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From the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Roger Freeman Esq MP
Minister of State
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Foreign and Comm
London SW

17 August

BCC

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SCD

Prime Minister

Tom King MP
John Major MP
John Wakeham MP
David Waddington MP
Peter Lilley MP
Sir Patrick Mayhew
Sir Robin Butler

Dear Roger,

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AVIATION SECURITY *hap*

William Waldegrave has asked me to reply to your letter of 14 August. Clearly the whole question of the security of British shipping and airline activity in the region of the Gulf needs to be kept under close review. So do the security arrangements for our airlines' operations elsewhere given the enhanced threat from terrorist activity. I know that our respective officials have been in close touch, particularly to ensure that other countries take their responsibilities towards aviation security as seriously as the current situation warrants. I note that procedures for identification of aircraft in the vicinity of naval ships in the Gulf have been reissued, but hope that air traffic control authorities are routing civil aircraft well away from the danger zones.

While our Emergency Unit and the Transport Co-ordination Centre are open to deal with the current crisis I am confident that the short term arrangements for preventing civil aircraft from flying into war zones will operate effectively. But we do need to establish longer term procedures with your National Air Traffic Control Services to prevent a repetition of BA 149's misfortune. I have instructed staff here to look at this problem urgently with your officials.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Tom King, John Major, John Wakeham, David Waddington, Peter Lilley, Sir Patrick Mayhew and Sir Robin Butler.

John Gaver
Mark

Mark Lennox-Boyd

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