

PRIORITY

RESTRICTED

FM 0011640Z OCT 81

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TO PRIORITY UKDEL MELBOURNE

RAB
2/10

TELEGRAM NUMBER 126 OF 1 OCTOBER

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF DEPARTMENT
WAS RECEIVED FROM JERUSALEM TELNO 64 OF 29 SEPTEMBER.

MIPT (NOT TO ALL): HMG'S RELATIONS WITH PLO

1. THE REMARKS MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT THE PLO AT HER PRESS CONFERENCE IN KUWAIT ON 27 SEPTEMBER, AS REPORTED HERE, HAVE PROMPTED STRONG CRITICISM FROM RADICAL OPINION IN THE TERRITORIES.
2. THE TWO PRO-PLO ARABIC DAILY NEWSPAPERS, AL FAJR AND ASSHA'AB, BOTH GIVE THE STORY THEIR FRONT PAGE LEAD TODAY, THE FORMER UNDER THE BANNER HEADLINE QUOTE THATCHER'S STATEMENT MET WITH ANGER IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES UNQUOTE. BOTH PAPERS QUOTE MOST LEADING WEST BANK MAYORS AS REACTING CRITICALLY. THERE ARE NUMEROUS REFERENCES TO BRITAIN'S PRE-1948 ROLE IN PALESTINE (OF WHICH MEMORIES ARE NEVER FAR BELOW THE SURFACE HERE) AND TO HMG'S POLICSH IN NORTHERN IRELAND, IN WHICH MANY ARABS HERE PURPORT TO SEE PARALLELS WITH THE BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PLO (COMMENT ON LATTER POINT FOLLOWS BY BAG).
3. THE LEADING ARABIC DAILY AL QUDS (PRO-JORDANIAN) HAS SO FAR OMITTED ANY MENTION OF THE STORY.
4. BY CONTRAST, M. MITTERAND'S MEETING WITH MR PERES IN PARIS DURING THE RECENT MEETING THERE OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL HAS CAUSED SCARCELY A RIPPLE OF CRITICISM HERE, ALTHOUGH ACCORDING TO LOCAL ARABIC PRESS REPORTS TODAY PERES WAS THE ONLY FOREIGN LEADER TO BE RECEIVED PRIVATELY BY THE PRESIDENT. THIS IS TYPICAL OF THE MUTED LOCAL REACTION SO FAR TO THE EVIDENT CHANGE IN DIRECTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT. RELATIVE EXPECTATIONS HERE OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES ARE STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY WHAT IS SEEN AS THE UK'S QUOTE HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY UNQUOTE (SIC) FOR THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

CARRINGTON

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FM FCO 011540Z OCT 81

TO PRIORITY UKDEL MELBOURNE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 116 OF 1 OCT

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF PRIVATE OFFICE WAS RECEIVED FROM DAMASCUS TELEGRAM NUMBER 308 OF 30 SEPTEMBER.

PRIME MINISTERS PRESS CONFERENCE IN KUWAIT.

1. IN RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST, I GAVE HEAD OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEPT OF MFA ON 28 SEPTEMBER THE TEXT OF THE EXTRACTS FROM THE PRIME MINISTERS'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN KUWAIT TELEGRAM NO.398.

2. THERE HAS BEEN ADVERSE COMMENT IN THE PRESS HERE. THEY HAVE FIXED IN THE REFERENCE TO DRIVING ISRAEL INTO THE SEA AS BEING QUOTE THE LANGUAGE OF ISRAELI LEADERS UNQUOTE AND PRESENT THE REFERENCE TO PLO LINKS WITH TERRORISM AS A CHALLENGE TO THW HOLE ARAB WORLD. THEY PORTRAY THE WHOLE TONE OF THE PRIME MINISTERS REMARKS AS SHOWING THAT THERE IS NOTHING FOR THE ARABS TO HOPE FOR FROM EUROPE WHICH IS NOW CLEARLY SUBSERVIENT TO US POLICY. THEY REPORT THAT THESE STATEMENTS AND PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S DECLARATION IN SAUDI ARABIA CRYSTALLIZED THE ARAB DISAPPOINTMENT, AND THAT THE PROPOSED MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE EURO ARAB DIALOGUE WILL NOT THEREFORE TAKE PLACE IN NOVEMBER.

3. IN A PROMINENTLY REPORTED INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESS THE OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN OF THE PLO, ABU MAIZAR, SAID HERE ON 29 SEPTEMBER THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS SHOWED THAT BRITAIN'S POLICY HAD NOT CHANGED SINCE IT CREATED THE ZIONIST PROJECT IN PALESTINE. HER REFERENCE TO THE PLO AS HAVING LINKS WITH TERRORISM DELIBERATELY IGNORED THE FACTS GUIDING THE PLO'S STRUGGLE. SHE HAD USED THE LANGUAGE OF BEGIN AND HIS MASTERS AS A PROVOCATION TO THE ARABS, THE MUSLIMS, THE NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND BRITISH AND WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. IF IT CONTINUED THIS HYPOCRITICAL BLACKMAILING POLICY, BRITAIN WOULD THREATEN SECURITY AND PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE PLO WAS STRUGGLING BY ALL LEGITIMATE MEANS, INCLUDING THE USE OF ARMS.

4. ABU MAIZAR DESCRIBED PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF 24 SEPTEMBER AS QUOTE NOT CONSTRUCTIVE UNQUOTE ON THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT USED MUCH STRONGER LANGUAGE IN HIS CONDEMNATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS.

CARRINGTON

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