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Authority E 072958  
By ML NAPA Date 11/7/08

# TELEGRAM

Department of State

## 1973-5-18, Faisal, Lebanon, Palestinians

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REF: (A) BEIRUT 5588 B STATE 94202

SUMMARY: IN ASSESSING SAUDI CAPABILITIES AND THEIR INCLINATION TO SWAY FEDAYEEN FOR BENEFIT OF GOL, WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND EXISTENCE OF MISCONCEPTIONS AS TO EXTENT SAUDI FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AN INFLUENCE WITH FEDAYEEN. WE FIND SAUDI FATAH RELATIONS RATHER AT A STAND OFF THESE DAYS AND DOUBT SAG HAS INFLUENCE, FINANCIAL OR MORAL, TO PERSUADE FEDAYEEN ACCOMMODATE THEMSELVES GOL DEMANDS. DEPENDING ON WHOM WE APPROACH IN SAG, RESPONSE COULD BE INCONCLUSIVE AND PERHAPS EVEN SOMEWHAT BITTER WITH EMPHASIS ON USG RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTLING MIDDLE EAST PROBLE. PRINCE FAHD MIGHT APPEAR MORE ACCOMMODATING BUT WE THINK FUNDAMENTALLY SAUDIS WOULD BE RELUCTANT APPEAR TAKE SIDES IN PRESNE GOL-FEDAYEEN CONFRONTATION. IF DEPARTMENT FEELS THAT IN ORDER STATISFY LEBANSE, WE OUGHT TO MAKE SOME KIND OF APPROACH HERE. THEN DEMARCH SHOULD BE IN

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect. 1.5  
16-01-26/155 per LMC 06116106

By gfr Date 07/20/08

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LOW KEY, SYMPATHETIC MANNER STRESSING OUR INTEREST IN WELFARE OF BOTH SIDES IN LEBANON AND OUR URGENT DESIRE SEE TRAGIC DENOUEMENT AVOIDED. END SUMMARY.

1. KEY ELEMENT TO BE ASSESSED IN DETERMINING WHAT SAUDIS MIGHT DO TO ASSIST GOL IS CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF SAUDI INFLUENCE WITH FEDAYEEN AND WHETHER THEY PREPARED TO USE IT FOR BENEFIT OF GOL. WE THINK THERE TENDS TO BE MISCONCEPTION AMONG OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS AS TO EXTENT SAUDI FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AND INFLUENCE WITH FEDYEEEN. LAST PAYMENT WE KNOW OF WAS 750,000 DOLLARS TO FAYAH ABOUT MID SUMMER 1972. SAQQAF REMARKED TO ME SOME TIME AGO THAT MANY OF SAUDI ARABIA'S FRIENDS IN PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT ARE NO LONGER ON THE SCENE OR INFLUENTIAL. AS BEST WE CAN DETERMINE SAUDI-FAYAH RELAYIONS AT A KIND OF STAND-OFF SINCE KHARYOUM INCIDENT. FAYAH REPRESENTATIVE, ABU HISHAM, HAS BEEN IN AND OUT OF SAUDI ARABIA IN APPARENT FENCE-MENDING EFFORT IN WEEKS SINCE KHARTOUM. (THAT THESE EFFORTS HAVE HAD AT LEAST LIMITED SUCCESS SUGGESTED BY REPORTS FAYAH WILL SONN OPEN OFFICE IN RIYADH -- FBIS 161418Z MAY 73) WE NOTE ARAFAT AND OTHER PALESTINIANS CALLED ON KING DURING HIS RECENT STOPOVER IN CAIRO BUT FORMER HAS NOT SET FOOT IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR MANY MONTHS. OVER PAST COUPLE YEARS, SAQQAF HAS OFTEN PLAYED INTERMEDIARY ROLE IN EFFORT IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND ARAB GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING AT TIMES BOTH JORDAN AND LEBANON. WHILE EGYPTIANS AND OTHERS WERE MUCH ON SCENE IN BEIRUT TO OFFER ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE DURING HEIGHT OF RECENT CONFLICT THERE, SAUDIS INCLUDING SAQQAF, WERE REMARKABLE FOR THEIR ABSENCE.

2. THUS WE INCLINED DOURT SAUDIS HAVE THE INFLUENCE. FINANCIAL OR MORAL, NEEDED TO PERSUADE FEDAYEEN ACCOMMODATE THEMSELVES TO GOL DEMANDS--ESPECIALLY SINCE TO FEDAYEEN POINTS AT ISSUE GO BEYOND FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND MANY TOUCH ON SURVIVABILITY OF RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. IN FACT WE THINK SAUDIS WOULD PREFER HUSRAND SUCH INFLUENCE AS THEY MAY HAVE WITH FEDAYEEN FOR PROTECTION THEIR OWN INTEREST. KINGDISTS AND FEARS TERRORISTS AND LEFTISTS AMONG PALESTINIANS AND SEES SAUDI ARABIA AS QUITE VULNERABLE TO THEIR ACTIVITIES. (CONCERN WITH LATTER REFLECTED BY RECENT HEAVY SAG PRESSURE ON ARAMCO

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TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY MEASURES AND FACILITIES AROUND OIL INSTALLATIONS.)

3. WE SHOULD CONSIDER TOO PROBABLE EFFECTIVENESS AND DESIRABILITY USG REPRESENTATIONS TO SAUDIS ON THIS SUBJECT. IF I WERE TO APPROACH SAQQAF OR KING FAISAL ASKING SAUDI INTERVENTION WITH FEDAYEEN, POLITE BUT SLIGHTLY BITTER RESPONSE WOULD BE QUITE PREDICTABLE; WE WILL TAKE UNDER ADVISEMENT USG VIEWS AND MEANWHILE US CAN QUITTE EASILY IF IT WILL BRING RESOLUTION TO WHOLE, DIFFICULT MIDDLE EAST AFFAIR BY SHIFTING ITS POLICIES. (IN CASE OF SAQQAF IN PARTICULAR, I WOULD BE TREATED TO ONE OF HIS LONG ACIDULOUS LECTURES ON INEQUITIES OF US POSTURE AND, GIVEN HIS PRESNET STATE OF MIND, BELIEVE HE MIGHT WELL MAKE NEGATIVE RECOMMENDATION TOKING IF ONLY BECAUSE U.S. HAD INTERVENED.) HOWEVER, SAQQAF SCHEDULED FOR LATIN AMERICAN TRIP NEXT DAY OR SO AND I COULD APPROACH PRINCE FAHD WHE RESPONSE MIGHT BE MORE POSITIVE THOUGH IT IS OPEN QUESTION WHETHER HE COULD SECURE AUTHORIZATION OF KING, NOW IN GENEVA, TO TAKE UP MATER WITH FEDAYEEN.

4. IN SUM, I BELIEVE SAUDIS DO OF COURSE VERY MUCH WISH TO SEE MODERATE TYPE GOVERNMENT SURVICE IN LEBANON BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE QUITE RELUCTANT APPEAR TAKE SIDES IN PRESENT GOL-FEDAYEEN MANEUVRING FOR POSITON. FIRST BECAUSE THEY MAY HAVE CONSIDRABLE DOUBTS AS TO DEGREE OF THEIR OWN INFLUENCE AND SECOND THEY WOULD WISH TO AVOID ANTAGONIZING FEDAYEEN BY PRESSING THEM TAKE STEPS WHICH MIGHT WELL END THEIR FREEDOM OF ACTION IN LEBANON. MOREOVER, SAUDIS HAVE, JUST ENOUGH IN THEM OF ARAB ANTAGONISM TOWARD U.S. ON M.O.E. ISSUE TO WONDER WHAT GOL IS UP TO IN SEEKING SUPPORT OF USG WHO ALSO ISRAEL'S DEVOTED PATRON AND PROTECTOR.

5. IF DEPARTMENT FEELS THAT IN ORDER TO SATISY LEBANESE WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MAKE SOME KIND OF APPROACH TO SAUDIS, THEN DEMARCH SHOULD BE TO PRINCE FAHD IN AS LOW KEY SYMPATHETIC MANNER AS POSSIBLE, I.E. NOT REPEAT NOT STRONGLY ANTI-FATAH OR ANTI-TERRORIST IN TONE. SUGGEST WE SHOULD STRESS BOTH SIDES IN LEBANON NEED HELP OF OUTSIDE MODERATES TO QUIET PASSIONS AND TO ENCOURAGE ACCOMMODATION. WE THINK GOL QUITE WILLING GIVE PALESTINIANS REASONABLE PLACE IN SUN AS

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SHOWN BY FACT IT HAS BEEN MORE LIBERAL WITH THEM THAN MAY OTHER GOVERNMENTS, AND GOL NOW REQUIRES CERTAIN SAFEGUARDS. IN GENERAL OUR REPRESENTATION SHOULD SEEM BALANCED AND MODERATE IN TONE, INDICATE OUR GENUINE CONCERN WITH CONDITION OF PALESTINIANS AND ALSO WITH POSITION OF ARAB MODERATES THAT COULD ONLY BE WEAKENED BY FRATRICIDAL OUTBREAK IN LEBANON.

6. SHOULD STRESS FINALLY HOWEVER I AM NOT PARTICULARLY SANGUINE SAG WOULD DO WHAT WE ASKED OR IF THEY DID THAT THERE WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON FEDAYEEN. WE CONSIDERING FURTHER WHETHER WE MAY HAVE ANY SUGGESTION OFFER RE QUESTIONS RAISED PARA 8 REF B.  
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