

RESTRICTED

GR 200

RESTRICTED

FM TEL AVIV 151205Z JUN 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 284 OF 15 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK BAGHDAD PARIS

PRIORITY BONN UKDEL NATO AMMAN BEIRUT DAMASCUS CAIRO JEDDA

VIENNA (FOR RES REP IAEA)

MS

YOUR TEL 302 AND BAGHDAD TEL NO 327 (NEITHER TO ALL): ISRAEL/IRAQ

1. FOLLOWING PRESS REPORTS HERE THAT BEGIN'S OFFICE HAD YESTERDAY ADMITTED THAT A QUOTATION FROM SADDAM HUSSEIN ABOUT IRAQ'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS IN AL THAWRA OF 4 OCTOBER, 1980, SUBSEQUENTLY USED BY BEGIN AND ISRAELI MISSIONS OVERSEAS TO JUSTIFY THE ATTACK ON THE OSIRAK REACTOR, COULD NOT BE VERIFIED, THE MFA HAVE CONFIRMED TO US THAT THE ALLEGED REMARKS (PARAGRAPH 1(C) OF YOUR TUR) DID NOT IN FACT APPEAR IN AL THAWRA. THE SOURCE OF THE QUOTATION WAS THE AL JUMHOURIYA EDITORIAL OF 4 OCTOBER (PARA 3 OF BAGHDAD TUR).
2. BUT YIGAR OF THE MFA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT ADMITTED THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN HAD NOT BEEN DIRECTLY QUOTED BY AL JUMHOURIYA AND THAT THE SINGLE SENTENCE SUMMARY IN QUOTATION MARKS IN THE ISRAELI OFFICIAL HANDOUT "DISTORTED" THE SENSE OF THE EDITORIAL.
3. IN SHORT THE AL THAWRA QUOTATION WAS APOCRYPHAL, AND THE ISRAELIS ARE ATTEMPTING TO USE THE AL JUMHOURIYA EDITORIAL IN A WAY WHICH CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED BY THE LANGUAGE ACTUALLY USED.

11

ROBINSON

MIDDLE EAST STANDARD

NENAD  
MED  
NAB  
UND  
EESD  
ECD  
WED

CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE

RESTRICTED