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FM JEDDA 290815Z APR

TO IMMEDIATE FCO TELNO 347 OF 29 APR for PS
MYTELNO 332: TV FILM

1. MY PRINCELY FRIEND IS BACK FROM RIYADH AND CAME TO MY HOUSE
LAST NIGHT. HE IS ZAID AL-SUDAIRI WHOSE FATHER'S SISTER
WAS THE MOTHER OF FAHD, SULTAN AND THE REST OF THE "SUDAIRI
SEVEN". HE HAD SEEN SULTAN AND SOME OF HIS OWN BROTHERS
WHO ARE DEPUTY MINISTERS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS.

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2. HE WAS VERY DEPRESSED. AT THE CABINET MEETING WHICH
DECIDED TO TAKE MEASURES AGAINST US THE HAWKS HAD BEEN
LED BY PRINCE ABDULLAH, SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND COMMANDER
OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND PRINCE MIT'IB, MINISTER OF HOUSING
AND ACTING MINISTER OF MUNICIPALITIES. (THE KING HAD NOT BEEN
PRESENT: PRINCE MOHAMMED IS NOT OF COURSE A MINISTER). BOTH
BDULLAH AND MIT'IBAHAD BEEN EXTREMELY ANGRY AND HAD PRESSED
FOR THE STERNEST ACTION AGAINST US. SULTAN, THOUGH APPARENTLY
LESS ANGRY, HAD TAKEN THE LINE THAT IF THEY WERE GOING TO ACT
AGAINST US THEY HAD BETTER GO ALL THE WAY. PRINCE FAHD HAD NOT
BEEN IN FAVOUR OF EXTREME MEASURES BUT HAD BEEN UNWILLING TO
ACCEPT A SPLIT IN THE FAMILY. THE COMMONER MINISTERS HAD PREFERRED
TO STAY QUIET OR TO GO ALONG WITH THE PRINCES FOR THE SAKE OF
A QUIET LIFE.

3. ZAID SAID THAT ALMOST EVERYONE HE TALKED TO REALISED
THAT THEY HAD MADE A MISTAKE BUT THEY WERE NOT THINKING LOGICALLY.
THEY HAD NO IDEA WHAT THEY WANTED US TO DO: THE WATCHWORD
WAS THAT BRITIAN MUST 'PAY THE PRICE'. ZAID HAD POINTED OUT
TO SULTAN THAT HE COULD NOT RUN THE AIRFORCE WITHOUT THE BRITISH.
SULTAN HAD REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT CONTEMPLATING KICKING US
(IE BAC) OUT. BUT THERE WERE NO DOUBT CONTRACTS COMING UP FROM
WHICH WE COULD BE EXCLUDED.

4. ZAID DID NOT KNOW WHAT PRECISE MEASURES WERE CONTEMPLATED.
BUT WE HAVE HEARD FROM A BRITISH SOURCE IN THE ROYAL COMMISSION
FOR YANBU AND JUBAIL (PLEASE PROTECT) THAT ON 26 APRIL INSTRUCTIONS
WERE ISSUED TO REMOVE ALL BRITISH COMPANIES FROM THE LISTS OF
TENDERERS FOR ROYAL COMMISSION PROJECTS. WE ARE TRYING TO GET
CONFIRMATION OF THIS BUT I FEAR IT IS TRUE.

5. I HOPE TO TELEGRAPH BEFORE MY DEPARTURE A SUMMARY OF THE
SITUATION AS WE SEE IT AND SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT WAHT WE CAN DO.
BUT AT THE MOMENT THOSE THOUGHTS ARE LIKELY TO BE PRETTY BARREN.

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