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From the Assistant Private Secretary

16 October 2003

Dear Kara

IRAQ: SIR JEREMY GREENSTOCK'S CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER

Sir Jeremy Greenstock called on the Prime Minister on 15 October. Key points covered:

- **Security situation:** a virtuous circle seemed to be building up in the South, with locals supporting the reconstruction process and turning in to the Coalition outsiders who disrupted it. This was not the case in Baghdad and the "Sunni triangle", where a perception of no credible authority coupled with easy availability of weapons and militants (some entering from outside through porous borders) and resentment of heavy-handed US methods risked a vicious spiral of violence. Information available to Coalition forces was limited. Continuing attacks on Coalition forces and further assassinations of Iraq Governing Council (IGC) members were likely.
- **New security threats:** Greenstock warned of new threats that might include rioting leading to an attempt by a mob to storm CPA premises (the Coalition needed riot control equipment: at present the only response would be to fire on the crowd) or the assassination of senior CPA figures inside the CPA palace by suborning Iraqi support staff. The terrorist and Saddam supporters were "mutating" in their structures and methods faster than Coalition intelligence could keep up. The US was handling dissident Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr cautiously and effectively.
- Greenstock saw the Coalition response as including:
 - Iraqisation: but real capability on the part of Iraqi police/military intelligence was a year away. The Prime Minister urged that this should be speeded up.

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- Channelling funding and projects into the Sunni heartland to combat unemployment and marginalisation.
- A more flexible approach to de-Ba'athification, although Bremer tended to be rigid on this issue.
- Internationalisation: for both political and military reasons.
- Improved border control: Greenstock estimated that this could require up to 20,000 troops. This could be a role for the Turks. He commented that in Iraq.
- **UNSCR:** Greenstock believed that the timing of this had been far from ideal from a CPA perspective: it would have had a greater impact in two months' time. He urged closer coordination between London and IraqRep on such issues.
- **Media:** Greenstock said that the Prime Minister's concerns on this problem were well founded. The Iraqi media strategy should kick in by January. IMN had lost credibility, although Bremer was good at generating propaganda over reconstruction achievements. Visits to Iraq by MPs, possibly including the FAC, should be encouraged.
- **Mass graves:** the Prime Minister raised his concept of a new unit to coordinate the investigation and publicising of Saddam-era atrocities. Greenstock supported this, although he warned that it would entail additional staff and that the death penalty angle would prove a complication.
- **Political process:** Greenstock commented that the IGC was dysfunctional, better at opposing Bremer than at legislating or taking decisions. Bremer was working on a radical overhaul of the CPA/IGC relationship and IGC structures.

Greenstock said that, despite the success of British efforts in the South, the success or failure of the Coalition project in Iraq would be decided in Baghdad and the centre. It was vital that the UK took a strong policy interest in developments in Baghdad. Limited UK funding (some 2% of the US contribution) curtailed our influence.

The Prime Minister concluded that Greenstock should flag up the key points on security, with detailed background, including Iraqisation, Sunni policy, border control and riot control. The Prime Minister would raise these with Bush

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- 3 -

at their next video-conference. Greenstock said that he would also feed in these concerns to Washington through General Abizaid.

I am copying this letter to Desmond Bowen and John Scarlett (Cabinet Office), Peter Watkins (MoD), PS/"C", Sir Jeremy Greenstock (IraqRep), Sir Hilary Synnott (CPA(South)), Sir Emyr Jones Parry (UKMis New York) and Sir David Manning (Washington).

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Cannon', written in a cursive style.

NICHOLAS CANNON

Kara Owen
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