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FM WASHINGTON 100047Z NOV 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3363 OF 9 NOVEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE EC POSTS, UKMIS NEW YORK CAIRO TEL AVIV

YOUR TELNO 488 TO PARIS: SINAI FORCE

1. THE FRENCH, ITALIAN AND NETHERLANDS AMBASSADORS AND I ACTED TODAY ON THE BASIS OF PART ONE OF THE INSTRUCTIONS IN TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE. IN PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION AMONGST THE FOUR THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAD SHOWN MARKED RELUCTANCE TO TAKE THE LEAD, ARGUING THAT THIS WAS A PRESIDENCY RESPONSIBILITY. I ACCORDINGLY AGREED TO SPEAK FIRST. I FOLLOWED THE INSTRUCTIONS TEXTUALLY AND EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS AN AGREED APPROACH BY THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS. THE THREE AMBASSADORS PARTICIPATED EQUALLY IN THE SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION. THIS SHOULD HAVE DISPELLED ANY IMPRESSION THAT THE UK WAS OUT IN FRONT OF THE OTHERS.
2. A RECORD OF THE CALL FOLLOWS IN MIFT. EACH EMBASSY HAD A NOTE-TAKER PRESENT AND THE RECORD HAS BEEN AGREED AMONGST THEM. IT WAS LEFT THAT THE THREE AMBASSADORS AND I WOULD SEND OUR OWN SEPARATE IMPRESSIONS AND NOT ATTEMPT TO PRODUCE A COORDINATED REPORT BECAUSE OF THE LATENESS OF THE HOUR. HOWEVER WE HELD A BRIEF DISCUSSION AFTER THE CALL AND THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF DISAGREEMENT.
3. HAIG LISTENED CAREFULLY TO OUR PRESENTATION AND REPLIED VERY CALMLY. HE WENT THROUGH THE REASONS WHICH HE SAW FOR FEARING THAT THE STATEMENT AS ORIGINALLY DRAFTED WOULD PRODUCE SERIOUSLY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE ISRAELIS AS WELL AS ON THE WIDER MIDDLE EAST SCENE. HE EMPHASIZED STRONGLY THAT HE WAS IN NO WAY CRITICAL OF OUR MOTIVES AND THAT HE GREATLY APPRECIATED THE EFFORT WHICH THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS HAD MADE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PEACE PROCESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST DESPITE THE DISADVANTAGES WHICH THEY SAW. THERE WAS A HINT OF APOLOGY FOR HIS STRONG REACTION LAST WEEK, WHICH HE EVIDENTLY FELT IT NECESSARY TO TRY TO JUSTIFY.
4. IN ONE RESPECT HOWEVER HAIG WENT FURTHER THAN HE HAD DONE PREVIOUSLY. HE SUGGESTED THAT RECENT PUBLICITY ABOUT THE EUROPEAN POSITION HAD MADE OUR VIEWS SO CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED THAT THERE WAS REALLY NO NEED FOR ANY STATEMENT AT ALL ABOUT PARTICIPATION

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IN THE MFO. IN SUMMING UP AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CALL I SAID THAT I SAW NO POSSIBILITY THAT THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS COULD UNDERTAKE A STEP OF THIS IMPORTANCE WITHOUT MAKING A STATEMENT. I REITERATED HOWEVER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 5 OF THE INSTRUCTIONS, THAT WE WOULD REFLECT ON THE VARIOUS POINTS HE HAD MADE AND WOULD ON OUR PART BE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BRIDGE THE GAP.

5. TODAY'S DISCUSSION HAS GONE SOME WAY TO CLEARING THE AIR AND TO ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH TO DISCUSS THE CONTENT OF THE STATEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 2 OF THE INSTRUCTIONS IF IT IS AGREED THAT WE SHOULD DO SO. ALTHOUGH HAIG PROBABLY REALISES THAT HIS ORIGINAL CRITICISMS WENT TOO FAR HE REMAINS ACUTELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ISRAELI REACTION AND THERE IS NO PROSPECT THAT HE WILL COME ROUND TO EXPRESSING APPROVAL OF THE ORIGINAL DRAFT STATEMENT. THE THREE AMBASSADORS, ESPECIALLY THE DUTCH, ASSUME THAT WE WILL SEEK A FURTHER APPOINTMENT WITH HAIG ON 10 NOVEMBER IN ORDER TO ACT ON PART 2, WITH ANY CLARIFICATIONS OR COMMENTS YOU WISH TO SEND US. IT WOULD BE CONVENIENT TO HAVE A DRAFT OF THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE IF IT IS AVAILABLE BY THEN.

6. I SEE ADVANTAGE IN ACTING ON 10 NOVEMBER IF POSSIBLE. FEW US OFFICIALS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON 11 NOVEMBER WHICH IS A PUBLIC HOLIDAY HERE. ON 12 NOVEMBER MR HURD WILL HOLD TALKS WHICH SHOULD NOT BE UNDULY FOCUSED ON THIS ONE IMMEDIATE ISSUE.

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3364 OF 9 NOVEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE EC POSTS, UKMIS NEW YORK, CAIRO, TEL AVIV.

M I P T: SINAI FORCE

1. FOLLOWING IS THE AGREED RECORD:

1. HEADS OF MISSION OF THE FOUR CALLED ON HAIG THIS AFTERNOON. THE BRITISH CHARGE, REPRESENTING THE PRESIDENCY, EXPLAINED THAT THEY WISHED TO RESPOND TO HAIG'S COMMENTS LAST WEEK ON THE PROPOSED STATEMENT OF THE FOUR. HE THEN READ OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS IN FULL.

2. HAIG EXPRESSED THANKS FOR THIS COMMUNICATION. HE STRESSED REPEATEDLY THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WELCOMED THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE FOUR TO RESPOND TO THE AMERICAN REQUEST. IT WAS A PITY THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD HAD WIND OF THE PROPOSED STATEMENT OF THE FOUR BEFORE THE AMERICANS HAD SEEN IT: THEY HAD MADE A VERY STRONG DEMARCHE TO THE AMERICANS ABOUT IT. HE KNEW THAT EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORCE WAS NOT FREE OF RISK. BUT THERE WAS AFTER ALL NO REASON TO SUSPECT THAT ANYONE COULD HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT WHERE THE EUROPEANS STOOD ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

3. HAIG SAID THAT THE PROPOSED STATEMENT RISKED BEING REJECTED BY ISRAEL WITH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES - WORSE RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT AND THE FORMATION OF A FAR LESS CREDIBLE FORCE. TWO OF THE FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAD ANYWAY PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION TO PARTICIPATE. THE FORCES IN ISRAEL OPPOSED TO THE RETURN OF THE SINAI WOULD BE STRENGTHENED AND THE WHOLE PROBLEM COMPLICATED. PARANOIA IN ISRAEL WAS THE HIGHEST HAIG HAD EVER SEEN. THE REASONS INCLUDED THE CUT-OFF OF US ARMS AFTER THE RAID ON THE IRAQI REACTOR, THE DEATH OF SADAT, GROWING CONDEMNATION (RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY) OF BEGIN, FAHD'S EIGHT POINTS AND NOW THIS ISSUE. WE RISKED BRINGING ABOUT THE WORST POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES BY DERAILING THE PEACE PROCESS AND TRIGGERING PRECIPITOUS ISRAELI ACTION IN LEBANON.

4. HAIG SAID THAT THE EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEKEND - THE INCREASED LEVEL OF TENSION, SPECULATION FROM RIYADH AND UNFORTUNATE ISRAELI RHETORIC MADE THE POSITION HE HIMSELF HAD TAKEN LAST WEEK EVEN MORE CREDIBLE. THE SITUATION WAS NOW MORE SERIOUS. LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY BE SEEN BY THE ISRAELIS AS INFLAMMATORY COULD BE FATAL. HAIG COMMENTED THAT IF SOME OF THE ASSURANCES THE FOUR HAD NOW OFFERED HAD BEEN MADE EXPLICIT IN THE STATEMENT WE WOULD NOT HAVE SUCH A PROBLEM. HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY ANY STATEMENT WAS NEEDED. HE WOULD PREFER NO STATEMENT OF THE FOUR AND THAT EACH CAPITAL SIMPLY EXPLAINED ITS OWN PARTICIPATION AS IT SAW FIT, OR THAT THEY REFER IN A COMMON STATEMENT TO THE THREE CONDITIONS ALREADY IN THE STATEMENT (AS AMENDED BY THE AMERICANS).

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5. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS HAIG SAID THAT IF THE PROPOSED STATEMENTS BY THE FOUR AND THE TEN WERE PUBLISHED NOW IT WOULD HAVE AN EVEN WORSE EFFECT THAN LAST WEEK: HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO AVOID GIVING THE ISRAELIS A PRETEXT FOR ACTION WHETHER OR NOT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR ONE: HE UNDERSTOOD THE EUROPEANS' NEED TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION TO ARAB STATES, BUT ON THE BASIS OF CONSULTATIONS PREVIOUSLY CARRIED OUT BY THE AMERICANS, DID NOT THINK THAT THERE WOULD BE SEVERE ARAB REACTIONS. THE FOUR EMPHASISED THEIR DESIRE TO FIND A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. HAIG AGREED AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE WAY THE EUROPEANS HAD HANDLED THIS SITUATION. IN CONCLUSION THE BRITISH CHARGE SAID THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD WISH TO REFLECT ON WHAT HAD BEEN SAID AND REVIEW THEIR POSITIONS IN THE HOPE OF BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THEM. HE ADDED ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE OPTION OF MAKING NO STATEMENT AT ALL WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS.

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