

1 ZCZC
 2 GRS
 3 CONFIDENTIAL
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 6 FM FCO 141700Z December
 7 TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER
 9 RFI IMMEDIATE BAGHDAD, TEHRAN, PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, GULF
 10 POSTS,
 11 RFI PRIORITY AMMAN, BONN, ROME, STOCKHOLM, ISLAMABAD, CAIRO,
 12 TEL AVIV, UKDEL NATO
 13 RFI SAVING ANKARA, ATHENS, BERNE, BRASILIA, BRUSSELS, LISBON,
 14 MADRID, SEOUL, SINGAPORE
 15 My telno 745 to Baghdad (not to all): Possible escalation
 16 of the Iran/Iraq war.
 17 1, After the meeting recorded in my TUR, Hooper (US Embassy)
 18 telephoned Haskell with some further background on the report
 19 from Eagleton in Baghdad. He apparently envisaged an Iraqi
 20 attack on Kharg using bombing aircraft and Scud B missiles
 21 (both of which they have already employed ineffectively against
 22 this target in the past) and not repeat not Super Etendard/
 23 Exocet ^{attacks} on tanker traffic, although this might follow at a
 24 later stage. Hooper pointed out that the Iraqi information
 25 media are now calling for reprisals against Iran for the bomb

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File number	Dept MED	Distribution Standard Iran/Iraq Additional dist: Iran/Iraq
Drafted by (Block capitals) DK Haskell		
Telephone number 233 5877		
Authorised for despatch <i>DK Haskell</i>		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

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2 explosions in Kuwait.

3 2. In our view, this somewhat reduces the impact of Price's
4 original approach, though it clearly makes it all the more
5 necessary to agree an assessment of the threat with the State
6 Department. As discussed with Goulty, Haskell (Head of MED),
7 Legge (Head of DS11 MOD) and Commodore Heaslip (Defence
8 Commitments Staff) will be arriving on 18 December for a
9 meeting with Raphel's team on the 19th. We still intend to
10 telegraph before the weekend a paper outlining our own thinking
11 for you to hand over in advance.

12 3. On a separate but related issue, Hooper, speaking on
13 instructions which the Ambassador would have carried out
14 personally if he had received them in time, said that the US
15 Government would like HMG urgently to consider stopping any
16 traffic in military equipment of whatever origin to Iran, at
17 least until a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq was in place.
18 They further hoped it would be possible to extend the reach
19 of UK law to the activities of UK citizens in third countries
20 and to third country manufacturers of UK licensed equipment.
21 They also hoped it would be possible to retard or reduce the
22 flow of any equipment transiting the UK for either of the
23 belligerents.

24 4. Hooper said that the telegram of instructions commented
25 that the US had so far had some notable success in stopping
26 the export to Iran of items of military significance.
27 They were considering banning also some non-munitions items
28 on the US export control list. However, these additional
29 efforts would not be effective unless partners and allies
30 co-operated. As well as with ourselves, similar US action
31 is being taken in Athens, Berne, Bonn, Brasilia, Brussels
32 Buenos Aires, Islamabad, Lisbon, Madrid, Rome, Seoul, Singapore
33 and Tel Aviv.

34 5. Rumsfeld is apparently visiting Baghdad today to tell

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2 the Iraqis of the US demarche and stress the need to take
3 no precipitate action at this time. He will say that in
4 the opinion of the US, the international community as a whole
5 will hold Iraq responsible for any escalation of the war
6 and consequent disruption of oil supplies from the Gulf area.

7 Comment

8 6. We shall need to consider carefully the implications
9 of the US request and are in no hurry to come back to them.
10 In the meantime, we hope they will keep their approach to us
11 confidential. There are obvious limitations on the extent
12 of our response. Moreover, we have already told the Americans
13 of our concern that their indications of support for Iraq
14 may make the latter more rather than less difficult to
15 deal with, while not softening Iranian intransigence. The
16 Americans may thus get the worst of both worlds. However,
17 your views and those of other addressees would be welcome.

19 HOWE

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