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TB 1/03

[4 January 2003]

Iraq

We start from behind. People suspect US motives; don't accept Saddam is a threat: worry it will make us a target. Yet the truth is removing Saddam

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is right; he is a threat; and WMD has to be countered. So there is a big job of persuasion. We need the following in place:

- (1) most obviously, the evidence of breach of the UN Resolution leading hopefully to a new Resolution. Time is short. We need either evidence of actual WMD; or documentation concealed; or an eye-witness account of the programme. We are making efforts on all three. But one or more need to be in place.

our biggest hindrance, is the intimidation Saddam is exercising. Those who might co-operate are being told very clearly their families will die. So even though we all know the Declaration of the 8<sup>th</sup> December is a lie, proving the lie will be hard. I need an early meeting on this with "C".

- (2) We need to set out the WMD case generally; publish evidence of it; and have some high profile interdiction of WMD material. People just totally underestimate the WMD threat.
- (3) We need to link WMD and terrorism. The truth is the two coming together, is only a matter of time. But people need to understand that if we don't act, the world will be more unsafe.
- (4) We need to prepare a very clear statement of guarantees for the Iraqi people, setting out territorial integrity etc; and I assume without Saddam we could lift sanctions.

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- (5) We need to work out the post Saddam scenario. Are we going to identify him, and his close associates only, as fit for removal, in the hope of having the regime crumble; or are we going to be more forward. By instinct, I favour making it clear: removing Saddam is the immediate task; the new Government has to be stable; and we can move forward in time. But Saddam's whole strategy will be to say we are attacking not him but all Baathists/Tikritis/Iraqis. There must be as little as possible vested interest in resistance.
- (6) We need to be sure the military plan is viable. I need a meeting on this and our military's assurance that the plan can work. This is no small undertaking.
- (7) We must strive to move the MEPP forward. For the Arabs, this is the key. Both in Egypt and in Jordan they are resigned to war; . But the whole focus of their street is on the MEPP. I have stressed the importance of the Palestinian Conference but there will need to be a lot of work prior to then, to overcome natural and synthetic scepticism.
- (8) We have got to show sensitivity to any humanitarian fall-out from war. Britain should seek to take the lead on this; working with the UN.

I believe it would be sensible to go to Washington late January in order to finalise the strategy.

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