

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /160 W

----- 050122

R 031445Z DEC 73 ZDK 3401104Z

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5449

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

EO 11652:N/A, DECONTROL 12/3/74

TAGS: PINS, XF

SUBJECT: INCREASE IN PUBLIC CAUTION EXERCISED BY FEDAYEEN
LEADERSHIP

REF: BEIRUT 13576 (NOTAL)

1. WE HAVE LEARNED FROM RELIABLE SOURCES WHY FATAH'S
SALAH KHALAF, IN DELIVERING HIS LONG SPEECH HERE
NOV 27 (PARAS 3 AND 4 REFTTEL), WAS SO CAREFUL TO
BLEND INTO IT CURIOUS MIXTURE OF INTRANSIGENT,
DOCTRINAIRE BOMBAST TYPICAL OF FEDAYEEN "REVOLUTIONARY"
JARGON (E.G., REFERENCES TO NEED FOR LONG-TERM POPULAR

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LIBERATION WAR; TOTAL LIBERATION OF PALESTINE;

REJECTION OF KING HUSSEIN; SOLIDARITY AMONG PALESTINIAN "MASSES"; ETC.) AND ELEMENTS OF RATHER STARTLING PRAGMATISM (E.G., DESIRABILITY OF ACCEPTING GOVT-IN-EXILE AND EVEN ME SETTLEMENT BASED ON SC RES 242 AS PARTIAL, "TACTICAL" GAIN FOR FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT; WISDOM OF PLAYING ALONG WITH ARAB GOVTS AND SOVS IN SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT; AND CALL FOR RECOGNITION OF "NEW REALITIES" IN FORMULATING FEDAYEEN POLICY RE FORTHCOMING PEACE CONFERENCE). ON ENTERING AUDITORIUM AT BEIRUT'S ARAB UNIVERSITY NOV 27, KHALAF FOUND IT PACKED WITH OVER 1,000 FEDAYEEN DIE-HARDS (MANY OF THEM FROM HIS OWN ORGANIZATION) WHO BOOED HIM ROUNDLY WHEN HE ROSE TO SPEAK. AS RESULT, HE NILT OBLIGED TO BEGIN HIS REMARKS WITH CUSTOMARY PALESTINIAN SLOGANS OUT OF DUE REGARD FOR HIS OWN SAFETY. IT WAS ONLY AFTER SOME 400 LOYAL FATAH MEMBERS HAD BEEN RUSHED TO SCENE THAT HE ENDED UPEECH WITH CAUTIOUS, ALBEIT UNMISTAKABLE, PIRTCH FOR EXERCISE OF "REALISM" AND RESTRAINT BY PALESTINIANS AT PRESENT "DELICATE PERIOD IN ME AFFAIRS.

2. IN PAST WEEK WE HAVE NOTICED SIMILAR CAUTION DISPLAYED BY "ARAFAT AND CO. IN THEIR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS. 'ARAFAT, FOR EXAMPLE, IN PRESS CONFERENCE REPORTED BY AFP FROM LIBYA DEC 3, COUPLED HIS ASSERTION THAT FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT "HAS ACCEPTED CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE" WITH PROMISE THAT "ARMED STRUGGLE" AGAINST ISRAEL "WILL CONTINUE UNTIL LIBERATION", REASSURANCE THAT "WE HAVE NOT BEEN FORMALLY NOTIFIED OF ANY SO-CALLED PEACE CONFERENCE", AND DENIGRATION OF KING HUSSEIN'S RIGHT "TO INTERFERE IN AFFAIRS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE". SALAH KHALAF, IN ANOTHER SPEECH DELIVERED HERE DEC. 2 -- FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF VIOLENT DIATRIBE AGAINST "SEAKLINGS" IN PLO LEADERSHIP BY LOCAL PFLP WEEKLY (BEIRUT 13684) -- STUCK CLOSELY TO STANDARD FEDAYEEN PHRASEOLOGY, INVEIGHING AGAINST "CAPITULATIONIST" ARAB REGIMES AND SHOUTING: "WHO DARES SAY WE WANT RECOGNIZE ISRAEL OR SACRIFICE OUR SACRED CAUSE ON NEGOTIATING TABLE?" SA'IQA'S ZOHAYR MUHSEN, IN RECENT INTERVIEW PUBLISHED BY PRO-SYRIAN PAPER HERE, ADMITTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT "LARGE MAJORITY OF FEDAYEEN ARE OPPOSED TO CREATION OF PALESTINIAN GOVT-IN-EXILE". ADDED IT IS NOT EASY FOR PLO LEADERSHIP TO MAKE UP ITS MIND RE ATTENDANCE AT FORTHCOMING PEACE CONFERENCE, SINCE "IT VERY HARD TO PERSUADE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN THEIR LEGITIMATE HISTORICAL RIGHTS AS EXPRESSED IN UN RESOLUTIONS".

3. COMMENT: WE EXPECT 'ARAFAT AND OTHER FATAH AND SA'IQA LEADERS, AWARE OF RANK-AND-FILE DISCONTENT AND OPPOSITION OF PFLP, WILL BE VERY CAREFUL IN THEIR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS IN DAYS AHEAD. THIS ALL MORE TRUE SINCE PRESENT TENSION IN AREA, THREATS OF RESUMED FIGHTING, AND UNCERTAINTY OVER PEACE CONFERENCE MAKE FEDAYEEN LEADERS DUBIOUS THAT THERE WILL BE EVEN A WEST BANK/GAZA PALESTINIAN ENTITY WAITING FOR THEM AT END OF LONG, DANGEROUS ROAD. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT FATAH AND SA'IQA AND MANY OTHER LEADERS REMAIN PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN PEACE TALKS AND SETTLE FOR RUMP PALESTINIAN ENTITY. WE ALSO BELIEVE THEY WILL QUIETLY CONTINUE CAUTIOUS EFFORTS TO RALLY SUPPORT FOR THEIR VIEWS RATHER THAN ABANDON FIELD COMPLETELY TO HARD-LINERS. EVEN SALAH KHALAF HAS TOLD RELIABLE SOURCE IN PRIVATE THAT HE STILL COMMITTED TO SETTLEMENT EFFORTS AND WOULD NOT BE AVERSE TO SOME SORT OF AGREEMENT WITH KING HUSSEIN -- NO MATTER WHAT LINE KHALAF MAY TAKE IN PUBLIC.
BUFFUM

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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