

Secret

21(a-f)

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Prime Minister

the further method on  
naval enforcement ROE.

An assault boarding party  
does not sound a

promising option.  
Aimed fire at the bridge  
is thought likely to stop  
most ships, but could be

ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN SUPPORT OF UN EMBARGO

MO6/17/15

PRIME MINISTER

In my Private Secretary's letter of 20 August we outlined the sequence of available enforcement measures permitted by our current ROE against sanction breaking ships, and indicated that we were looking at what further measures might be appropriate.

2. We have identified two broadly viable options to be used as a follow-on to firing at the funnel of a ship which fails to stop. One would be to fire small calibre fire at the bridge, after due warnings, the other - to land an assault boarding party of sufficient size and with sufficiently robust ROE to overcome any armed resistance.

3. There are a series of escalating steps within the option of firing at the bridge. After appropriate warnings which would give sufficient time to clear the bridge the first step would be a single shot fired at the bridge using small calibre weapons (30mm or less) and solid (non-explosive) ammunition (to reduce collateral damage, in particular the possibility of fires which could cause extensive damage to or loss of the vessel). If the vessel still failed to comply with instructions, after further warnings the next step would be a multiple shot burst at the bridge, still using small calibre weapons and practice ammunition, but ultimately resorting to normal (HE) ammunition if necessary, again after an appropriate warning.

4. As for an assault boarding party, the current ROE provide for circumstances in which a boarding party is landed on a acquiescent vessel. They also allow for landing a boarding party on a vessel which is not acquiescent but where specific armed resistance is not anticipated. In these circumstances the boarding party would operate to JSP 385, that is they would be permitted to fire in self defence.

5. The current ROE do not, however, cover a scenario where there is reason to believe that the Master and members of the

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You  
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discuss  
forward  
morning.  
COD  
22/8



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crew will put up armed resistance. In these circumstances an assault boarding party comprising RM personnel might be put on the vessel, either boarding from alongside or landed by helicopter. (Such an assault party could not however be expected to cope with the extreme case where hostages are used to prevent the use of force, which would have to be dealt with on a 'one-off' basis in direct consultation with London.)

6. An assault boarding party of sufficient size to overcome armed resistance would exceed the capacity of a single helicopter carried by a destroyer or frigate. Further consideration is being given both to the size of boarding party which would be required and to ways in which it could be deployed. In parallel we are looking at whether rules of engagement based on the principle of self-defence would be sufficient to allow a boarding party to take over the vessel. This work is being done as a matter of urgency and I will report further in a couple of days time.

7. In the meantime, we have refined the available measures outlined in my letter of 20 August in the light of these further possible steps. The sequence of available enforcement measures, from warnings through firing on the bridge, all the way to complete disablement, is shown in the note attached behind. You will wish to note the following points:

i. Depth charges The dropping of depth charges for warning purposes is now included as a discrete step. It is assessed that the closest safe distance is 100 yards; this would be likely to cause severe shake but no real damage to the vessel. We have considered whether depth charges should be used to attempt to stop a vessel, but have concluded that this could cause damage which would result in spillages, or could damage the engine and steering gear to an extent that the vessel became uncontrollable;

ii. Aimed fire at the funnel The ROE now allow for firing by small calibre weapons using practice ammunition, and as a separate measure, firing using HE ammunition. We have decided to withdraw the option of firing the main armament of the RN ship, as this intrinsically carries greater risk of collateral damage because of difficulties involved in aiming a 4.5 inch gun at a single point on the vessel but is unlikely to be significantly more effective as a means of persuasion.

8. The Navy believe that the full sequence of events listed in the Annex, including the additional steps leading ultimately to



the firing of live small-calibre ammunition at the bridge, should be sufficient to halt the most determined master. Since the full sequence of measures under the existing ROE would normally take several hours, there would normally be sufficient time to consult London before firing on the bridge or mounting an assault boarding party. In the very unlikely event that these steps were not sufficient, the way forward would be to seek progressively to disable the vessel using main armament or missiles with a serious risk of loss of life, major damage (or even loss of the vessel) and consequent pollution (in the case of tankers).

9. The additional steps I have identified clearly go considerably further than the current measures adopted by our allies and potential allies. Indeed, we understand that the US are urgently reassessing their stance on the enforcement of the embargo while the issue is considered by the UN, and that in the meantime US ROE relating to the use of force have been put on hold. Until we have had an opportunity to discuss this tomorrow, I have issued similar instructions that RN ships should not use force without specific authorisation from a Defence Minister.

10. Finally, we have also been pursuing the question of operations in the IAZ through our contacts at the UN. The Iranians have said that they would raise no difficulties about Nimrods operating in the IAZ (outside their territorial seas) and we have passed them details of radio frequencies which our aircraft will monitor to ensure that we can communicate with them if necessary. The Iranians have been much less explicit about ships but Sir Crispin Tickell has advised that they appear to have tacitly accepted that our warships will be operating within the IAZ but have not indicated what their attitude might be if we were to carry out interceptions there. Sir Crispin believes that it is unlikely that we will persuade the Iranians to be more explicit on this point. In these circumstances, I believe that we should allow ARMILLA ships to carry out surveillance activity as required within the IAZ (outside territorial seas) but interceptions may only be carried out with explicit authority from London. If we were to exclude the possibility of interceptions within the IAZ (through which the major shipping lanes to Iraq and Kuwait pass) we would risk leaving a loophole in enforcement. We should therefore consider rapidly the need for interceptions within the IAZ on a case by case basis, particularly taking into account the feasibility of arranging for the ship to be monitored and intercepted on leaving the IAZ.

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11. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Energy, Attorney General, and the Cabinet Secretary.

SW

TK

(Approved by the Defence Secretary and initialled in his absence)

ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN SUPPORT OF UN EMBARGO

The purpose of these measures is to implement the UN embargo of all cargoes, including food, bound to or from Iraq or Kuwait (with the exception of inbound medical supplies). Inbound vessels found to be in breach of the embargo are to be diverted to destinations other than Iraq or Kuwait. Outbound vessels in breach of the embargo are not to be allowed to proceed. The following sequence of measures may be used to secure compliance:

(a) Initial interrogation by radio and/or other means to establish basic information;

(b) If further investigation is necessary (to inspect cargo/papers) request agreement to accept boarding party;

If the master refuses to accept a boarding party or, where appropriate, to accept diversion instructions the following steps may be used;

(c) harassment which does not result in damage; and, after exploring all other avenues of communication and manoeuvring, and after giving the vessel every opportunity to comply with instructions:

(d) warning shots may be fired (after due warning) initially no closer than 300 yards from the target, reducing to 100 yards;

(e) alternatively, or in addition, warning depth charges may be dropped after due warning, initially no closer than 300 yards from the target, reducing to 100 yards;

(f) aimed shots at the funnel by small calibre weapons using solid ammunition (after due warning), beginning with single shots and progressing to burst fire;

(g) aimed shots at the funnel by small calibre weapons using live (HE) ammunition (again after due warning), beginning with single shots and progressing to burst fire;

*This will be covered by John Peters*



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If the vessel still failed to comply with instructions, the following steps might be taken:

(h) after specific warnings (to stop the vessel and vacate the bridge), small calibre (30 mm max) fire at the bridge, initially a single shot using solid (i.e. non-explosive) shot, escalating (after due warning) to a multiple burst using solid ammunition and a multiple burst using live (HE) ammunition.

At any stage in the preceding sequence there may be an opportunity to land a boarding party.

Where the vessel still failed to stop, and/or where there was good reason to believe that the Master and crew would put up armed resistance, the further options would be to land an assault boarding party (the practical and legal implications of this are being studied further) or to seek progressively to disable the vessel using major armaments with serious risk of loss of life, major damage to (or loss of) the vessel and consequent pollution.

20(a-d) ②

EMBARGO SURVEILLANCE CENTRE

## SUSPECT VESSELS AND CARGOES REPORT

AS AT 0600Z HRS 22 AUGUST 1990

P. H. H. H.

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22/8

1. At 0431Z on 21 August two Iraqi oil tankers attempted to break the Embargo and are being shadowed by the US Navy. Tankers are the BABA GUR GUR 36,397 tonnes dwt, and the KHANAQIN 35,338 tonnes dwt. Vessels have left the Gulf of Oman and are travelling south east, possibly towards the Gulf of Aden (see Note 2).

2. BALQEES, a RO/RO ferry, Iraqi registered, carrying military equipment from Poland and East Germany, (loaded before invasion and embargo), (UNCLASSIFIED), unloaded equipment in Tripoli on 19 August (SECRET). Reassigned as passenger ferry in Red Sea (SECRET). It is possible that part of the cargo could be transhipped to Iraq by air (see next para).

3. There is still no evidence of cargo unloaded from ships in Tripoli being transferred to aeroplanes bound for Amman and Baghdad. But we now know that Libyan Arab Airlines flew 4 Ilyushin IL76T flights from Tripoli to Baghdad for general cargo.

ADEN

4. Reuters reported on 21 August that Iraq has a processing deal with the Aden refinery under which it supplies 30,000 barrels per day of crude. The products allegedly sold by Aden on Baghdad's account (see Note 1).

Report from British Embassy Aden that two unidentified tankers are alongside terminal jetty. One of which appears in ballast, the other was confirmed, 1800Z on 21 August, to be discharging oil (Aden telno 198 to FCO). There are two more vessels, also unidentified, in outer harbour (see also para 6 Ain Zalah).

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5. We now have evidence of Iraqi bound ships unloading cargoes in North African ports. But there is no evidence so far of these cargoes being reloaded on other ships or on aeroplanes bound for Amman and Baghdad. The ESC is working closely with those concerned to monitor the situation. SECRET

6. AIN ZALAH Iraqi tanker 36,330 tonnes dwt, eta Aden 0700Z on 21 August. Original Yemeni assurance that vessel would be refused permission to dock has apparently been rescinded. Yemeni Foreign Minister told US Ambassador that AIN ZALAH would be allowed to dock but not discharge cargo. Vessel is believed to require repairs and to be carrying 26,500 mt crude or fuel oil for Aden refineries company.

7. The HUAZ SARONTA (Philippines) left Southampton 10 August for Aqaba, carrying defence equipment. Now believed in port Pwaeus and considering offloading cargo.

8. HINK JIN HAI (Chinese freighter) carrying 14,200 tonnes Iraqi fertiliser stopped by US Naval vessel 18 August (NFI).

9. JOLCOS LEADER (Greek) carrying Canadian wheat etc. Aqaba 24 August. Consider seeking UK cooperation in contacting owners.

Note 1

Oil storage capacity at Aden:

- |    |                      |                                   |
|----|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. | Little Aden Refinery | 655,000 tons of products          |
|    |                      | 211,000 tons crude in 92 tanks    |
| b. | Little Aden Port     |                                   |
|    | Storage              | 105,000 tons products in 20 tanks |
| c. | MA 'allam (Main      |                                   |
|    | Harbour)             | 327,788 tons in 29 tanks          |



Note 2

Earlier reports (MOD) that KHANAQIN claimed to be in ballast BABA GUR GUR now believed to be carrying 240,000 barrels Basrah light crude.

## EMBARGO SURVEILLANCE CENTRE

USABLE INFORMATION

1. Reuters reported on 21 August that the 36,330 tonne Iraqi vessel AIN ZALAH unloaded its cargo that day at the refinery in Aden, Yemen. (We have collateral.) The vessel is listed by Lloyds as a crude carrier.

2. Reuters also reported that Iraq has a processing deal with the Aden refinery under which it supplies 30,000 barrels per day of crude. The products are allegedly sold by Aden on Baghdad's account.