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DESKBY 230930Z

FM BAGHDAD 230730Z OCT 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 549 OF 23/10/80

AND SAVING TO IMMEDIATE HM YACHT BRITANNIA (FOR PS) DESKBY 231100Z

AND IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK DESKBY 231100Z

FO INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON MOSCOW PARIS AMMAN KUWAIT TEL AVIV
AND BONN

UKMIS NEW YORK TEL NO 1560, 1567 AND 1568 IRAQ/IRAN

1. I AGREE THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD REACT BADLY, AT THIS STAGE TO A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF THE TYPE OUTLINED BY - ARDAKANI (IRAN). THIS IS BECAUSE IRAQ HAS NEITHER MADE DEMONSTRABLY SIGNIFICANT GAINS IN KHUZISTAN, NOR BEEN RECEIVED AS LIBERATORS BY THE ARABS THERE.

2. WHAT SADDAM WOULD CONSIDER ADEQUATE GAINS IN THAT REGION IS A QUESTION I DISCUSSED ON 21 OCTOBER WITH THE DAILY TELEGRAPH (MAJOR GENERAL FURSDON) AND GUARDIAN (DAVID FAIRHALL) DEFENCE CORRESPONDENTS, BOTH RECENTLY BACK FROM OCCUPIED KHUZISTAN AND ABOUT TO RETURN TO THE UK AS NO (NO) FURTHER PRESS TRIPS TO THE FRONT ARE BEING PERMITTED BY THE IRAQIS. BOTH THOUGHT THAT SADDAM'S MINIMUM PLAN NOW COMPRISED SEIZURE OF THE PORT AND MOST OF THE TOWN OF KHORRAMSHAHR; THE SEALING OFF OF ABADAN; AND THE NEUTRALISATION OF DEZFUL, WITH ITS UNDERGROUND JOINT COMMAND CENTRE AND MILITARY AIRPORT. NEITHER THE CAPTURE OF AHWAZ NOR BANDAR KHOMEINI WAS NEARLY AS IMPORTANT; THE FORMER BEING SPRAWLY WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO HOLD. FURSDON SAID THAT AN ADDED COMPLICATION WAS THE CROSS-COUNTRY IRAQI SUPPLY LINE FROM AMARA TO DEZFUL, WHICH INVOLVED A RIVER CROSSING (OF THE KARKHEH, A TRIBUTARY OF THE KARUN), AND WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE SECURE BEFORE THE RAINS STARTED IN NOVEMBER. THE THREAT TO THIS SUPPLY LINE FROM LOW-FLYING PHANTOMS WAS CONSIDERABLE, BOTH WITHIN IRAN AND ON THE KUT TO AMARA HIGHWAY, WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN PROHIBITED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC, AND IS JAMMED DAILY WITH RESUPPLY CONVOYS. THERE SEEMED TO BE LITTLE IRAQI ACK-ACK OR INTERCEPTION IN THIS SECTOR. FURSDON REMARKED THAT IT WAS LUCKY THAT THE IRANIANS DID NOT YET SEEM TO HAVE OR BE USING NAPALM, THE IDEAL ANTI-PERSONNEL WEAPON FOR DEALING WITH CONVOYS; NOR APPARENTLY ANY LAND OR SEA MINES.

3. COMMENT.

IN THIS CURIOUS WAR, A NON-WIN BY IRAQ WILL BE SEEN AS TANTAMOUNT TO FAILURE. SADDAM HAS PUT HIS PEOPLE ON NOTICE, IN HIS EID SPEECH (MY TEL NO 541) THAT THEY MAY BE IN FOR A

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LONG HAUL. THIS IS AN UNWELCOME MESSAGE, PARTICULARLY TO THE IRAQI ARMY, WHO HAVE NEITHER THE TRAINING NOR I SUSPECT THE PATIENCE, TO BE AN ARMY OF OCCUPATION. THEY MUST BE WONDERING WHY THE IRAQI AIRFORCE HAS NOT (NOT) YET BEEN HEAVILY COMMITTED.

4. UKMIS TEL NO. 1568, JUST RECEIVED. TEXT OF PROPOSED STATEMENT SEEMS ADMIRABLE. IF A REFERENCE TO FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION IN ALL WATERWAYS IN THE AREA COULD BE WORKED INTO ITS PARA. 6 THAT WOULD SUIT THE IRAQIS (C.F. PARA 3. OF FCO TEL NO. 420 TO ME).

EGERTON

IRAQ/IRAN STANDARD

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