

LUK 854/2

IMMEDIATE

FDW 8168/2

OO DELHI

GRS 220

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCC 021445Z NOV 84

TO IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI

TELEGRAM NUMBER 772 OF 2 NOVEMBER

YOUR TEL NO 867: UK SIKH REACTION TO MRS GANDHI'S MURDER

1. WE HAVE TELEGRAPHED TO YOU THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT EXPRESSING HER REPUGNANCE AT REACTIONS BY SIKH EXTREMISTS HERE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE WILL REINFORCE THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN TALKING TO THE INDIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES LATER TODAY.
2. WE TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY YOUR INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE RETALIATORY ACTION BY GOI AND ARE NOW CONSIDERING WHAT MIGHT BE DONE TO FEND OFF OR LIMIT ANY DAMAGE TO OUR COMMERCIAL AND DEFENCE INTERESTS. THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A WIDE AREA OF VULNERABILITY, AND THE WESTLANDS HELICOPTER CONTRACT MIGHT, IN PARTICULAR, OFFER A HANDY ACHILLES HEEL IF THE INDIANS WERE SO MINDED. GRATEFUL FOR YOUR VIEWS.
3. IN ADDITION TO THE NEED FOR STRINGENT SECURITY FOR PRINCESS ANNE AND THE PRIME MINISTER DURING THEIR STAY (YOUR TELNO 874) YOU WILL NO DOUBT ALSO BE ASSESSING THE RISK TO HIGH COMMISSION STAFF AND PREMISES IN DELHI AND THE OUTPOSTS IF WORST FEARS ABOUT A WAVE OF ANTI-BRITISH FEELING ARE REALISED. A FURTHER QUESTION ARISING IN THIS CONTEXT IS WHETHER THERE IS ANY LIKELIHOOD OF SIKH LOCALLY ENGAGED STAFF OR OTHERS ATTEMPTING TO SEEK REFUGE IN HIGH COMMISSION PREMISES. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THIS.

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