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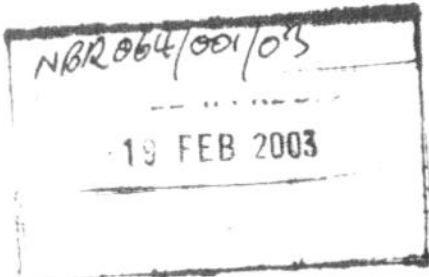


10/2/03

PSM/03/015

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Gray, MED  
cc: PS/PUS  
PS/Mr. O'Brien  
Mr. Ricketts  
Mr. Chaplin  
Mr. Butler  
Mr. Chilcott



Iraq: Humanitarian Planning

JMG 1/12

(+page)

1. I have seen Clare Short's letter of 5 February.
2. As Clare says, DFID, MOD, Cabinet Office have been co-operating closely on the humanitarian considerations of the possible military action in Iraq. This, and other long term planning issues, will, as set out in the Cabinet Office's letter of this morning, now be further strengthened by the Whitehall-wide group now being set up under an FCO lead. Michael Jay will be writing to relevant Permanent Secretaries as soon as possible with the details.
3. Humanitarian planning is the area of long term work where we probably have fewest differences with the US. In that area, unlike some others, the Americans seem to agree on the need for close UN involvement. The US accept that they need to restore rapidly after the fighting the Oil For Food (OFF) distribution systems. US and UK missions in New York are working together on how we might fine-tune the OFF arrangements to make them better suited to the circumstances of a post-conflict Iraq.
4. The US military are developing detailed plans for relief and reconstruction teams to follow in the wake of advancing military forces in Iraq to begin immediately the urgent tasks of restoring water and electricity supplies and repairing public buildings. The US are clearly aware of the importance of

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14

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delivering quick wins to show the Iraqi people and the world the benefits of coalition action.

5. As for economic reconstruction, an interdepartmental group ~~visiting~~ Washington this week found that, though there were, as always, clear differences of emphasis between different US government agencies, there did still seem to be an opportunity to influence their thinking on economic issues. There also seemed to be a greater acceptance of a possible role for the UN and the international financial institutions. But it was clear that there is still work to do to get the Americans fully on board for this.

6. A further element is the need for greater EU involvement in humanitarian planning. I understand that the Commission is quite well advanced in contingency planning; and they have identified sources of funding for humanitarian work. I understand also that the Cabinet Office EU Secretariat will shortly be producing further proposals.

7. I am copying this minute to the Lord Chancellor, Geoff Hoon and Clare Short.

(JACK STRAW)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

10 February 2003

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