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Don
attache below you
with TB

Bv Link you

5/17

From: David Manning
Date: 3 July 2002

S 182 /02

PRIME MINISTER

cc: Jonathan Powell
Anna Wechsberg
Matthew Rycroft

IRAQ

CENTCOM have now briefed an MOD team on the latest US military thinking on Iraq.

Key points:

- They are thinking big: up to 250,000 men (with call up of 300,000 reservists).
- The cost is huge: perhaps \$70bn.
- They need basing in Kuwait, Jordan and Turkey as a minimum; and will need Diego Garcia and our Cyprus airbase.
- They could be ready to activate the plan from August and move from a standing start in 3 months (ie to follow November Congressional elections).

The MOD team comment on the critical importance of basing; the fragility of the logistic concept; US ignorance of Iraqi WMD locations; and lack of clarity about what the US might ask us to do. They comment on the total policy void in which the military planning has taken place.

Geoff Hoon has authorised a small UK team to work alongside the US in CENTCOM. There should be no publicity.

Geoff suggests an early meeting to discuss. I think this is a good idea. I suggest Gordon Brown, Jack Straw, C, John Scarlett, Richard Wilson and the Attorney. We need to consider funding and legal issues before we go much further.

CDS - Piggot

Land

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