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From: Julian Metcalfe

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cc: Edward Chaplin
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, IPU
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To: Peter Collecott

BASRA OFFICES

1. This saga is now turning into something of a joke. If we are to realise our objective of setting up an office in Basra IPU needs to grip the issue and break a vicious circle that has developed.
2. The idea of a visit by Estate Group experts was prompted by the claim **BASRAH OFFICE ESU VISIT** of UK personnel in CPA (South) that they did not have the resources to identify possible new premises for the proposed Consul-General. CPA (South) thus asked for a visit by Estate Group. CPA (South) then said they did not even have the resources to provide the visitors with the necessary logistic support.
3. We have (today) now approached the military. They are prepared to provide support for perhaps one day. But they insist that the visitors identify, in advance, where they need to go and whom they need to talk to. This is required in order for the military to recce, in advance, the areas that the visitors propose to visit. But clearly and (the EG visitors) will have no idea, on arrival, where they should go or who they should talk to. And in the absence of assistance from CPA (South) over this, the military would be unwilling to render support since they will not have had the opportunity of an advance recce. We are, in short, going round in circles. I appreciate that our people in CPA (South) have many other priorities. But I also suspect that is not being as helpful. If IPU want an office in Basra IPU will need to lean on our people to be more helpful.
4. In the meantime I have agreed with IPU that and will travel to Basra this afternoon. They will spend tomorrow in initial discussions with British military

Page 1

DECLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

250

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personnel to orientate themselves and possibly identify areas in the city which would be the right locations for a British office. Ideally they might be able to locate a local "fixer" who could scour the landscape and identify possible buildings/owners whom the Estate Group team could meet in a subsequent visit.

Julian Metcalfe
Head, Estate Strategy Unit

PS. Since drafting the above has confirmed that the military would probably be prepared to look after and for 2/3 days. This is helpful and might provide time for the military to do an advance recce before showing the visitors agreed premises. And in any subsequent visit we might be able to use a private security company. But our efforts to establish this office will remain critically dependent on a Brit in CPA (South) being able to give this subject attention.

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