

SECRET  
FM DUBAI 5  
TO DESKBY 081000Z BANGKOK  
TELNO U/N  
OF 080630Z AUGUST 88  
AND TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
INFO PRIORITY ABU DHABI

MF

ABU DHABI TELNO 218 TO FCO AND MY U/N TEL TO BANGKOK : PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT

1. WE BELIEVE, THOUGH I CANNOT EVEN NOW BE CERTAIN, THAT SHAIKH ZAID WILL NOT COME TO DUBAI. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT THEREFORE FIND SOME OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT SHAIKH MOHAMMED BIN RASHID USEFUL.
2. SHAIKH MOHAMMED WILL BE PREPARED TO CARRY ON HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BRISKLY, WITH A MINIMUM OF INTRODUCTORY COURTESIES, THOUGH SHE MAY CARE TO OPEN BY RECALLING MEETING THE RULER, SHAIKH RASHID, ON HER 1981 VISIT, AND ENQUIRE ABOUT HIS HEALTH (WHICH HAS LONG BEEN VERY POOR).
3. IN DISCUSSION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER I SHOULD EXPECT SHAIKH MOHAMMED TO ADDRESS MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUES AS A SENIOR UAE LEADER, BUT HIS MAIN POLITICAL PREOCCUPATIONS REMAIN PRESERVING THE INDEPENDENCE OF DUBAI WITHIN THE FEDERATION. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT CARE TO REMIND HIM OF THE UK'S SUPPORT FOR THE STRENGTH AND UNITY OF THE FEDERATION.
4. HE IS WELL INFORMED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN IRAN, PARTLY THROUGH THE LARGE IRANIAN COMMUNITY HERE. HE WOULD BE FLATTERED, AND HIS REPLY WORTH HEARING, IF THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS. HE SEES DUBAI'S RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAN AS CLOSER THAN THAT (GOOD THOUGH IT IS) OF THE FEDERATION AS A WHOLE.
5. HE ALSO VIEWS DUBAI'S CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UK, SIMILARLY, AS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO IT THAN IS BRITAIN TO THE FEDERATION. HE TAKES PRIDE IN HAVING INTRODUCED HAWK TO THE MIDDLE EASTERN MARKET (AND RECKONS WE HAVE STILL TO REPAY THAT FAVOUR). HE AND HIS BROTHERS SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF THEIR TIME IN THE UK. HE HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE WORK OF THE ARMILLA PATROL, FREELY OFFERING FACILITIES ONLY JUST SHORT OF ANYTHING THAT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS (TABOO WORD) AN ON SHORE BASE - EG JEBEL ALI PORT SELDOM HAS FEWER THAN TWO OR THREE RN SHIPS ALONGSIDE. BRITAIN PROVIDES MOST OF THE ARMS FOR THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMAND (DUBAI'S QUASI INDEPENDENT ARMED FORCE), AND A MODEST NUMBER OF LOAN SERVICE PERSONNEL. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO PURSUE THE LINE IN PARA 11 OF TUR.
6. THE DUBAI SHAIKHS KNOW THEIR OIL WILL RUN OUT WELL BEFORE THAT OF ABU DHABI, AND ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO BUILD UP DUBAI AS A REGIONAL COMMERCIAL CENTRE. MANY BRITISH COMPANIES HAVE INDEED ESTABLISHED THEIR MIDDLE EASTERN HEADQUARTERS HERE, TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE GOOD COMMUNICATIONS, THE ORDERLY SOCIETY AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S PRO-BUSINESS ATTITUDE. THE LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM CAUSED BY CORRUPTION AND SHAIKHLY INTERFERENCE IS THE WEAKEST POINT, AND THAT THEY ARE MAKING SOME EFFORT TO CLEAR UP.
7. THIS HAS PRODUCED A LARGE (ESTIMATED 15,000) BRITISH EXPATRIATE POPULATION WHO HAVE VERY FEW DIFFICULTIES WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. IF OPPORTUNITY OFFERED MRS THATCHER MIGHT LIKE TO ASSURE HIM THEY RECOGNISE AND APPRECIATE THE HOSPITALITY OF THE DUBAI AUTHORITIES.
8. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT APPROPRIATELY CONCLUDE BY ASKING THAT HER GOOD WISHES AND APPRECIATION OF THE UAE'S HELPFUL ATTITUDE IN SUPPORT OF ARMILLA/CALENDER BE CONVEYED TO SHAIKH ZAID.
9. SHAIKH MOHAMMED BIN RASHID HAS SHOWN A FIRM INTEREST IN ATTENDING THE FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION (5 - 8 SEPTEMBER 1988.) WOULD THE PRIME MINISTER LIKE TO HAND OVER THE INVITATION CARD?

KAY