

PRIME MINISTER

PS TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET.

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 200
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FM JEDDA 090905Z DEC 82
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 589 OF 09 DEC

INFO SAVING RIYADH (ACTIONED)

ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION TO LONDON

1. I SPENT YESTERDAY IN RIYADH AND WAS ASSAILED ON ALL SIDES ON THIS SUBJECT. THERE IS NO DOUBT OF THE UNANIMITY OF SAUDI FEELINGS. I HAVE SEEN NOTHING LIKE IT SINCE THE AFFAIR OF THE TV FILM IN 1980.
2. ON THE OTHER HAND NOBODY MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMERCIAL MEASURES AGAINST US. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN THE STATEMENT BY THE SAUDI MINISTER OF INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT BUT THIS WAS MADE IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY A REUTER'S CORRESPONDENT. THIS ASPECT OF THE AFFAIR SEEMS TO BE ENTIRELY THE CREATION OF THE PRESS WHICH IS TRYING TO MANUFACTURE A STORY. THE EGREGIOUS JOHN DICKIE OF THE DAILY MAIL APPEARS TO BE THE MAIN CULPRIT. THERE IS A DANGER THAT THE SAUDIS MAY BE DRIVEN BY THE PUBLICITY INTO CONSIDERING ACTION WHICH THEY HAVE NO DESIRE TO TAKE. THOUGH I REALISE HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO CRUSH A STORY ONCE IT IS RUNNING, I HOPE THAT ANY COMMENTS MADE BY NEWS DEPARTMENT WILL BE FIRM AND DISMISSIVE.
3. I HOPE I DO NOT NEED TO ADD THAT DESPITE DICKIE'S REFERENCE TO TELEGRAMS FROM ME (DAILY MAIL, DECEMBER 6), THIS EMBASSY HAS GIVEN NO INFORMATION AND MADE NO COMMENTS WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY HIS STORY.

CRAIG

STANDARD

NENAD
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SECURITY D
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CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

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