

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E 072958

By *ML* NAPA Date 11/7/08

Department of State

TELEGRAM

1974-2-7) ~~Oil~~ ~~Flash~~ Syria

Z 070925Z FEB 74 Z 1124
 FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 6104
 BI
 S E C R E T - JIDDA 628

CONTROL: 1700Q

RECD: 7 FEBRUARY 74 -

5 54 AM

EXDIS

HANDLE AS NODIS/CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI DEMARCHE TO SYRIA

REF: SECRETARY'S FEB 6 MSG TO AMBASSADOR IN RIYADH UN-NUMBERED

1. SAYYID OMAR SAQQAF, SAUDI MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND ROYAL ADVISORS PRINCE NAWWAF AND RASHAD PHARAON MET FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF WITH THE KING AFTER OUR MEETING LAST NIGHT, (I.E. UNTIL 2130 GMT FEB 6 (A FULL ACCOUNT OF THIS MEETING FOLLOWS). I SAW SAYYID OMAR IMMEDIATELY ON MY RETURN TO JIDDA THIS MORNING (0730 GMT FEB 7) AND HE GAVE ME THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THAT TALK:

2. HE SAID HE AND THE OTHERS WERE MOST PLEASED WITH THE EARLIER MEETING. THE KING UNDERSTOOD VERY WELL THE POINTS I MADE. ALL, INCLUDING THE KING, AGREED THAT THE BOYCOTT SHOULD BE LIFTED. THE KING, HOWEVER, STILL INSISTED THAT SAUDI ARABIA COULD NOT ACT ALONE IN LIFTING IT. THE KING SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT TO BUILD UP AN ARAB CONSENSUS AND HE COULD NOT BE THE ONE TO DESTROY IT. FURTHERMORE, IF THE BOYCOTT WAS LIFTED IT WOULD NOT BE AS EASY TO REIMPOSE IT AS SOME PEOPLE (I.E. HENRY KISSINGER AND JAMES AKINS) HAVE IMPLIED.

3. THE KING AGREED TO SEND OMAR SAQQAF TO DAMASCUS IMMEDIATELY AS A RESULT OF THE MEETING. SAQQAF SAID HE TOLD THE KING HE WAS NOT HIRED TO BE A MESSENGER BOY AND WOULD NOT GO JUST TO PICK UP ASSAD'S VIEWS. HE WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE EMPOWERED TO NEGOTIATE. THE KING AGREED.

4. I TOLD SAQQAF WE HAD JUST RECEIVED INFORMATION, WHICH WE BELIEVED VERY RELIABLE, THAT THE LIBYANS AND THE SOVIET UNION WERE BEHIND THE SYRIAN INTRANSIGENCE AND BOTH WANTED THE PEACE TALKS TO FAIL. HE ASKED

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NLN 01-29/111 147 24 JULY 2006

By NS NARA, Date 02 Aug 2007
[2 pages]

NODIS NODIS NODIS



Department of State
TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~

-2- JIDDA 628

IF I WERE SURPRISED. I SAID I WASN'T, BUT I ASSUMED HE WOULD BE. STILL, IF HE HAD SUSPECTED THIS, IT WAS ALL MORE REASON TO BE FIRM WITH THE SYRIANS.

5. HE SAID I KNEW HIS VIEWS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SYRIA IN THE ARAB WORLD AND I HAD BY NOW SEEN THE TREMENDOUS IMPRESSION PRESIDENT ASSAD HAD MADE ON KING FAISAL AND THE INFLUENCE HE HAD ON THE KING. NONETHELESS, HE (SAQQAF) WAS AS FIRMLY CONVINCED AS WAS I THAT THE BOYCOTT SHOULD NOW BE LIFTED. THE LINES HE WOULD TAKE WITH THE SYRIANS WAS THE LINE I HAD PUSHED SO HARD: I.E. THE BOYCOTT HAS ALREADY MADE ITS POINTS. ITS CONTINUATION CANNOT HELP THE ARABS. HE SAID HE WASN'T AS CONVINCED AS I THAT LIFTING IT WOULD HELP THEM, BUT IT MIGHT. IN ANY CASE THERE CAN BE NO REASON FOR CONTINUING IT.

6. HE SAID THE PLAN SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD PRESENTED TO THE SYRIANS COULD BE USED AS A PRETEXT TO MOVE BUT HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN CONVINCING THE SYRIANS TO AGREE TO LIFTING THE BOYCOTT.

7. I SAID WE WERE NOT TRYING TO DESTROY ARAB UNITY; BUT THE PRESERVATION OF THIS UNITY SHOULD NOT BE A MATTER OF THE MODERATES ALWAYS YIELDING TO THE RADICALS. THIS WAS A TIME WHEN SYRIA CLEARLY MUST MOVE. I SAID I HOPED WE COULD EXPECT OTHER ARABS TO MOVE EVEN IF SYRIA REMAINED RECALCITRANT. HE SAID HE COULD MAKE NO COMMITMENT BEFORE TALKING WITH THE KING. HE WILL SEE HIM IN RIYADH THIS EVENING AFTER RETURNING FROM DAMASCUS AND WILL INFORM ME TOMORROW OF THE RESULTS OF BOTH HIS MEETINGS.

8. HE SAID HE HAD THANKED GOD LAST NIGHT THAT THE MEETING HAD GONE SO WELL AND THAT MY INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN MOLIFIED TO ALLOW A FRIENDLIER TONE, EVEN THOUGH THE BASIC MESSAGE WAS THE SAME. HE SAID IF I HAD MADE THE SAME POINTS IN THE SAME FORM TO THE KING AS I HAD TO HIM EARLIER "WE, AND I MEAN BOTH YOU AND I, WOULD HAVE LOST EVERYTHING."

AKINS

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

~~SECRET~~

NODIS NODIS NODIS