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ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NEA-06 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-09 L-03
PM-10 PA-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 PRS-01
DS-01 DSE-00 SCT-04 /051 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4636
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RIYADH IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1257
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK IMMEDIATE
HQ3AFRAF MILDENHALL UK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07809

E.O.12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PTER, LY, UK,
SUBJECT: LIBYA - MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS ALLEGED REQUEST
- FOR USE OF BRITISH AIR BASES

- 1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.
- 2. UK MEDIA COMMENTARY ON LIBYA OVER THE WEEKEND
FOCUSED ON SPECULATION THAT PRIME MINISTER THATCHER HAS
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DENIED AN ADMINISTRATION REQUEST TO USE F-111'S AT U.S.
BASES IN THE UK FOR ACTION AGAINST LIBYA. SPECULATION
ABOUT U.S. ACTIONS VIS A VIS LIBYA WHICH MIGHT INVOLVE
UK BASES WAS FUELED BY REPORTS FROM MILDENHALL AFB THAT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ROBERT O HOMME
DATE/CASE ID: 22 DEC 2009 200903792

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3. THE PRESS, TELEVISION TALK SHOWS, AND RADIO COMMENTARIES ALL HOTLY DEBATED PROSPECTIVE U.S. MILITARY ACTION. WHILE MANY OBSERVERS AGREED THAT QADHAFI HAS TO BE RECKONED WITH IN SOME WAY, MOST FELT MILITARY MOVES WOULD BE PROVOCATIVE AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, NOT TO MENTION DANGEROUS FOR BRITONS AND OTHER EUROPEANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION. THATCHER WAS BROADLY PRAISED BY OPPOSITION POLITICIANS AND OTHERS FOR ALLEGEDLY SAYING NO TO THE REPORTED AMERICAN REQUEST AND FOR URGING CAUTION UPON THE ADMINISTRATION. HOWEVER, THE MOST RESPECTED PAPERS (PRESUMABLY AFTER CHECKING WITH NUMBER 10 OR THE FCO) WERE CAREFUL NOT TO IMPLY THAT THATCHER HAD ADVISED THE USG AGAINST ANY MILITARY ACTION AT ALL.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WE HAVE HELD TO A VERY SPARSE PRESS LINE SINCE THE WALTERS VISIT, MERELY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE VISIT TOOK PLACE AND REFUSING TO CHARACTERIZE THE THATCHER MEETING BEYOND SAYING WE DISCUSSED MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. MORE NUANCED GUIDANCE WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US (AND OTHER POSTS) AS WE HEAD INTO WHAT IS BOUND TO BE A RELENTLESS WEEK ON THE PRESS SIDE.

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