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PS/MR LUCE

PS/PUS

SIR J BULLARD

SIR J LEAHY

MR EGERTON

ED/MED

ED/NENAD

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ED/CONS. EM UNIT

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ED/DEFENCE D

HD | ADD (CHEMICAL WEAPONS ONLY)  
RESIDENT CLERK

PS/No. 10 DOWNING ST (2)

CABINET OFFICE D I O



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SECRET

FROM UKDEL NATO 101545Z APR 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 191 OF 10 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON PRIORITY PARIS MUSCAT BAGHDAD TEHRAN  
ABU DHABI BAHRAIN DOHA DUBAI KUWAIT JEDDA UKMIS NEW YORK AMMAN  
CAIRO ROME

INFO SAYING UKREP BRUSSELS UKDEL OECD

ADVANCE COPY  
IMMEDIATE

YOUR TELNO 659 TO WASHINGTON: IRAN/IRAQ: CONTINGENCY PLANNING

1. AS FORECAST IN PARAGRAPH 8 OF TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE,  
ABSHIRE (US) RAISED THIS ISSUE AT THE END OF TODAY'S WEEKLY  
LUNCH OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES. HE SAID THAT IRAN WAS ON  
THE POINT OF LAUNCHING ITS BIGGEST OFFENSIVE YET AND, DEPENDING  
ON THE FORTUNES OF WAR, IRAQ MIGHT ATTACK KHARG ISLAND OR BLOCK  
TANKERS EN ROUTE TO OR FROM IT. THAT COULD LEAD TO FURTHER  
ESCALATION WITH THE RISK OF ACTION BY IRAN IN THE STRAITS OF HORMUZ.  
BOTH SIDES BORE A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR, BUT IRAN WAS  
NOW THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO PEACE. THE US HAD CONDEMNED IRAQI USE  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND IRAN'S USE OF CHILDREN AND REFUSAL TO  
NEGOTIATE. GIVEN THE GRAVITY OF WESTERN INTERESTS AT STAKE, THE  
US BELIEVED IT RIGHT TO ENGAGE IN MILITARY PLANNING THOUGH THEY  
WOULD PLACE PRIORITY ON DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. THE US WOULD OPPOSE

~~W BELIEVED IT RIGHT TO ENGAGE IN MILITARY PLANNING THOUGH THEY~~  
WOULD PLACE PRIORITY ON DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. THE US WOULD OPPOSE  
ANY ACTION WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE CLOSURE OF THE HORMUZ STRAITS.  
THEY WOULD TAKE NO ACTION WHICH WAS NOT ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH  
INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE AND THEY REALISED  
THE IMPORTANCE OF INVOLVING THE GULF STATES ALTHOUGH THE LATTER  
HAD HITHERTO MADE NO COMMITMENTS. THE US GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN  
IN CONTACT WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND WOULD MAINTAIN CONTACT  
AND CONSULT WITH THEM IN ANY CRISIS. THEY DID NOT THINK THAT THE  
SOVIET UNION WOULD RESPOND MILITARILY, ALTHOUGH THEY WOULD NO  
DOUBT CRITICISE WHATEVER ACTION THE WEST MIGHT TAKE.

2. I SAID THAT WHILE HMG TOOK A SOMEWHAT MORE SANGUINE VIEW OF  
THE LIKELIHOOD OF ESCALATION, IT WAS NEVERTHELESS PRUDENT THAT  
WE SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT WHAT ACTION WE MIGHT TAKE SHOULD  
THE WORST COME TO THE WORST. HMG'S VIEW WAS THAT PRIORITY MUST  
BE GIVEN TO DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS, AND THAT IF IT CAME TO MILITARY  
ACTION IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT IT SHOULD BE TAKEN ON THE BASIS  
OF AN INVITATION FROM A REGIONAL STATE.

3. ABSHIRE'S STATEMENT CLEARLY TOOK OTHERS BY SURPRISE AND  
THERE WAS A REQUEST FOR A COPY OF HIS SPEAKING NOTES IN WRITING.  
ABSHIRE SAID THAT HE COULD MAKE NO PROMISES ABOUT THIS BUT WOULD  
TRY TO OBTAIN AUTHORITY. OLCAY (TURKEY) SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT  
HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE IRANIANS BUT HAD FOUND THEM TOTALLY  
NEGATIVE, ALTHOUGH THEY HAD AT LEAST ALLOWED DISCUSSION OF THE  
DIPLOMATIC ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM: WITH MANY OTHERS THEY HAD  
REJECTED EVEN THAT.

4. AFTER LUNCH OJEDA (SPAIN) TOOK ME ASIDE TO EXPRESS CONCERN  
AT WHAT ABSHIRE HAD SAID, WHICH HE SEEMED TO HAVE INTERPRETED  
AS PRESAGING IMMEDIATE ACTION. I ASSURED HIM THAT IT WAS CLEAR  
THAT ABSHIRE HAD BEEN TALKING MERELY OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING.

PARIS PASS SAVING UKDEL DECD

GRAHAM