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From: Edward Chaplin  
Date: 28 January 2003

cc: PS  
PS/PUS  
Peter Ricketts  
William Ehrman  
Graham Fry  
Michael Wood, Legal Advisers  
Michael Williams, Special  
Advisers  
Stephen Pattison, UND  
Charles Gray, MED  
Dominick Chilcott, MED  
John Williams, Press Office

Reference:

To: PS/Mr O'Brien

**SUBJECT: IRAQ: DAY AFTER**

1. Some quick comments on Mike O'Brien's minute of 22 January to the Secretary of State about post-Saddam Iraq. I have also seen Michael Williams' minute of 21 January on the same subject. They will both have seen Washington telno 89 recording the Day After talks I had with the US in Washington on 22 January.
2. I agree very much with the idea of setting out a vision of what a future Iraq might look like, after a second SCR and before military action takes place. The main point to emphasise at that point, I think, is that the institutions of a future Iraq should be decided by the Iraqis themselves.
3. All agree that a Transitional Administration will be needed before the Iraqis can take such decisions. The Washington meeting shifted the US a bit towards accepting that there should be some form of UN blessing. This is the key to securing wider Arab and international support. We are following up in a working group, (led on our side by Stephen Pattison) including looking at what an SCR for a Transitional Administration might look like.
4. I have no problem in setting democracy as a goal for Iraq and the wider Arab world. But we have to be careful about how we present this. To most Arabs "democracy" means

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imposing Western style institutions on the Arab world, for our own benefit. It is wiser, in my view, to talk about the application of universal principles such as democratic values, good governance, the rule of law and so on. These are themes we are planning to develop in our wider reform initiative.

5. My only point of disagreement in Mike O'Brien's analysis is that "we" ie the coalition should negotiate a new constitution for Iraq with Iraqi opposition groups. Firstly (see above) a new constitution must be seen to be developed by the Iraqis themselves. What we will be doing is holding the ring to allow that process to take place. Secondly Iraqi opposition groups are a very disparate bunch. A few of them (KDP, PUK and SCIRI) represent a constituency on the ground in Iraq. Most of them represent only themselves. Over the years, we have been happy to allow their representative offices to operate in London, speaking out about the evils of the current regime and expressing ideas about the future. If and when the regime falls, they will have to test their credibility where it matters – back in Iraq.

*Edward Chaplin*

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