

IRAN/IRAQ

ADVANCE COPIES 18



PS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
SIR J LEAHY
MR EGERTON
HD/MED
HD/NENAD
HD/UND
HD/CONS. D
HD/CONS. EM UNIT
HD/NEWS D
HD/DEFENCE D

PS/No.10 DOWNING ST (2)

CABINET OFFICE D I O

RESIDENT CLERK

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPY

Prime Minister.

This would be significant.

F/C.O. are investigating.

A.S.C. 4/6.

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM KUWAIT 041130Z JUN84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 218 OF 04 JUNE 84

AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK

AND INFORMATION IMMEDIATE GULF POSTS, WASHINGTON, PARIS, BAGHDAD,
TEHRAN.

ATTACKS ON SHIPPING IN THE GULF.

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED CONFIRMATION OF TODAY'S KUWAIT PRESS REPORTS THAT US NAVAL VESSELS HAVE BEGUN PROTECTING OIL TANKERS AND COMMERCIAL SHIPS IN THE GULF. KOTC HAVE TOLD US THAT THE TANKER RAS AL JALAI'A WAS ESCORTED BY TWO US NAVAL VESSELS FROM APPROXIMATELY 27 DEGREES NORTH TO JUST OFF BAHRAIN, FROM THERE TWO OTHER US VESSELS TOOK UP THE TASK ESCORTING THE TANKER TO NEAR ARABI ISLAND, ABOUT 140 MILES SOUTH OF KUWAIT. NO RADIO CONTACT WAS MADE AT ANY TIME.

2. ANOTHER KOTC TANKER, THE RAS AL BASHIR, WAS ESCORTED IN THE SAME MANNER, THOUGH THIS TIME THE US NAVAL VESSELS CAME SO CLOSE TO THE TANKER THAT THE SWEDISH MASTER WAS FORCED TO BREAK RADIO SILENCE IN ORDER TO PREVENT A COLLISION. THE MASTER DESCRIBED THE US ATTITUDE AS INSISTENT AND THREATENING.