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From the Private Secretary

3 June 2004

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Filed:

Dear Chris,

**IRAQ: PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING, 3 JUNE**

The Prime Minister met the Defence, Foreign and International Development Secretaries on 3 June. Also present were CDS, C, Andrew Turnbull, John Scarlett, Nigel Sheinwald, Desmond Bowen and me.

CDS and John Scarlett updated the meeting on the security situation.

On Iraqi-isation, the meeting considered the MOD paper. The Prime Minister agreed that a UK team should go out to Iraq to act in effect as the embryonic secretariat of the MCNS and draft the equivalent of a white paper on defence and security. This should be agreed with the US first on the military net; the White House should then be informed.

The Prime Minister commissioned an update illustrating what is actually happening in MND(SE) in terms of handing over responsibility for security to the Iraqis. Comment: Please can we receive this by close on 11 June.

It was agreed that we would push for the publication by the end of June by Petraeus and Allawi of the Iraqi-isation plan.

The Prime Minister asked to be informed of *any* obstacles or log jams on Iraqi-isation. He would then decide which to raise with Bush. This should happen automatically every week.

The Prime Minister would welcome an update, once it is decided, on which Iraqi security forces will be responsible for which bits of security policy, including for instance protection of power supplies, fighting insurgents etc.

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We would be grateful if the Cabinet Office could coordinate work with the MOD, DFID and FCO to resolve any remaining project funding issues that might otherwise be blocked post-transition.

The Prime Minister commissioned a round-up on all the Iraqi-isation points every two weeks, in advance of each meeting of this group of Ministers.

On the possible UK reinforcement, CDS and the Defence Secretary set out the options. With increasing Iraqi-isation there should be a reduction, not increase, in the number of troops. No more troops were required for the tasks currently assigned to the UK in MND(SE). But if for other reasons (solidarity with the US, increased influence in Iraq, increased likelihood of achieving strategic goal in Iraq) it was decided to go ahead, the optimal military solution would be to provide both the ARRC as a three star HQ to command both MND(SE) and MND(CS) and a brigade of troops.

After a full discussion, the Prime Minister concluded that the issue should be kept under advisement for now. The MOD would continue their contingency planning. We should only consider an increased commitment if the new Iraqi government supported it. The timing of the adoption of the SCR was also relevant.

Ministers will discuss this again on around 17 June: we will be in touch to fix this up. It would be useful to have updated MOD advice in good time for that meeting.

I am copying this letter to Geoffrey Adams (FCO), Moazzam Malik (DFID), PS/C, and Sir Andrew Turnbull, John Scarlett and Desmond Bowen (Cabinet Office).

*Turn.*

*Matthew*

MATTHEW RYCROFT

Chris Baker  
MOD

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