

Prime Minister

We shall make it plain that Foreign and Commonwealth Office
the delegation cannot include the
P.L.O.

London SW1A 2AH

Agree:-

(a) to receive King Hassan at 11.45
on 8 November

19 October 1982

(b) to have a plenary session with the
delegation at 12.15

Yes MT.

(c) to give lunch for 48 at 13.00?

Dear John,

A.J.C. 19/10

Thank you for your letter of 14 October about the Arab League Delegation. The Commission met in Morocco on 15 October to finalise their plans. The Moroccan Ambassador told us on 18 October that the earliest date on which all members of the delegation could be in London is Monday, 8 November (the Members plan to arrive on 7 November).

The Moroccans have stressed that King Hassan will be coming to London in his capacity as leader of the Arab League Delegation rather than on a bilateral visit, and that the plenary session with the whole delegation will be the main part of the programme. They hope however that as a Head of State he will be granted the honour of a short tete-a-tete with the Prime Minister before or after the main talks. We are in touch separately with Buckingham Palace on an Audience of The Queen. Subject to the Prime Minister's wishes, Mr Pym recommends that the visit might take the following form on the morning of 8 November:

- a) a short meeting between the Prime Minister and King Hassan (say 20 minutes) with, at the same time
- b) a meeting between Mr Pym (Mr Hurd) and the other members of the delegation,
- c) a plenary session (45 minutes to one hour) with the Prime Minister, Mr Pym and the delegation,
- d) a luncheon given by the Prime Minister for the delegation.

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It is clear from the Moroccan Ambassador's conversation with the Department on 18 October, and from news agency reports we have seen, that the PLO at least still cling to some hope of being included in the visits to Washington and London, despite firm indications from the Americans and ourselves that they will not be welcome. This insistence is perhaps not surprising since the PLO are the seventh member of the Commission. But the Moroccan Ambassador has invited us to tell him formally that we would not be prepared to accept a PLO representative. It is possible that our refusal to meet the PLO may lead to the cancellation of the London visit. This is a risk we must accept; it is for the Arab League to decide their own priorities. We shall of course do all we can to avoid a situation in which a PLO representative turns up in London and attempts to bounce us into a meeting in some way.

I should be grateful to know if the Prime Minister can agree to these proposals.

I met the Moroccan Ambassador at dinner last night and told him to forget any idea of a P.L.O. representative being included in the delegation.

A. J. C. ¹⁴/₁₀

Yours ever
J. E. Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

20 October 1982

ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

Thank you for your letter of 19 October. On the assumption that the delegation does not include a PLO representative, the Prime Minister will be glad:

- (a) to receive King Hassan at 1145 on 8 November;
- (b) to have a plenary session with the delegation at 1215 - Mrs. Thatcher would be grateful if the Foreign Secretary could attend this;
- (c) to give lunch for the delegation at 1300 hours.

I should be grateful if you could provide as soon as possible a draft guest list for a lunch of 48 people.

With regard to your penultimate paragraph, you should know that on 18 October, at a dinner given by the German Ambassador, I was asked by the Moroccan Ambassador whether a PLO representative could be part of the Arab League Delegation. I told him that there was no question of a PLO representative being received at No. 10 and that it would be best not to make such a proposal.

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

JHC



Prime Minister:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 October 1982

Do you agree in principle to see the delegation, subject to its composition?

Yes

Dear John,

13/10.

As you know, King Hassan of Morocco is to lead a delegation of Arab League Foreign Ministers to Washington, probably on 21 or 22 October. The Moroccan Ambassador has told us that the King wishes to bring the delegation to London on 26 or 27 October (with 27 October as the main working day). Arab League delegations are also to visit Moscow, Paris and Peking, although their composition is not yet known. The precise composition of King Hassan's delegation has also yet to be decided but it is likely to include at least the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Syria and Tunisia.

We had thought that the London delegation would be the same as that visiting Washington and that there would be no question of PLO representation, but the Moroccan Ambassador told us informally on 12 October that a request that we receive a delegation including a member of the PLO was now a possibility. (Arafat is reported to have said in Amman yesterday that the PLO would be involved in the exercise.) We made it clear to the Ambassador that such a request would cause great difficulties and that we very much hoped that it would not be made even if (as the Ambassador had speculated) Arafat himself would not be involved. We are asking the Americans about their own reactions if they too should be asked.

The level of the delegation is such that Mr Pym believes that, if at all possible, the Prime Minister should receive them and offer a meal in their honour. The Arab League attach great importance to this exercise, which is being conducted during a crucial phase in efforts to find a lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East. The arrival of the delegation from Washington would present us with a unique opportunity to put across our views at a high level to a cross-section of Arab opinion. It is clear that the eventual Arab view of the Reagan proposals may depend to a large extent on their report, and we must stress the need to seize the opportunity for progress which these proposals represent.

The timetable outlined above may change (a high-level meeting is being held in Rabat on 15 October to discuss the arrangements and King Hassan is notoriously fickle), but I hope that, if the Prime Minister is willing to see the delegation in principle (subject to its composition), time

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can be at least provisionally reserved on the proposed London dates. (We are of course aware that the Prime Minister of Luxembourg is lunching with the Prime Minister on 27 October.) I will let you know as soon as we have firmer information.

Yours ever
J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 October, 1982

ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

Thank you for your letter of 13 October. The Prime Minister is prepared to receive a delegation from the Arab League, subject to its composition and provided that the date is convenient. You have indicated on the telephone that there is considerable uncertainty as to the date of the visit. I should be grateful if you would let me know as soon as the position is clarified - the Prime Minister's diary is already very committed for the foreseeable future and it may not be easy to find a convenient time.

A. J. DOLE

J Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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