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SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/17/15CB

28 March 2003

PJHQ - Dep Hd Pol/Ops(ME)

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IRAQ: BASRAH - COALITION CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

1. Thank you for your minute (D/PJHQ/10/5341) of 27 March 2003, on the significance of Basrah within the wider campaign strategy. The Secretary of State notes the details of coalition planning in respect of Basrah, and the continuing imperative attached to operations in respect of Baghdad.
2. As he described at this morning's Ministerial Brief, the Secretary of State is keen that we do not adopt a static approach to Basrah, but instead actively exploit the physical and information opportunities which are presented. He would be grateful to see advice on the actions being taken by British Forces around Basrah.
3. Mr Hoon also wonders whether the balance would be changed if circumstances dictated that the attack on Baghdad were delayed, say until after the arrival of 4th Infantry Division.

[original signed]

M J WILLIAMS

Cdr RN

APS/Secretary of State

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