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CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 021100Z  
FM JEDDAH 020933Z JUN  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 428 OF 2ND JUNE 1980.

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PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T114A/80

*Read i full.*

*Subject on Saudi Arabia Nov 79  
Saudi / Uk Relations*

ANGLO-SAUDI RELATIONS

1. I WAS SUMMONED TO THE ROYAL DIWAN ON 1 JUNE TO COLLECT PRINCE FAHD'S REPLY TO MRS THATCHER'S LETTER. I AM SENDING THE ORIGINAL BY TODAY'S BAG, UNDER COVER OF A LETTER TO SEGAR IN MED. THE FOLLOWING IS OUR TRANSLATION:

"I WAS MOST GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE YOUR COURTEOUS LETTER DATED 28 APRIL 1980 AND APPRECIATED THE GENEROUS SPIRIT AND NOBLE SENTIMENTS IT CONTAINED, PARTICULARLY THE REGRET YOU EXPRESSED AT THE TELEVISION STATION ITV'S SHOWING OF THE FILM "DEATH OF A PRINCESS" AND AT THE COMPLICATIONS WHICH RESULTED THEREFROM.

ALTHOUGH WE WERE ALL CONVINCED THAT THE FILM REFERRED TO CONTAINED A DISTORTION OF FACTS, CHEAP INTRIGUE AND DECEPTION OF PUBLIC OPINION IN YOUR FRIENDLY COUNTRY, IT WAS SHOWN, WHICH HARMED A COUNTRY WITH A DEEP-ROOTED FRIENDSHIP FOR BRITAIN AND INJURE THE FEELINGS OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF MUSLIMS LIVING THERE AND ABROAD.

ON THIS OCCASION, I SHOULD LIKE TO DISCLOSE TO YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT THE ISSUE IS NOT CONFINED TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS FILM ALONE. WE HAVE BEEN AWARE FOR SOME TIME OF THE EXISTENCE OF A CONTINUOUS INFORMATION CAMPAIGN WHICH AIMS AT HARMING THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AS A STRUCTURE, A GOVERNMENT AND A PEOPLE, USING BRITAIN AS ONE OF ITS MAIN BASES. IN SPITE OF OUR APPRECIATION OF THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN YOUR COUNTRY, WE HAD HOPED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD FACE UP TO THE MATTER WITH ITS WELL-KNOWN WISDOM AND VISION IN DEALING WITH MATTERS WITHOUT OBSTRUCTING FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND ABOVE ALL NOT ALLOW THIS FREEDOM TO HARM A FRIENDLY COUNTRY, ITS PEOPLE AND ITS RULING FAMILY OR PARTICULARLY TO OPPOSE THE ISLAMIC FAITH.

I REMEMBER WITH APPRECIATION THE EXCELLENT EFFORTS OF SOME FRIENDLY STATES WHICH OPERATE FREEDOM TO EXPRESS OPINION, TO PREVENT THE SHOWING OF THIS CHEAP PROPAGANDA FILM IN THEIR COUNTRIES. WE FEEL THAT EVERY GOVERNMENT HAS SALUTARY WAYS AND MEANS TO DEAL WITH MATTERS OF THIS SORT, AND TO PREVENT THEM HAPPENING, WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK IN USE IN THEIR COUNTRY. WE IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA HAD LOOKED TO YOUR COUNTRY TO BE OF ALL FRIENDLY STATES THE MOST INTENT ON THE WELL-BEING OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE MOST TENACIOUS OF THEIR CONTINUATION, AND HAD LOOKED TO ITS GOVERNMENT TO EXERT PRAISEWORTHY EFFORTS TO PREVENT THE SHOWING OF THAT FILM IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE, OR TO APOLOGISE CLEARLY.

/DESPITE THIS

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DESPITE THIS FRIENDLY REBUKE OF MINE, I EXPRESS TO YOUR EXCELLENCY MY ABUNDANT THANKS AND GRATITUDE FOR YOUR FRIENDLY INITIATIVE AND CONCERN TO DO ALL THAT SERVES TO RESTORE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES TO WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE. I HOPE SINCERELY THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TOGETHER TO REMOVE THE BLEMISHES WHICH HAVE OVERTAKEN THESE RELATIONS AND WHICH I HOPE WILL BE TEMPORARY.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE WHAT YOU SAID IN YOUR LETTER ABOUT PUTTING AN END TO MISUNDERSTANDING AND REBUILDING THE FRIENDSHIP EXISTING BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND BRITAIN, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO OPEN A DIALOGUE BETWEEN OUR TWO MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO ATTAIN THIS GOAL.

BEFORE ENDING THIS LETTER I SHALL NOT NEGLECT TO PRAISE THE EXCELLENT ATTITUDES WHICH APPEARED IN THE DISAPPROVAL BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT OF THE SHOWING OF THAT FILM AND IN THE LETTERS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM INDIVIDUALS OF THE FRIENDLY BRITISH PEOPLE ALL OF WHICH EXPRESSED THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF IT AND ITS SHOWING.

I APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENTS OF THEM ALL AND WISH YOUR EXCELLENCY ABUNDANT HEALTH AND PERPETUAL PROSPERITY AND WELL-BEING''.

2. CURIOUSLY, THE LETTER, WHICH IS SIGNED BY FAHD, IS DATED 27 MAY I.E. TWO DAYS AFTER HE LEFT ON HIS CURENT TRIP TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. BUT PERHAPS THEY HAVE A BAG SERVICE.

3. PLEASE SEE MIFT.

GRAY

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