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S E C R E T

GR 350

SECRET

FM F. C. O. 281308Z SEP 80

TO FLASH MUSCAT

TELEGRAM NUMBER 370 OF 28 SEPTEMBER

INFO FLASH MODUK (FOR COSSEC DIA AND DNOT), CINCFLEET, WASHINGTON,
UKMIS NEW YORK, BAGHDAD, ABU DHABI, DUBAI,

INFO IMMEDIATE KUWAIT, BAHRAIN, DOHA, JEDDA, AMMAN, DAMASCUS, PARIS.

YOUR TELNO 269: IRAN/IRAQ

1. YOU SHOULD FORTHWITH MAKE A FURTHER APPROACH TO ZAWAMI. YOU SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT H. M. G. HAVE AN OBVIOUS INTEREST IN THE MILITARY CONTEXT IN WHICH BRITISH L. S. P. WILL OPERATE, AND HAND OVER A PIECE OF PAPER MAKING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:-

- A. ACCORDING TO OUR INTELLIGENCE, THE IRAN AIRFORCE, THOUGH POTENTIALLY SHORT OF AVIATION FUEL, ARE STILL CAPABLE OF MOUNTING SIGNIFICANT ATTACKS FROM A NUMBER OF AIRFIELDS NOT PREVIOUSLY ACTIVE IN THE FIGHTING WITH IRAQ, AND WITHIN RANGE OF MUSCAT:
- B. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE IRANIANS WILL HAVE DETECTED IRAQI AIR MOVES TOWARDS OMAN, AND MIGHT SOON TAKE OBVIOUS EVASIVE MEASURES E. G. BY DISPERSING THEIR SHIPS FROM BANDAR ABBAS. ANY NAVAL FORCE SURVIVING AN INITIAL ATTACK WOULD FIND OMAN AN EASIER TARGET THAN IRAQ.
- C. FROM WHAT WE KNOW OF THE US- OMANI ACCESS AGREEMENT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD FEEL COMMITTED TO COMING TO OMAN'S DEFENCE AGAINST A RETALIATORY ATTACK FROM IRAN, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE PROBLEM OF THE HOSTAGES.

2. IN CONVEYING THIS PIECE OF PAPER, YOU SHOULD HOWEVER AVOID ANY SUGGESTION THAT WE MIGHT PREVENT OUR LOAN SERVICE PERSONNEL FROM TAKING PART IN THE DEFENCE OF OMANI TERRITORY, FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:-

- A. WE WOULD LOSE ALL CREDIBILITY WITH THE AMANIS IF OUR LOAN SERVICE PERSONNEL STAND BY WHILE THEY GET A BLOODY NOSE.
- B. WE WOULD TURN THE ARABS AS A WHOLE AGAINST US.

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/ C. CONVERSELY

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C. CONVERSELY, WE SHOULD GAIN CREDIT IN ARAB OPINION IF OUR LOAN SERVICE PERSONNEL WERE KNOWN TO HAVE PLAYED THEIR PART IN DEFENCE OF AMANI TERRITORY.

3. OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES SHOULD BE TO DISCOURAGE THE AMANIS AS UNATTRIBUTABLY AS POSSIBLE, TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF RETALIATION BY IRAQ OR OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES WHO MIGHT THINK THAT WE ARE FRUSTRATING A BLOW AGAINST IRAN, AND TO AVOID GETTING TOO FAR IN FRONT OF THE AMERICANS.

4. YOU SHOULD KEEP YOUR US COLLEAGUE INFORMED AND REPORT ABOUT PARALLEL ACTION HE IS TAKING.

CARRINGTON

IRAQ/IRAN STANDARD

MED	MAED
NEWAD	TRED
NAD	ERD
UND	ECON D
EPED	CONS D
ECD	CONS EM UNIT
WED	CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTR.

IRAQ/IRAN

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