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Dep.

Subject copy

Libya : UK/Libya  
Relations - July 79



Final

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

26 April 1980

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. TA4A/80

I have asked Sir Antony Acland, who is one of our most trusted colleagues, to bring you a personal message to emphasise the importance I attach to relations between our two countries. We have many common interests, which could benefit from closer cooperation and increased exchanges.

The British Government share the wish of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to maintain and develop these relations. My colleagues and I are convinced that this is in our interests and yours. I was delighted to hear that our Ambassador was told recently by Major Jaloud that the Jamahiriya looks forward to a period of constructive development of Anglo/Libyan relations. We ourselves look forward to discussing practical measures which will make this hope a reality.

We have, for example, been studying the problems, raised for us by the establishment of the People's Bureau as representative of the Jamahiriya in London. I am glad to say that we find no objection in principle to the form adopted by the People's Bureau and we can see our way towards a satisfactory solution of the legal and other problems which we have been discussing with your representatives.

However, a problem has arisen in our relations which is causing us grave concern, and about which I thought I should write to you at once. You have expressed to us your concern about the presence in Britain of Libyans whose political activities you regard as unacceptable, and you have asked that they should be removed from Britain. I should like to explain to you how we see the position.

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My country has a long tradition of offering hospitality to people from elsewhere regardless of their political opinions. All such visitors; like our own citizens, are bound by the law. For example, their political activities are limited by our law of libel and in other ways, but provided that they do nothing which is against the law, they are free.

As you know, there have recently been a number of incidents in London involving Libyan citizens, two of whom have been shot dead. Six persons are at present being held by the Police and two of these have been charged with murder and one with kidnapping. Unfortunately, evidence has also come to our attention that members of the People's Bureau in London have been associated with those who have been detained and have provided them with assistance. This is something which is not acceptable to us. On the other hand, because of the importance I attach to strengthening further the friendly relations between our countries, I do not wish to expel these persons as long as I have any alternative. I believe it would be in the interests of both our countries if you would withdraw them and the purpose of this letter is to ask you to do so within the next few days.

The persons concerned are:

Dr. Khalifa I. Azzabi

Musa M. Makhyoun

Othman Saud

all members of the People's Bureau; and also:

Dr. Faraj Ihtiwaish

who is associated with the Bureau and has been involved in the same activities.

In addition, I must ask that the members of the People's Bureau should be given strict instructions that all illegal activities in Britain will cease from today. Should there be further incidents of this kind, we shall have to take immediate action ourselves.

Sir Antony Acland will be able to give you some clear examples of the criminal activities which have compelled me to write this letter.

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I should like to repeat that it is the firm belief of myself and my colleagues that, once these obstacles have been removed, Anglo/Libyan relations can continue to develop to the great benefit of the two countries.

Colonel Mu'ammarr Muhammad al Qadhafi

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