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MESSAGE

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ACTION SS-25

INFO  OCT-01  ISO-00  SSO-00  /026 W
-----------101842Z  (27940/41)

P 101635Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8703
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 03 JERUSALEM 0206

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US, EG, JO, PLO, XF

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SUBJECT: IS PEACE ACHIEVABLE? A VIEW FROM JERUSALEM

SUMMARY: AS SEEN FROM JERUSALEM, THE ARAB CONFRONTATION
STATES FOR THEIR OWN REASONS CURRENTLY APPEAR WILLING
TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL’S LEGITIMACY BY ENTERING INTO A PEACE
AGREEMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR ISRAEL’S WITHDRAWAL FROM MOST
TERRITORY OCCUPIED IN 1967 AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A PALESTINIAN ENTITY IN THE WEST BANK/GAZA. ISRAEL,
WHILE ARTICULATING A DESIRE FOR PEACE, HARBORS DEEP
SUSPICIONS OF ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS AND ADAMANTLY REJECTS THE
PLO. FOR ITS PART, THE PLO APPEARS WEAKENED AND DISORGANIZED.
THE WEST BANKERS AND GAZANS SUPPORT THE PLO BUT HAVE
NO EFFECTIVE WAY OF PARTICIPATING IN THE POLITICAL LIFE
OF THE REGION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IF ISRAEL CAN
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BE INDUCED TO RUN SOME RISKS IN THE PURSUIT OF PEACE
AND IF "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS" CAN BE MET SUFFICIENTLY
THROUGH THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN ENTITY ON THE WEST BANK/
EAST JERUSALEM AND GAZA, A REAL POSSIBILITY FOR PEACE EXISTS.
THE COMPLICATED AND INTERRELATED PROBLEMS OF PEACE,
WITHDRAWAL, SECURITY, A PALESTINIAN ENTITY, AND THE FUTURE
OF THE PLO, WHILE TRULY FORMIDABLE, DO NOT APPEAR.
INHERENTLY INSOLUBLE END SUMMARY.


2. ISRAEL HAS CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED THAT IT WILL NOT ACCEPT AN INDEPENDENT STATE BETWEEN ITSELF AND JORDAN AND HAS ASSERTED THAT "THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM" MUST BE SOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. (PREASSUMABLY THIS MEANS THAT ISRAEL WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH HUSSEIN OVER THE WEST BANK, THAT THE PLO AS SUCH WOULD BE EXCLUDED AND THAT OTHER, "GOOD", PALESTINIANS FROM THE WEST BANK ACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL AND HUSSEIN COULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.) THIS IMPLIES A RETURN OF THE WEST BANK TO JORDAN OR A LESS-THAN-INDEPENDENT SECRET PALESTINIAN ENTITY LINKED TO JORDAN UNDER EFFECTIVE GUARANTEES ASSURING DEMILITARIZATION AND NON-INDEPENDENCE. SADAT, ASSAD AND HUSSEIN HAVE ALL SPOKEN OF A POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN A PALESTINIAN ENTITY AND JORDAN. WEST BANKERS ASSERT THAT SUCH A LINK COULD BE ESTABLISHED ONLY AFTER AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE HAD BEEN CREATED AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN PALESTINE AND JORDAN WOULD BE ON THE BASIS OF FORMAL EQUALITY. FAHMY, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS HINTED THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF ISRAEL FOR SECURITY AND THE PALESTINIANS FOR LEGITIMACY MIGHT BE MET BY THE SIMULTANEOUS ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENTITY AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH JORDAN. TO THE CONSTERNATION OF ITS SUPPORTERS ON THE WEST BANK, THE PLO'S REACTION TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAS BEEN TO START A DIALOGUE WITH HUSSEIN.
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3. EVEN IF THE PNC WERE TO REVISE THE CONVENENT TO THE EXTENT OF STATING THE PLO'S READINESS TO ACCEPT ISRAEL WITHIN ITS 1967 BORDERS IN EXCHANGE FOR PEACE, MOST FOREIGN OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE IT IS INCONCEIVABLE ANY ISRAELI LEADER COULD ACCEPT A PALESTINIAN ENTITY (EVEN ONE LINKED TO JORDAN) WITH ARAFAT AT THE HEAD OF IT. IF ARAFAT AND OTHER PLO LEADERS PUBLICLY ASSOCIATED WITH TERRORISM COULD BE EASED ASIDE, A PURGED PLO LEADERSHIP ACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL AS PART OF JORDAN'S DELEGATION MIGHT BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS ALONG WITH PALESTINIANS FROM THE WEST BANK. WHILE UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES ISRAEL MIGHT BE PERSUADED IT IS IN ITS INTEREST TO WITHDRAW FROM MOST OF THE WEST BANK, ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH A TRAUMATIC STEP COULD NOT INCLUDE THE ACCEPTANCE OF AN ARAFAT TOO.

4. A MAJORITY OF WEST BANKERS SUPPORT THE PLO AND ITS PRESENT LEADERSHIP. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE WEST BANK MAYORS ELECTED IN THE SPRING OF 1976 AS WELL AS IN THEIR FEBRUARY 10 LETTER TO WALDHEIM. THIS SITUATION IS NOT TO BE THE LIKING OF EITHER SECRET

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1967. WHO FAVOR A RETURN TO HASHEMITE RULE. EVEN THOUGH A
MAJORITY OF WEST BANKERS ARE ANTIPATHETIC TO SUCH A DEVELOPMENT,
THIS SITUATION COULD CHANGE IF THEY WERE TO BE CONFRONTED WITH
THE CHOICE OF INDEFINITE ISRAELI OCCUPATION OR BECOMING PART
OF JORDAN.

5. AS TO WITHDRAWAL, A MAJORITY OF WEST BANKERS SUPPORT THE
POSITION OF THE CONFRONTATION STATES OF WITHDRAWAL TO THE
1967 LINES. THIS IS BASED IN PART ON A REALIZATION THAT ISRAEL
IS NOT GOING TO DISAPPEAR AND IN PART ON FRUSTRATIONS OF
9 1/2 YEARS OF OCCUPATION. EFFORTS BY THE PRO-PLO MAYOR
OF RAMALLAH TO REDUCE THIS POSITION INTO WRITING HAS RUN INTO
DIFFICULTIES. IN THE FEBRUARY 10 LETTER TO WALDHEIM THE
WEST BANK MAYORS CALLED FOR "IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN RESOLUTIONS
CALLING FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION FORCES FROM
OUR HOME LAND AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NUCLEUS OF AN
INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON THIS LAND AND IN THIS
COUNTRY".

6. THE HEART OF THE TERRITORIAL PROBLEM IS, OF COURSE, EAST
JERUSALEM. WEST BANKERS OF ALL POLITICAL PERSUASIONS MAINTAIN
THAT THERE MUST BE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 LINES BUT STOP
SHORT OF DEMANDING THAT THE CITY BE REDIVIDED PHYSICALLY. THERE
WILL HERE, AS ELSEWHERE, HAVE TO BE TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS.
IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT A COMPROMISE COULD BE FOUND IN A
BOROUGH SYSTEM WHICH WOULD RESULT IN EAST JERUSALEM (EXCLUSIVE
OF ZION GATE, THE JEWISH QUARTERS AND THE WESTERN WALL) UNDER
ARAB CONTROL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT. HERE,
SOME FORM OF JOINT SOVEREIGNTY MIGHT BE DEvised WHICH WOULD,
IN EFFECT, PERPETUATE THE STATUS QUO IN REGARD TO THIS AREA.
INTERNATIONALIZATION APPEARS UNACCEPTABLE. THE LARGE ISRAELI
HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS BUILT IN EAST JERUSALEM SINCE 1967 WOULD
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7. AGREEMENT ON JERUSALEM COULD BE ACHIEVED (IF AT ALL) ONLY
WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY PROVIDED EVERYTHING ELSE IN A PEACE AGREEMENT
HAD ALREADY BEEN AGREED UPON AND THE ENTIRE PACKAGE DEPENDED
ON THE RESOLUTION OF THIS FINAL POINT. BECAUSE ISRAEL MAINTAINS
THAT JERUSALEM IS NOT NEGOTIABLE, THE NEGOTIATING FRAME-
WORK AND AGENDA SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH SO THAT IT EVENTUALLY
COULD BE INCLUDED BUT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE
SPECIFICALLY TO TRY TO INCLUDE JERUSALEM AT THE OUTSET.

8. ON THE WEST BANK, THE ARABS WILL INSIST ON PULLBACK TO THE
1967 LINES WITH MINOR RECTIFICATIONS. ONE OF THE MAJOR
TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS WOULD PRESUMABLY OCCUR IN THE REGION
OF THE ETZION BLOC, SOUTH OF BETHLEHEM, WHICH EVEN ISRAELI
DOVES AND PRIME MINISTER RABIN MAINTAIN MUST BE A PART OF
ISRAEL IN A SETTLEMENT. (RABIN MADE A SIMILAR STATEMENT
ABOUT RAFAH IN THE SOUTH GAZA STRIP.)

9. THE HARDER AND MORE INTRACTABLE PROBLEM IS THAT OF THE
30-ODD ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE WEST BANK. REMOVAL OF SETTLEMENTS
SUCH AS KIRYAT ARBA NEAR HEBRON AND QADOM NEAR NABLUS WOULD
PROVOKE GREAT OPPOSITION ON THE PART OF ULTRA-RELIGIOUS
ELEMENTS. WEST BANKERS INSISTS THAT ALL ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS
ESTABLISHED SINCE 1967 WOULD HAVE TO BE EVACUATED SINCE
PALESTINIANS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN
PRE-1949 ISRAEL. INDEED, AS LONG AS ONE JEWISH SETTLEMENTS
WERE TO REMAIN THERE WOULD BE THE CONSTANT DANGER OF A
HEBRON-STYLE MASSACRE BY REJECTIONIST ELEMENTS BEN ON FRUSTRATING
THE AGREEMENT.

10. ANOTHER DIFFICULT PROBLEM WOULD BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A LAND CORRIDOR LINKING GAZA AND THE WEST BANK. WHILE ISRAEL
MIGHT BE PREPARED TO PERMIT TRANSIT OVER A SPECIFIED ROUTE,
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IT IS HARD TO ENVISAGE ISRAEL AGREETING TO A LAND CORRIDOR
ACROSS PRE-1967 ISRAEL WHICH WOULD BE UNDER ARAB CONTROL.
(OBVIOUSLY, THE VULNERABILITY OF SUCH A LINK TO ISRAELI
DISRUPTION WOULD BE ONE OF THE GUARANTEES THAT THE ENTITY
WOULD LIVE UP TO THE TERMS OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT.)

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P 101635Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8705
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

Margaret P. Grafeld  Declassified/Released  US Department of State  EO Systematic Review  22 May 2009
11. ON THE QUESTION OF VIABILITY, THE ANSWER IS HEAVILY
DEPENDENT UPON WHAT KIND OF PALESTINIAN ENTITY IS SET UP
AND ITS RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, JORDAN AND THE ARAB WORLD.
AMONG THE ISSUES WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE SOLVED ARE: PALESTINIAN
DAY LABOR IN ISRAEL; A LARGE NUMBER OF WEST BANK/GAZA
PALESTINIANS NOW LIVING IN UNRWA CAMPS; AND HOW MANY OF THE
1,400,000 PALESTINIANS LIVING ON THE EAST BANK, SYRIA AND
LEBANON WOULD SEEK TO MIGRATE TO THE NEW ENTITY.

12. SECURITY

WITH OR WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT, ISRAEL’S SECURITY FOR THE NEXT
FEW YEARS WILL PRESUMABLY BE ITS OVERALL TECHNOLOGICAL
SUPERIORITY IN RELATION TO ANY COMBINATION OF ITS NEIGHBORS.
ALTHOUGH A WEST BANK ENTITY IS REGULARLY CHARACTERIZED AS
"A DAGGER" AT ISRAEL’S HEART, THIS PROBLEM COULD BE MET BY
GUARANTEED DEMILITARIZATION. IN THE EVENT OF A PEACE AGREEMENT,
ARABS AS WELL AS OTHER STATES WOULD HAVE POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION
FOR CRACKING DOWN ON REJECTIONIST AND TERRORISTS. WERE THE
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AGREEMENT TO BE VIOLATED, ISRAEL WOULD HAVE THE MILITARY
CAPABILITY OF TAKING APPROPRIATE REMEDIAL ACTION. IT IS
DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE THE ARABS ACCEPTING THE ALLON PLAN OR
A VARIATION OF IT WHEREBY SIZEABLE ISRAELI UNITS WOULD REMAIN
IN THE JORDAN VALLEY AFTER THE SIGNATURE OF AN AGREEMENT.

13. CONCLUSION

IN SUM, THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PEACE, WITHDRAWAL,
SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BORDERS, SECURITY AND PALESTINIAN INTERESTS
(INCLUDING VIABILITY OF A PALESTINIAN ENTITY) DO NOT APPEAR
TO BE INHERENTLY INSOLUBLE. IN ACTUAL PRACTICE, THEY MAY WELL
TURN OUT TO BE MORE THAN THE COMBINED POLITICAL WILL OF
OVERCOME. HOWEVER, THIS IS NO REASON NOT TO MAKE A CONCERTED,
EVEN HEROIC, EFFORT TO OVERCOME THEM. IF A SOLUTION IS NOT
FOUND, THEN THE FUTURE HOLDS SUFFERING AND GREAT DANGER
FOR ISRAEL, THE ARABS, AND THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES, FIRST
AND FOREMOST THE U.S. NEWLIN

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