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S 338 /03

From the Assistant Private Secretary

2 September 2003

Dear Geoffrey,

IRAQ: BRIEFING FOR PRIME MINISTER

The Prime Minister held a meeting on Iraq on 2 September. Present were the Foreign and Defence Secretaries, Hilary Benn, CDS, "C", Chairman JIC, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, John Sawers and No 10 officials.

The Prime Minister wanted action on Iraq taken forward with a heightened sense of urgency. He intends to telephone President Bush on 5 September for a detailed review of progress on Iraq. Ahead of this call, he will prepare a note for Bush on the key issues he believes they should address. He therefore requires the following advice by **1500 on Thursday 4 September**:

- (a) **Police and internal security**: The Prime Minister believes that the key to the security situation in Iraq is the rapid mobilisation of an effective Iraqi police force. This should include:
- Police manpower up to 70,000 within three months, as a stage towards a full force.
 - Adequate trainers and secure training facilities.
 - Flexible handling of de-Ba'athification in order not to exclude recruits unnecessarily.
 - Establishment of an internal intelligence service.
 - Mobilisation of the Protection Force and Civil Defence Force to protect key installations.

Iraq Policy Unit to provide a paper, consulting FCO, DfID, MoD, Home Office.

- (b) **Infrastructure in the south**: The Prime Minister wants the maximum possible support given to Sir Hilary Synnott's proposals for immediate infrastructure projects in the CPA(South) area, with appropriate military cover. **DfID to provide details of this package, consulting FCO and**

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MoD, after DfID discussions with CPA(S). MoD to cover the security support required.

- (c) **CPA finances:** The Prime Minister would like a clear account. What are the obstacles to financial flows? What is Bremer requesting from the US Administration, how are they responding, what can we do to help? The meeting agreed that we should be prepared to finance new operations in the South ourselves, in advance of CPA funding if there were delays. **IPU to provide a paper, consulting HMT, DfID, IraqRep.**
- (d) **Iraqi oil and electricity:** The Prime Minister would like an update. He remains keen to see British industry more involved. How does the oil sector inter-link with electricity supply and security? How can progress be improved in this sector? **IraqRep to report on the CPA oil plan.**
- (e) **Media:** The Prime Minister remains concerned at slow progress in this area. The target should be a choice of terrestrial TV channels, putting out a mix of information and entertainment. The Prime Minister still thinks we should look at involving one of the major international TV organisations. How does the new CPA media team plan to take this forward? Do they require any further resources? **IraqRep to report after consulting Gary Thatcher.**
- (f) **Political process:** The Prime Minister would welcome an update. Is the current timetable (elections by mid-2004) appropriate? Should it be set out more clearly to the Iraqi people? Can the process be accelerated? What are the potential downsides to this? **FCO to provide an update [the Prime Minister at this stage does not intend to discuss this in any detail with Bush].**
- (g) **Conditions of service for UK civil staff:** The Prime Minister was concerned at accounts of the difficult working conditions experienced by British CPA and BO Baghdad staff. He would like advice as to how these can be improved. **IPU to advise.**
- (h) **Iraqi assets overseas:** The Prime Minister would like the CPA to get early access to Iraqi assets frozen outside the country. How can this process be accelerated, and what action would be required on assets in the UK? **HMT to advise.**

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- 3 -

We do not wish to be seen to be cutting across Bremer's position in raising these issues with Bush. **We would be grateful if IraqRep could talk through points (a)-(f) above with Bremer. Are there particular points that Bremer would wish the Prime Minister to take up with Bush on 5 September?** For instance, if helpful the Prime Minister would be prepared to tell Bush that he supports Bremer's arguments on finance and on the need for further military resources to defend the Iraqi border.

I am copying this letter to Desmond Bowen and John Scarlett (Cabinet Office), Peter Watkins (MoD), Mark Bowman (HM Treasury), Moazzem Malik (DfID), PS/"C", Sir Jeremy Greenstock, David Richmond (IraqRep), Sir Hilary Synnott (CPA(South)), and Sir David Manning (Washington).



NICHOLAS CANNON

Geoffrey Adams, FCO

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