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OF 091109Z SEPTEMBER 86

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY : PUBLIC REACTIONS

1. THERE ARE PLANS FOR PROTESTS DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT. THESE ARE PROMPTED BY OPPOSITION TO MRS THATCHER'S PERCEIVED POLICIES ON SOUTH AFRICA, BRITISH TRADE UNIONS AND NORTHERN IRELAND. THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF SOFT-CENTRED IGNORANCE ON ALL THESE ISSUES IN CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THIS COUNTRY.
2. IN TROMSO, ELEMENTS IN THE TOWN COUNCIL, THE UNIVERSITY AND LOCAL UNIONS REPORTEDLY INTEND TO STAGE A WORK STOPPAGE AND DEMONSTRATIONS. THIS HAS PROMPTED OTHERS TO MAKE PUBLIC THEIR SUPPORT FOR MRS THATCHER: IN PARTICULAR BUVIK, THE COUNTY MAYOR, HAS STATED IN A SUITABLY DIGNIFIED MANNER, IN A LETTER PUBLISHED IN TROMSO'S MAIN NEWSPAPER, THE NEED TO DISPLAY COURTESY TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF A COUNTRY WHOSE FRIENDSHIP EXTENDS BACK BEFORE THE LAST WAR.
3. IN OSLO A MEETING HAS BEEN ARRANGED IN THE UNIVERSITY AT WHICH SPEAKERS FROM SINN FEIN, THE ANC OFFICE IN STOCKHOLM AND NORWEGIAN TRADE UNIONS WILL ARGUE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD NOT BE MADE WELCOME HERE. THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN A PUBLIC REACTION AND MANY OF THE POSTERS ADVERTISING THE MEETING HAVE BEEN TORN DOWN. HALVORSEN, THE CHAIRMAN OF LO (TUC EQUIVALENT) HAS RESPONDED IN SIMILAR TERMS TO THE COUNTY MAYOR OF TROMS TO CRITICISM OF HIS ATTENDING THE PRIME MINISTER'S DINNER.
4. WE EXPECT THEREFORE THAT THERE WILL BE SOME DEMONSTRATIONS IN TROMSO BUT THAT THEY WILL BE PEACEFUL AND RESTRAINED AND WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PROGRAMME. THERE MAY ALSO BE MINOR DEMONSTRATIONS IN OSLO BUT WE EXPECT MRS THATCHER TO BE GIVEN A WARM WELCOME IN THE CAPITAL. THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES HAVE ASSURED US THAT THEY HAVE THE SITUATION WELL IN HAND, AND THAT THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

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5. ACID RAIN: THE NORWEGIAN PRESS HAVE PLAYED BACK STORIES IN BRITISH NEWSPAPERS ABOUT A CHANGE IN POLICY ON ACID RAIN INVOLVING FILTERING EQUIPMENT FOR POWER STATIONS. THIS HAS AROUSED A GENERAL EXPECTATION THAT MRS THATCHER WILL BE ABLE TO INFORM MRS BRUNDTLAND THAT NEW MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN: AND THE NORWEGIANS WILL BE CORRESPONDINGLY DISAPPOINTED IF THIS PROVES NOT TO BE THE CASE.

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