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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA**SUMMARY**

1. THE PRIME MINISTER SUCCEEDS IN ESTABLISHING GOOD RAPPORT WITH KING FAHD AND THE CROWN PRINCE. USEFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH KING FAHD AND SENIOR MINISTERS WHEN CONTINUITY OF SUPPORT FOR OUR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA FOLLOWING MRS THATCHER'S RESIGNATION WAS PUT ACROSS AND WELCOMED. SAUDIS PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS. A LIFT FOR SUBSTANTIAL BRITISH COMMUNITY. VERY POSITIVE REACTION FROM BRITISH FORCES OF ALL THREE SERVICES TO PRIME MINISTER'S CONTACT WITH THEM AND REMARKS. OUR HIGH MILITARY MORALE IN EVIDENCE. TIMELY FIRST HAND MILITARY BRIEF FOR PRIME MINISTER. PRESS ASPECTS OF VISIT POSITIVE. DISCUSSIONS WITH KUWAITI AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER IN TAIF.

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO HAD A BRIEFING IN RIYADH BY BFCME AND HIS STAFF ON THE MILITARY SITUATION AND BRITISH PARTICIPATION, AND MET HEADQUARTERS TROOPS. ON 8 JANUARY THE PRIME MINISTER CARRIED OUT AT THE CANTER A PROGRAMME OF VISITS TO THE NEWLY ARRIVED 4TH ARMoured BRIGADE TRAINING IN THE DESERT BETWEEN JUBAIL AND THE KUWAITI FRONTIER, VISITED THE IMPRESSIVE PORT AND BASE WORKSHOP FACILITIES AT JUBAIL WHERE THE UNLOADING AND PREPARATION OF BRITISH EQUIPMENT WAS IN FULL SWING, FLEW OUT TO HMS LONDON WHERE HE WAS TREATED TO AN IMPRESSIVE NAVAL REVIEW OF 13 OF THE RN AND RFA SHIPS NOW IN THE GULF: AND FINISHED THE AFTERNOON WITH A VISIT TO THE TORNADO F3 AND IDS CREWS AT DHAHRAN AS WELL AS BAE EMPLOYEES. THE PRIME MINISTER FOUND TIME TO TALK INFORMALLY TO TROOPS AT ALL POINTS ALONG THIS PROGRAMME. HIS WORDS OF EXPLANATION OF THE TASK IN HAND AND ENCOURAGEMENT OVER WHAT MIGHT LIE AHEAD CAME OVER VERY WELL AND WERE RECEIVED WITH APPLAUSE. BFCME ACCOMPANIED THROUGHOUT AND SNOME RECEIVED THE PRIME MINISTER ON HMS LONDON. THE PRIME MINISTER WAS SEEN OFF FROM DHAHRAN FOR MUSCAT BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF THE EASTERN PROVINCE PRINCE FAHD BIN SALMAN. HE ALSO HAD A TALK WITH THE COMMANDER OF THE DHAHRAN AIR BASE WHO ALSO MANAGES THE AL YAMAMAH PROJECT (PRINCE TURKI BIN NASSER) AND MET SAUDI AIR FORCE PERSONNEL AS WELL AS US MARINES IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY.

3. THE TWO MAIN POLITICAL OBJECTIVES OF THIS VISIT WERE TO ESTABLISH A FIRM BASIS FOR A CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH KING FAHD, FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF MRS THATCHER, AND TO REAFFIRM BOTH TO THE SAUDIS AND TO BAGHDAD, THROUGH THE MEDIA, OUR JOINT RESOLVE TO HAVE IRAQ WITHDRAW UNCONDITIONALLY, PEACEFULLY IF POSSIBLE BUT IF NECESSARY THROUGH THE USE OF FORCE. AT THE SAME TIME THE VISIT WAS AIMED AT GIVING THE PRIME MINISTER AS MUCH FIRST HAND CONTACT AS POSSIBLE WITH THE BRITISH FORCES. I JUDGE THESE AIMS TO HAVE BEEN WELL ACHIEVED. KING FAHD GAVE A WARM PERSONAL WELCOME AND APPRECIATED MR MAJOR'S AFFIRMATION OF HIS INTENTION TO CARRY FORWARD THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH MRS THATCHER WITH ALL IT HAD MEANT TO THE KING. IN THE DISCUSSION WITH THE KING (WHICH IS BEING RECORDED SEPARATELY BY THE PRIVATE SECRETARY). THE MAIN POINTS TO COME THROUGH WERE:

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- B) THE KING'S APPRECIATION OF OUR OWN FIRM AND CONSISTENT STAND WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.

C) A BELIEF THAT IF WE DID SUSTAIN A FIRM FRONT OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS SADDAM'S BRAVADO COULD CRACK, THOUGH HE WOULD STILL TRY TO PLAY THINGS LONG AND GET AWAY WITH SOMETHING FOR HIS ADVENTURE. THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE: THE KING WAS THUS MORE PESSIMISTIC THAN OPTIMISTIC OVER THE PROSPECT OF HOSTILITIES.

D) A RELUCTANCE TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSION AT THIS STAGE ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE CRISIS AND FUTURE REGIONAL DEFENCE. FIRST THINGS FIRST. BUT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE READY TO OPEN DISCUSSION WITH US THEREAFTER, (AS WELL AS THE AMERICANS AND FRENCH), ON HOW WE COULD PLAY A PART IN HELPING TO STRENGTHEN SAUDI ARABIA'S DEFENCES. HE IMPLIED THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF WESTERN TROOPS IN SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE DIFFICULT.

E) THE PRIME MINISTER'S EXPRESSION OF CONTINUING PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF THE AL YAMAMAH PROJECT WAS WELL RECEIVED.

F) KING FAHD DOUBTED SADDAM WOULD BE PERSUADED TO DESTROY HIS CBW CAPABILITY OR CEASE MANUFACTURE IN THE EVENT OF WITHDRAWING INTACT, NOR WOULD HE RUN DOWN HIS ARMY STRENGTH. FURTHER MEASURES WOULD BE NEEDED, THROUGH SANCTIONS OR INTERNATIONAL FORCES (IN KUWAIT) TO GET HIM TO DISMANTLE THE INVENTORY. HE SHOULD NOT GET AWAY WITH HAVING THESE ASPECTS HANDLED ON EQUAL TERMS WITH OTHER REGIONAL COUNTERPARTS SUCH AS ISRAEL OR IRAN. THE USE OF FORCE WOULD PROVIDE THE QUICKEST SOLUTION.

G) KING FAHD THOUGHT THAT PROVIDED OUR ALLIANCE REMAINED SOLID THE NEXT FEW DAYS COULD WELL PRODUCE MOVEMENT ON SADDAM'S PART OVER WITHDRAWAL. THIS WOULD NEED TO BE EVALUATED. BUT WE SHOULD BE READY FOR THE WORST AND KEEP IN CONSTANT CONTACT (IN THIS LAST CONNECTION THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED ME TO CALL THIS MORNING AT PRINCE SAUD'S REQUEST TO COMPARE NOTES ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON THE EUROPEAN FRONT AND IN THE RUN-UP TO THE BAKER/TARIQ AZIZ MEETING).

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