Canonical ID: 1973THEHA05612_b
Subject: PRICE BERNHARD'S PROPOSAL FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE IN THE SINAI
From: Netherlands The Hague
To: Secretary of State, United Nations (Geneva)
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Previous Handling Restrictions: -- N/A or Blank --
Archive Status: Electronic Telegrams
Type: TE
Locator: TEXT ONLINE
Reference(s): n/a
Executive Order (E.O.): -- N/A or Blank --
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO
Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005
Enclosure: -- N/A or Blank --
Concepts: -- N/A OR BLANK --
TAGS: Middle East [XF]
Netherlands [NL]
Social Affairs--Environment [SENV]
Office: -- N/A or Blank --
Document Character Count: 2387
Date: 1973 December 21, 14:59 (Friday)

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R 211459Z DEC 73
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FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV, NL, XF
SUBJ: PRICE BERNHARD'S PROPOSAL FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE
IN THE SINAI

1. PRINCE BERNHARD, FULLY AWARE THAT FOLLOWING CONCEPT IS AT BEST A LONG SHOT, ASKED NONETHELESS THAT IT BE PASSED TO THE SECRETARY.

2. LAST SEPTEMBER PRINCE BERNHARD PROPOSED TO DEPARTING EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORLD PARK AND NATURE PRESERVE IN THE SINAI UNDER AUSPICES OF WORLD WILDLIFE FUND WHICH HE HEADS. THE OBJECTIVE WAS TWOFOLD: FIRST TO RELIEVE TENSIONS IN THE AREA, AND SECOND TO PRESERVE RARE DESERT FLORA AND FAUNA AND UNUSUAL SEALIFE IN ADJACENT COASTAL WATERS. WORLD WILDLIFE FUND HAS ALREADY DONE TECHNICAL STUDIES SUPPORTING THE ECOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR SUCH A PARK IN THE SINAI. FINANCING FOR ITS ESTABLISHMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE THROUGH THE FUND.

3. BERNHARD TOLD EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR THAT IF SADAT LIKED THE CONCEPT HE WAS WELCOME TO TREAT IT AS ORIGINATING IN EGYPT AND TO PROPOSE IT AS AN EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE. BERNHARD SAYS THE AMBASSADOR HAD REACTED FAVORABLY, INDICATING HE WOULD TRANSMIT THE SUGGESTION TO PRESIDEN SADAT, BUT BERNHARD HAS NO KNOWLEDGE AS TO WHETHER IT WAS IN FACT TRANSMITTED AND IF IT WAS AS TO WHAT REACTION ENSUED.

4. IT ACCURS TO ME THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORLD PARK AND WILDLIFE RESERVATION COULD CONCEIVABLY BE INCORPORATED INTO OR IN CONNECTION WITH A DEMILITARIZED ZONE. OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES WOULD FLOW FROM HAVING A GENUINE AND ENORMOUSLY IMPORTANT NON-HUMAN REASON FOR MINIMIZING HUMAN ACTIVITY IN THE AREA, AND FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ECOLOGICALLY-OrientED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND. IT WOULD ALSO SERVE AS A FACE-SAVING DEVICE FOR ANY COUNTRY WHICH MUST YIELD SOVEREIGNTY TO A DEMILITARIZED AREA.

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier: n/a
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date: n/a
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRICE BERNHARD'S PROPOSAL FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE IN THE SINAI
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