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Prime Minister.

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To note.

A.S.C.  $\frac{17}{1}$ PRIME MINISTER

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IRAN/IRAQ WAR: DMAO VISIT TO GULF STATES

You will recall that during OD(EM) discussion of the Iran/Iraq war, on 21st December, I mentioned that I had agreed to a tour of the Gulf States by the Director of Military Assistance Overseas (DMAO), Major General Dennis.

2. Major General Dennis is due to visit Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Doha and Dubai between 18th and 27th January, then Jedda and Kuwait with me from 29th January to 2nd February; and finally Muscat (subject to confirmation) immediately afterwards. The principal purpose of his visits will be to encourage the Gulf States to identify particular British military assistance enhancements, in the form of advice, training and Loan Service Personnel (LSP), which would help them to build up their indigenous capabilities and thereby reduce the likelihood of the possible need for more direct British military involvement in the future. I believe this is in line with our discussion before Christmas, which saw scope for a reasonably forthcoming attitude towards requests for such forms of assistance. Major General Dennis will, of course, only be taking exploratory soundings of the Gulf States; any firm commitments will only be made after subsequent consideration of his report. In particular he will avoid being drawn into discussion of possible deployment of British combat forces in a crisis; we shall need to consider our policy on this further at the next meeting of OD(EM). I would expect any further military assistance which we may provide as a result of Major General Dennis's visit to be made available on a repayment basis.





3. Although it would be premature to anticipate the sort of requests he is likely to receive, it is possible they may include assistance with the protection of key points, bomb disposal and maritime counter-terrorist training; measures to improve the safety of shipping such as advice on mine counter-measures and control of shipping; and air defence improvements such as better coordination of existing assets and possible additional LSP for Rapier units employed in the region. All these are areas in which, in principle, we should be able to help, although our overall resources are, of course, limited.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to our OD(EM) colleagues and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*WMA*

Ministry of Defence  
13th January 1984

Iraq Relations with Iran Pt 3

