

GRS 280

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FM RIYADH

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELNO 105

OF 030650Z FEBRUARY 86

INFO ROUTINE MIDDLE EAST POSTS, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

mf

YOUR TELNO 80 (NOT TO ALL) : ARAB/ISRAEL

1. I CALLED ON KING FAHD IN RIYADH ON 2 FEBRUARY AND DELIVERED THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER, PRINCE SAUD, WAS ALSO PRESENT.

2. AS IS NORMAL, THE KING DID NOT READ THE MESSAGE IN MY PRESENCE, AND I THEREFORE SUMMARISED ITS CONTENTS. AFTER THE KING HAD SPOKEN WARMLY OF THE PRIME MINISTER, AND ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS BEST WISHES TO HER, HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO A MONOLOGUE FOR NEARLY AN HOUR (RECORDED IN MY LETTER OF 3 FEBRUARY TO DAY, MED), WHICH RANGED FROM THE ARAB/ISRAEL QUESTION, THE HISTORY OF EGYPTIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE YEMEN, THE UNWISDOM OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS LIBYA, THE ISRAELI ATTACK AGAINST TUNIS, AND OTHER SUBJECTS. I AM REPORTING SEPARATELY HIS REMARKS ABOUT SOUTH YEMEN. THE KING ALSO REFERRED APPRECIATIVELY TO THE IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST TORNADOES FOR SAUDI ARABIA.

3. ON ARAB/ISRAEL, THE KING SPOKE IN FAMILIAR TERMS ABOUT THE URGENT NEED FOR PROGRESS, IF ARAB DESPAIR WAS NOT TO LEAD TO THE RADICALISATION AND COMMUNISATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST. HE DESCRIBED SAUDI ARABIA'S POSITION AS SUPPORTING KING HUSSEIN AND THE PALESTINIANS, AND SAID THAT HE WOULD BE READY TO GO ALONG WITH ANY PROPOSALS WHICH THEY WERE ABLE TO WORK OUT TOGETHER. THE ARAB POSITION WAS ALREADY ON OFFER IN THE SHAPE OF THE FEZ DECLARATION, AND HE URGED THAT THE UNITED STATES, BRITAIN, FRANCE AND OTHER EUROPEANS SHOULD PUT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL, WHILE THERE WAS STILL TIME, TO DECLARE HER READINESS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IN COMPARISON WITH SHAMIR, PERES SEEMED TO BE A REASONABLE MAN, AND THE PROBLEM NEEDED TO BE APPROACHED IN A LOGICAL WAY. AT PRESENT, ONLY LIBYA, PDRY AND SYRIA WERE CLOSE TO THE RUSSIANS, AND EVEN THE SYRIAN PEOPLE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THAT. IF THE ISRAELIS SHOWED THAT THEY WERE GENUINELY PREPARED TO WITHDRAW, THERE WAS NO REASON WHY THE ARABS AND THE JEWS SHOULD NOT LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE. THE ALTERNATIVE WAS THAT THE WEST'S POSITION, AND THEIR FRIENDS, IN THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BE DESTROYED AND THE WHOLE AREA DELIVERED OVER THE SOVIET INFLUENCE AND DOMINATION.

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4. RATHER SURPRISINGLY, THE KING MADE NO REFERENCE, EVEN IMPLICITLY, TO THE AL AQSA INCIDENT, OR TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE, EVEN THOUGH ALL SERMONS IN THE RIYADH MOSQUES ON 31 JANUARY WERE, ON HIS INSTRUCTIONS, DEDICATED TO THIS ISSUE.

WRIGHT

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NAD
SOVIET D
PLANNING STAFF
UND
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NEWS D
INFO D
PUSD
SED
SCD
DEFENCE D

PS
PS/MR RENTON
PS/PUS
MR FERGUSSON
MR DEREK THOMAS
MR GOODALL
SIR D MIERS
MR O'NEILL
MR RATFORD
MR LONG

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
ARAB/ISRAEL

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

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