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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 21/83

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Subject on Yemen, 21 February, 1983
Jan '80, Internal Situation

*Y
Your Excellency.*

Your personal letter to me about the devastating earthquake in North Yemen in December was delivered by your Minister for Economic Development when he saw the Foreign Secretary on 15 February. In addition to meeting Mr. Pym your Minister also saw Mr. Douglas Hurd and Mr. Timothy Raison, who is our Minister for Overseas Development. At these meetings Mr. Mohammed explained in more detail the consequences for your government of the devastation caused by the earthquake.

Her Majesty's Government express their very great sympathy to your Government and people in the disaster which befell the Yemen Arab Republic last December. We were deeply distressed to learn of the loss of life and the homelessness and injury which resulted, and I send you my sincere sympathy to those who have been bereaved or who have lost their homes.

It is clear from your letter, and from the account we have received from your Minister, that your government has urgent and realistic plans for coping with the effects of the disaster. I am very glad that we were able to respond quickly with some emergency relief. I hope that we may be able to give some help in the future tasks of reconstruction and the restoration of normal economic life. Our present aid programme to North Yemen, which I know is greatly valued by both our governments, concentrates on technical co-operation, in economic activity and most particularly in agriculture; and I hope that by some redeployment of these resources, or perhaps some small addition to them, we may be able to contribute more directly to the relief of the

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consequences of the earthquake. Our officials in Sana'a and London are looking into this very urgently.

I am grateful to you for writing to me and I send you all my best wishes in your country's present difficulties.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Colonel Ali Abdullah Saleh