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From: Matthew Rycroft  
Date: 12 March 2003

S 128/03

PRIME MINISTER

cc: Jonathan Powell  
Alastair Campbell  
Sally Morgan  
David Manning  
Nick Cannon

BUSH CALL

You are calling Bush at 1515.

You should ask him whether he has had any further contact with Lagos or Fox.

You need to decide if you want to ask for the further week. If you do, you should link this to the military advice that because of the full it would be dangerous to begin around 17 March, and that a start date of around 24 March would be much better.

If you do make this argument and he buys into it, you can make the case for trying over the next 24 hours to secure a UN resolution based on the Blix-agreed tests with the revised deadline of 24 March (or whatever he accepts).

If on the other hand you decide not to make the case, or if he rejects it completely, you need to set out the following fallback:

I have not given up hope of trying to secure a second resolution. I know that you want to get out of the UN morass. But there cannot be a vote today. I need a further 24 hours to see if I can get the Chileans to put forward a serious proposal.

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- It is important that you do not publicly lose interest in the UN route. If you do, I fear that Mexico/Chile/France/Russia may put forward a resolution with a long, eg 45-day, time-line. This could attract 11 votes. (NB there is no evidence for this, but it would be the obvious step for them to take.)
- To position myself for these next steps, I have today set out publicly the Blix-agreed tests. I have also argued that because of Chirac's threat of a veto in any circumstances, it is difficult to see how the UN can uphold 1441.
- I now plan to put the issue to a vote in parliament on x date.
- There are two things you could do to help me win my parliamentary vote:
  - (a) Say publicly before the vote that you will publish the Roadmap on the Middle East.
  - (b) Commit publicly to further UN resolutions establishing a UN role in reconstruction and humanitarian issues post-conflict and in running the Oil for Food programme.

MATTHEW RYCROFT

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