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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

By SDZIKSU Date 7/20/88  
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Department of State **TELEGRAM**



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SECTO 07

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION: FM MASMOUDI (TUNISIA)  
SECRETARY'S OCTOBER 1  
MEETING WITH FONMIN:  
PART I MIDDLE EAST  
9:30 A.M., 35A WALDORF

1. PARTICIPANTS: TUNISIA - MASMOUDI, MINISTER MOUSSA;  
U.S. - THE SECRETARY, MR. DE PALMA, AMBASSADOR MCKESSON  
(REPORTING OFFICER), MR. TOUMAYAN (INTERPRETER).

2. SUMMARY: MASMOUDI SAID ARABS LONG FOR CLOSER TIES  
WITH US AND HOPE US CAN EXERT ITS INFLUENCE TO BRING  
ABOUT JUST PEACE IN AREA. SECRETARY EXPLAINED US  
POSITION STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF INTERIM AGREEMENT  
LEADING TO FINAL SETTLEMENT, BUT POINTED OUT FINAL TERMS  
OF LATTER COULD NOT BE DECIDED IN ADVANCE. MASMOUDI  
FORESAW CONTINUED STALEMATE WITH ALTERNATING TALKS AND  
SKIRMISHES. END SUMMARY

3. MASMOUDI SAID THAT ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO MID EAST HE  
NOTED GREAT LONGING AMONG ARABS FOR BETTER AND CLOSER  
RELATIONS WITH U.S. ARABS ADMIRE NUMEIRI'S STAND IN  
SUDAN AND WANT TO SEE SOVIETS LEAVE EGYPT. THIS IS NOT  
AN IDEOLOGICAL POSITION BUT REFLECTS A FEELING THAT

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WITH CLOSER US TIES AREA WOULD BE CLOSER TO PEACE AND FREEDOM.

4. MASMOUDI SAID ARABS WONDER WHY U.S. DOES NOT UNDERSTAND AND HELP THEM MORE. THEY DO NOT WANT WAR BUT FEAR WAR IS ONLY OUTLET IF THINGS REMAIN AS THEY ARE. EGYPT WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH RECENT MEETING BETWEEN RIAD AND SECRETARY, ACCORDING TO MASMOUDI, AND CAIRO NOW FEELS CONDEMNED TO DO SOMETHING. ARABS ARE TALKING ABOUT REDUCING THE FLOW OF OIL AND ARE PREPARING FOR WAR KNOWING THEY CAN SUFFER MANY DEFEATS BUT THAT ISRAEL CANNOT SURVIVE ONE.

5. SECRETARY ROGERS SAID U.S. CAN DO NOTHING IF ARABS DECIDE ON WAR, BUT THAT A POLICY OF COURTING DEFEAT IS NO POLICY. THE U.S. CAN BE HELPFUL IN BRINGING ABOUT A SOLUTION IN WHICH ARABS WILL GET ALMOST EVERYTHING THEY WANT. OUR POLICY IS QUITE FAVORABLE TO THE ARABS AND THAT IS WHY IT IS CRITICIZED BY ISRAEL. THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION HAS CHANGED THE U.S. POLICY OF THREE YEARS AGO AND THE ARABS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THIS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT. WE OFFER POSSIBILITY OF PEACE, WITH ARABS OBTAINING ALMOST ALL THEY ASK FOR. SOVIETS TELL ARABS TO HOLD OUT FOR EVERYTHING THEY DEMAND AND OFFER NO ALTERNATIVE EXCEPT STALEMATE AND WAR. PROLONGATION OF PRESENT STATUS PLAYS INTO ISRAELI HANDS AND INTERIM SETTLEMENT WHICH WE FEEL CAN BE ACHIEVED IS MORE IN INTEREST OF ARABS THAN ISRAELIS. INTERIM AGREEMENT SHOULD BE STEP TOWARD FINAL SETTLEMENT BUT IT CANNOT SPELL OUT EXACTLY WHAT FINAL AGREEMENT WILL BE, OR THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR INTERIM STEP. THE U.S. POSITION IS THAT ISRAEL SHOULD RETURN SUBSTANTIALLY ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES EXCEPT FOR SOME MINOR SECURITY ADJUSTMENTS SUCH AS THE PROBLEM OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS AND SHARM EL SHEIKH. SECRETARY SAID HE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH SADAT AND BELIEVES INTERIM AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED WHICH WOULD BENEFIT EGYPT WITHOUT PREJUDICING FINAL SETTLEMENT BUT THAT NOTHING CAN BE DONE IF ARABS ASK FOR EVERYTHING THEY WANT PRIOR TO AN INTERIM ACCORD. AS IN CASE OF BERLIN AGREEMENT, SECRETARY POINT OUT THAT SOME THINGS CAN BE SETTLED WHILE OTHERS ARE NEGOTIATED LATER.

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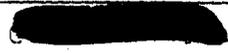
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6. MASMOUDI SAID THAT AN INTERIM AGREEMENT LATER.

6. MASMOUDI SAID THAT AN INTERIM AGREEMENT WITHOUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ULTIMATE GOAL WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PROMOTE ON ARAB SIDE. HE FORESAW LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY PROGRESS UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS AND EXPECTED THAT THE STALEMATE WOULD CONTINUE WITH INTERMITTENT TALKS AND SKIRMISHES. HE THEN RAISED BRIEFLY THE PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM.

7. THE SECRETARY RECALLED THAT WE SUPPORTED THE ARAB POSITION ON JERUSALEM AND SAID THAT WE CAN ONLY TRY TO HELP IF THE PARTIES WISHED TO MAKE PROGRESS. IT SEEMED TO US THAT EGYPT WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITH THE CANO OPEN AND SUCH A MOVE COULD LEAD TO OTHERS. GP+. ROGERS

