

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

16

PS  
PS/MR HURD  
PS/PUS  
SIR J LEAHY  
MR EGERTON  
SIR J BULLARD  
HD/NENAD  
HD/MED  
HD/UND

NO 10 DOWNING STREET  
CABINET OFFICE D10

HD/... ..

HD/CONSULAR DEPT

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PUSD (2)  
NEWS D  
~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

IMMEDIATE

MF

GRS 180  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM JEDDA 291105Z NOV 82  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 562 OF 29 NOV  
INFO PRIORITY RABAT, TUNIS, WASHINGTON, RIYADH

MY TELNO 561: ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION.

1. COVERAGE OF THE ISSUE IN TODAY'S (29 NOVEMBER) PRESS IS GENERALLY HOSTILE.
2. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEGUN TO CALL FOR A REAPPRAISAL OF ARAB-BRITISH RELATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THIS EPISODE. THE MOST SPECIFIC IS A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL IN 'OKAZ' BY AZIZ DHIA', WHICH INTERPRETS THE BRITISH POSITION IN TERMS OF OUR LONGSTANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES; BUT POINTS OUT THAT BRITAIN HAS NOT FOLLOWED THE US LINE OVER E.G. THE SIBERIAN PIPELINE AND THE FALKLANDS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. IN VIEW OF BRITAIN'S HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PALESTINE, SHE SHOULD NOT FOLLOW THE US IN THIS CASE EITHER. THE ARTICLE ENDS BY SAYING THAT ON AN (UNSPECIFIED) PREVIOUS OCCASION, WHEN THE ARAB STATES REVIEWED THEIR CONTRACTS WITH BRITISH COMPANIES, MRS THATCHER 'WAS FORCED TO BACK DOWN AND APOLOGISE', AND SUGGESTING THAT THE ARABS SHOULD CONSIDER THE SAME TACTICS NOW.

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AND SUGGESTING THAT THE ARABS SHOULD CONSIDER THE SAME TACTICS NOW.

3. COMMENT. DHIA' MUST HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO THE DEATH OF A PRINCESS EPISODE. ALTHOUGH HE IS SAID TO BE CLOSE TO KING FAHD, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THIS IS ANYTHING BUT A PRIVATE INITIATIVE.

4. IN OUR CONTACTS WITH THE LOCAL PRESS, WE ARE ADHERING TO THE LINE IN YOUR TELNO 860 TO RABAT.

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