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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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SUBJECT: (U) US-Moroccan Relations Next Steps

(S) King Hassan was surprised at the overwhelmingly negative US reaction to the Oujda Treaty and has appealed to us to help him out of his dilemma. The following thoughts, in conjunction with Joe Reed's message, should be helpful as we deliberate the future of US-Moroccan relations in the aftermath of the Treaty.

(S) State's informal legal assessment is that, despite the Treaty, we still are dealing with two countries, Morocco and Libya, and, hence, there are no direct legal consequences of the agreement (i.e., third country transfer prohibitions continue to be operative). However, there is strong interagency concern that King Hassan has not been forthcoming in his explanation of various provisions of the Treaty, that information on possible secret codicils has been withheld, and that the King has not been truthful with us on the treatment of the Libyan dissident returned to Libya.

(S) Given our close, historic ties and significant interests in Morocco, we believe it is important to give King Hassan the benefit of the doubt. However, we also must get some straight-forward answers and make clear that our position has not changed on Qadhafi and his policies of terrorism and subversion.

(S) Significant, highly visible actions taken against Morocco to signal our displeasure (e.g., immediate cancellation of visits or exercises, etc.) would disrupt US-Moroccan relations, jeopardize US military programs in Morocco -- including US access/transit rights -- and force King Hassan into more radical positions on the Middle East. Such actions would be exploited by Qadhafi and those in Morocco who desire to destroy US-Moroccan relations as evidence that the US is unreliable and unwilling to keep security commitments.

(S) Thus, we should avoid public positions that visibly force King Hassan to put distance between the US and Morocco. Although we may want to adopt a more reserved profile, as Joe Reed suggests, we should not stop visits, cancel exercises, or visibly decrease US-Moroccan cooperation in military and economic fields.

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487 Instead, we should set out markers that offer King Hassan ways to restore US confidence in Morocco and the means to back away from the agreement with Libya. This could be done in a high level demarche to the King to:

-- Inform him that, while we will continue relations on all levels, we are aware of Moroccan deception in handing over Libyan dissidents to Libya. Such deception cannot continue if US-Moroccan relations are to proceed.

-- Ask King Hassan directly if there are secret codicils to the treaty, while stating that further surprises could destroy US-Moroccan relations.

-- Obtain King Hassan's written secret agreement that Libyan military/intelligence officers will not be based in Morocco.



OSD 3.3(b)(6)

487 Following the above plan of action will allow us to protect US interests in the short-term until full implications of the Moroccan-Libyan agreement become clear. To that end, we should seek a candid explanation from King Hassan about his comment that the union will last "one or two months" at the most and what tangible gains he expects.

487 If the Treaty is an aberrant, short-term tactical maneuver, we will be able to take advantage of the opportunities it presents to modify Qadhafi's behavior (Libyan forces out of Chad; possible reduction of immediate Libyan threat to Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia; possible reduction of Libyan terrorist/subversion activities). There is the possibility that we might obtain some gain for Egypt out of the entire affair. We might urge King Hassan II to restore formally ties with Egypt as a signal to all (including Qadhafi). Although Hassan would probably consult with the Saudis, we might be helpful. If the Treaty has a longer life than we expect, we can revise our policy as necessary.

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