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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 June 1984

Prime Minister

Dear John,

Iran/Iraq

In view of the bilateral meetings which the Prime Minister will be having tomorrow, I thought that you might like to have a note on events in the Gulf since the briefing we provided for the Prime Minister's use at yesterday's dinner.

There have been no further attacks on shipping. There is still no confirmation that the Liberian-registered 'Dashaki' was hit by a mine on 6 June: it may have been an engine-room explosion. On the other hand, drifting mines from Iraqi-laid minefields near Bandar Khomeini have been an occasional hazard for some time.

Both sides are continuing to shell civilian targets. The Iranians have shelled the Iraqi port city of Basra where there is a British community of about 75 - there have been no reports of any British casualties. The MOD have no confirmation of press reports that the Iraqis have acquired long-range missiles from the USSR and cluster bombs from Chile. These claims may be intended to build up Iraqi confidence and deter the Iranians from launching their long-awaited major land offensive.

Yesterday evening the Iraqi Ambassador called at the FCO to hand over a copy of his Foreign Minister's appeal to the London Summit for a new initiative to end the war (this message was mentioned in yesterday's briefing).

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

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