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PAGE 01 LONDON 07884 151243Z  
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FOR: STATE FOR OPERATIONS CENTER PLEASE PASS LIBYAN  
WORKING GROUP; USIA FOR EU

E.O. 12356 N/A  
SUBJECT: EARLY MORNING RADIO AND TV COVERAGE OF U.S.  
BOMBING MISSION OVER LIBYA

1. ALL EARLY MORNING RADIO AND TELEVISION NEWS REPORTS  
GAVE EXCLUSIVE COVERAGE TO THE U.S. BOMBING MISSION OVER  
LIBYA, APRIL 14. BOTH BBC AND INDEPENDENT TELEVISION  
NEWS CARRIED FOOTAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S TELEVISED  
STATEMENT, AS WELL AS THE NEWS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY  
SECRETARY OF STATE SHULTZ, AND DEFENSE SECRETARY  
WEINBERGER. LIVE INTERVIEWS WERE CARRIED WITH LEADING  
ANALYSTS, AND OPPOSITION AND HMG SPOKESMEN. MOST  
NON-GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE  
USG'S ACTION.

2. THE STORY BROKE TOO LATE TO BE CARRIED IN MOST OF  
THE EARLY MORNING NEWSPAPERS. TELEVISION NEWS STORIES  
EXAMINED THE DIFFICULT POSITION HMG MAY HAVE BEEN PLACED  
IN BECAUSE OF THE BOMBING MISSION'S USE OF U.S. AIRCRAFT

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PAGE 02 LONDON 07884 151243Z

BASED IN BRITAIN. OPPOSITION SPOKESMEN, LABOR PARTY  
LEADER NEIL KINNOCK PARTICULARLY STRESSED THAT POINT.  
OTHERS SAID THAT THEY FEARED THE U.S. ACTION WOULD, FAR  
FROM HALTING TERRORISM, ACTUALLY INCREASE IT. KINNOCK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ROBERT O HOMME  
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THAN HE HAD LAST WEEK. REPORTS FROM BRITISH AND AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS IN TRIPOLI WERE CARRIED WITH DETAILS OF OVER ONE HUNDRED CASUALTIES INCLUDING CIVILIANS AND CHILDREN, AND OF THE DAMAGE IN THE CITY. GRUESOME PICTURES OF LIBYAN CASUALTIES WERE SHOWN. AT THIS STAGE THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO COVERAGE GIVEN TO WHATEVER MILITARY SUCCESSES THE MISSION MAY HAVE ACHIEVED IN KNOCKING OUT TERRORISM-RELATED INSTALLATIONS. THE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ASPECTS WERE CARRYING THE DAY.

3. POLITICAL TV CORRESPONDENTS ASKED WHY THE FIRST NEWS OF THE ATTACK CAME FROM WASHINGTON AND NOT LONDON. THEY QUESTIONED THE COHESION OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE, CITING THE FRENCH REFUSAL OF OVERFLYING RIGHTS, AND OTHER EUROPEAN MISGIVINGS ABOUT U.S. MILITARY ACTION. BOTH BBC AND ITN SAID THAT PRESSURE IS MOUNTING STEADILY FOR A COMPREHENSIVE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ABOUT THE U.K.'S ROLE, AND THAT MRS. THATCHER WILL FACE VERY DIFFICULT QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT LATER TODAY. AMONG COMMENTS FROM OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE: "A BLUNDER" (MR. PADDY ASHDOWN, LIBERAL PARTY SPOKESMAN); "IT WAS WRONG... IT COULD LEAD TO AN INTENSIFICATION OF TERRORISM. IT WILL PROVOKE QADHAFI. IT WAS ENTIRELY UNNECESSARY. PRESIDENT REAGAN HAS USED THE U.K. AS A SUPER AIRCRAFT CARRIER. QADHAFI THIS MORNING HAS MORE FRIENDS THEN HE HAD YESTERDAY -- AND THAT'S GOT TO BE WRONG." (NEIL KINNOCK.) WHILE FOREIGN SECRETARY GEOFFREY HOWE DID UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 LONDON 07884 151243Z

YEOMAN SERVICE APPEARING ON RADIO AND TV TO SUPPORT THE U.S. ACTION ("THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE (OF) A SUSTAINED TERRORIST CAMPAIGN QADHAFI HAS BEEN LEADING"), THE OPPOSITION FOREIGN SECRETARY DENIS HEALEY SAID THAT MRS. THATCHER HAD EXHIBITED, ONCE AGAIN, "GROVELLING SUBSERVIENCE" TO PRESIDENT REAGAN.-KORENGOLD

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