



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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PR has seen & agreed.

Dear Michael,

Rich

Israeli Attack on Iraq

The Americans have told us, presumably from Israeli sources, that of the two installations in the nuclear reactor one is damaged beyond repair and one has suffered serious structural damage.

As the Prime Minister will know, we have accepted and stated in Parliament that this is a civil reactor subject to full IAEA safeguards. Iraq is a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (unlike Israel).

The State Department and White House Spokesmen have said that the raid is regarded as a 'very serious' development which they view with the 'utmost concern'. They have drawn attention to the use of US aircraft and have offered to help in any complications arising from nuclear hazards, while expressing the initial view that such hazards are unlikely. French TV has reported the French Government's "condemnation" but we do not yet have a text (today is a holiday in France).

New Department have been under pressure to give a British view. Lord Carrington believes that it would be wrong not to condemn an action which was unprovoked and gives a clear new twist to the cycle of violence in the region. He proposes that News Department should say that we do not as yet have confirmation of the details, but this appears to have been an unprovoked attack. We can only condemn such a grave breach of international law, which could have the most serious consequences.

Yours ever,

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

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