

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

16

PS
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR EGERTON
SIR J BULLARD
HD/NENAD
HD/MED
HD/UND

NO 10 DOWNING STREET
CABINET OFFICE D10



HD/... ..

HD/CONSULAR DEPT

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PUSD (2)
NEWS D
RESIDENT CLERK

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

DESKBY 141500Z

GRS 320

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 141500Z MAR 83

FM RABAT 141300Z MAR 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 156 OF 14 MARCH

INFO IMMEDIATE AMMAN, DAMASCUS, JEDDA, TUNIS, ALGIERS

INFO ROUTINE OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS, WASHINGTON

MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 155: VISIT OF ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

1. I SAW BOUCETTA THIS MORNING. HE SAID HE WAS VERY SORRY NOT TO HAVE REPLIED BEFORE NOW TO THE MESSAGE WHICH YOU HAD SENT HIM IN DELHI. HE MADE A PARTICULAR POINT OF ASKING ME TO CONVEY APOLOGIES. HE SHOWED SURPRISE THAT WE HAD NOT ALREADY BEEN TOLD BY THE MOROCCANS OF THE CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP. HE SAID GUEDIRA, THE KING'S COUNSELLOR, HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO TALK TO ME ON SATURDAY MORNING. I THOUGHT THERE WAS NO POINT IN PRETENDING TO GRUMBLE AND LET IT PASS. I MERELY SAID THAT WE HAD HAD NEWS OF THE CHANGE FROM KING HUSSEIN WHEN HE RETURNED TO AMMAN.

2. BOUCETTA SAID THE KING VERY MUCH REGRETTED THAT HE WAS NOT AFTER ALL TO LEAD THE DELEGATION. HE HAD PUT OFF A DECISION

UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE. THE FACT WAS, BOUCETTA SAID, HE WAS QUOTE VERY TIRED UNQUOTE. I DID NOT GET A HINT OF ANY OTHER REASON. I SAID WE WERE ALL SORRY TO HEAR THAT THE KING WAS UNWELL.

3. BOUCETTA WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE KING WOULD BE TELLING ME QUOTE OFFICIALLY UNQUOTE TOMORROW ABOUT THE CHANGE AND ALSO ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION. HOWEVER, IN REPLY TO YOUR MESSAGE, HE WISHED ME TO LET YOU KNOW OF IT NOW. (THE MOROCCANS CLEARLY REGARD THEMSELVES AS STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING THE DELEGATION TOGETHER.) THE PALESTINIAN WOULD BE WALID KHALIDI. BOUCETTA SAID THAT ARAFAT HAD AGREED TO THIS NAME IN DELHI WHEREUPON BOUCETTA HAD INFORMED KING HUSSEIN AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION. THE OTHERS WOULD BE PRINCE SAUD, AL MAHRI FOR ALGERIA, THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE FOR TUNISIA, ABDUL HALIM KHADDAM FOR SYRIA, KING HUSSEIN AND QASEM OF COURSE, AND BOUCETTA HIMSELF FOR MOROCCO.

4. BOUCETTA MENTIONED THAT ARAFAT WAS COMING TO FEZ TODAY.

CAMBRIDGE

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SHED BE GRS 320

'3SENT/RECD AT 141415Z SEA/KRD