

Department of State TELEGRAM

1974-5-28, Assad, Kissinger visit



CONFIDENTIAL 6001

PAGE 01 DAMASC 00951 281050Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 00951

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.) SY
SUBJECT: MOOD IN DAMASCUS

1. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, THERE IS MUCH CONFUSION IN CITY CONCERNING THE FINAL OUTCOME OF YOUR VISIT TO DAMASCUS. MANY PEOPLE ARE NOW WORRIED THAT YOUR MISSION HAS FAILED BECAUSE YOU DID NOT MAKE A DEPARTURE ANNOUNCEMENT INDICATING SUCCESS. THEIR FEARS HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN EXACERBATED BY THE ARRIVAL OF GROMYKO, WHO MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE WILL NOW MAKE AN EFFORT TO UNDERCUT YOUR MISSION. MOST PEOPLE ARE STILL HOPEFUL BUT THEIR HOPES ARE TINGED WITH APPREHENSION. I AM TOLD THAT EVERYONE IN THE CITY IS NOW LISTENING TO RADIO ISRAEL FOR SOME HINT AS TO WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

2. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS RUN FRONT-PAGE PICTURES OF YOU AND THE PRESIDENT IN SMILING, RELAXED SCENES. PAPERS ALSO RUN THE COMPLETE TEXT OF YOUR FAREWELL STATEMENT AS WELL AS THE USUAL INFORMATION GIVING THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE TALKS AND DETAILS OF YOUR ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.

3. BOTH PAPERS ALSO CARRY THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH IN THE STORY ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS:

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 00951 281050Z

"A NUMBER OF POINTS RELATING TO THE SUBJECT OF FORCES DISENGAGEMENT ARE STILL UNDER DISCUSSION. THERE ARE ALSO SOME POINTS IN WHICH SYRIA REFUSED ANY DISCUSSIONS SUCH AS THE SUBJECT OF GUERRILLAS BECAUSE THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT OF GUERRILLAS MUST SOLVE THE SUBJECT OF THE ARAB PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, AND TO DISCUSS THAT SUBJECT WITH THE PALESTINIAN COMMANDS. ANY OTHER ATTEMPT IS WASTING TIME."

4. THE LOCAL RAIDO HAS BEEN BROADCASTING THE NEWS OF YOUR EFFORTS, PROVIDING PRETTY MUCH THE SAME INFORMATION GIVEN IN THE NEWSPAPERS, AND PARTICULARLY THE COMPLETE TEXT OF YOUR DEPARTURE STATEMENT, AS WELL AS THE PORTION RELATING TO THE SYRIAN POSITION ON THE FEDAYEEN.

5. BOTH PAPERS ALSO CARRY STORIES OF GROMYKO'S ARRIVAL. HE, TOO, IS SHOWN WITH SMILING VISAGE BEING GREETED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF PROTOCOL. PICTURES (SMALLER THAN YOURS) AND STORIES RELATING TO THE GROMYKO VISIT ARE PLACED ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE OF THE PAGE AT THE BOTTOM, DIRECTLY UNDER STORIES ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES.

6. AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST, PICTURES AND ARTICLES ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE OF THE NEWSPAPER CONCERNING THE DISENGAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS ARE BALANCED BY PICTURES AND ARTICLES ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE PAGE SHOWING PICTURES OF THE CONTINUED FIGHTING ON THE GOLAN. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE CANNONS WITH SMOKE SPEWING OUT OF THEIR MOUTHS ARE POINTED IN YOUR DIRECTION.

7. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HAS JUST TOLD ME THAT THE GENERAL TLAS HAS BEEN PRAISING YOU TO THE ARAB AMBASSADOR IN THE CITY. ACCORDING TO THE MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR HE SAID THAT THE SYRIANS ARE ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED OF YOUR GOOD WILL AND HONESTY. THE SYRIANS ARE ALSO FULLY CONVINCED THAT YOU REPRESENT THEIR SIDE IN TEL AVIV WITH THE SAME COMMITMENT AND INTENSITY AS YOU DO THE ISRAELI POSITION IN DAMASCUS. GENERAL TLAS SAID THE SYRIANS NOW BELIEVE THAT A

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Authority E.O. 12958

By KJ NARA Date 4/10/18



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SETTLEMENT WILL BE ACHIEVED THANKS TO YOU. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR AGREED WITH ME THAT IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT A MAJOR SYRIAN FIGURE IS TAKING THIS KIND OF POSITION WITH THE ARAB AMBASSADOR IN THE CITY, AND THAT THIS BODES WELL, BOTH WITH REGARD TO DISENGAGEMENT AS WELL AS TO U.S. SYRIAN RELATIONS. SCOTES

NOTE BY OC/TI: (#)AS RECEIVED.

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