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PRIME MINISTER

OPTIONS FOR GROUND FORCE REINFORCEMENTS TO SAUDI ARABIA

I agreed to report this evening on the two options that we discussed this morning, of either an enhanced armoured brigade, or an artillery brigade with a reconnaissance regiment as well. The composition of the two options is described in more detail in Annexes A and B.

Armoured Brigade

2. We know that the US in-theatre commander, Gen Schwarzkopf, regards the tank imbalance between allied and Iraqi forces (likely to be 1:3 even by December) as his major military concern and would particularly value the deployment of a UK armoured unit. An armoured brigade (some 6000-7500 men in total) with 114 Challenger tanks, a battalion of infantry with Warrior armoured fighting vehicles, an artillery regiment and an armoured reconnaissance squadron would provide an all round capability and make a significant contribution towards alleviating the shortage of allied tanks.

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3. The Challenger would be a good match for the very best of the Iraqi tanks (the T72M1). It has had reliability problems but these are mainly with sophisticated turret systems (which are desirable rather than essential). The Army is confident that as long as an above average level of logistic support is provided it will be able to maintain a proper level of operational availability. This would be at the expense of the readiness of our Challenger force in Germany.

4. The outline package therefore includes an extra element of support to ensure that the brigade would be fully sustainable. It might be possible to reduce the third line element (ie the most rearward element along the line of communication). This would depend on the degree to which we could draw upon support from US forces in theatre - this is one of the factors which would need to be established by a very early in-theatre reconnaissance. Although a number of modifications would be required for desert conditions, Challenger was developed from a tank designed specifically to operate in such conditions and the modifications are relatively minor and could be carried out either in transit or on arrival in theatre.

5. I have spoken twice to Sir Colin Chandler today, and asked his Managing Director Mr Boxall to call on me in London. They have not disguised the risks associated with deploying Challenger but believe that - with the modifications envisaged - it will show up well. Vickers have offered to provide free a team of 10 in the Gulf, supplemented by the main turret systems contractors - Barr and Stroud and Marconi.

6. The light armoured vehicles of the reconnaissance squadron (Scorpion family - with an excellent record and used in a number of Middle East countries) and the Warrior vehicles of the armoured infantry battalion (successfully trialled in desert conditions)



would provide an effective additional fighting element and the brigade would also include half the guns of the independent artillery brigade option. Challenger, Warrior and, to a slightly lesser degree, Scorpion/Scimitar all provide collective NBC protection for those inside.

Artillery brigade and reconnaissance regiment

7. A fully self-supporting artillery brigade (48 guns, again approx 6000-7500 men) would also provide a substantial improvement in capability responding to a clear military imbalance (about 2:1 in Iraq's favour at the beginning of November). The brigade would deploy with a fully sufficient stock of ammunition for sustained operations, but this would amount to about two thirds of the immediately available national ammunition of this type. The brigade would have a clear defensive role but would equally be able to provide support for offensive operations if required. In the absence of other UK ground troops, it would need to be integrated into a larger US formation (it has interoperable equipment). A reconnaissance regiment of light armoured vehicles equipped with vehicles of the Scorpion family would provide a further capability in which the British Army has particular expertise (although the US forces are already well provided in this area).

Command and Control

8. Both an artillery brigade and the armoured brigade would need to be closely integrated with US forces. We would, of course, retain the right of decision over whether our forces should be committed to any US operation but, once we had taken such a decision, we would need to assign them to US operational control, although the degree of operational integration would be greater in the case of artillery. This parallels the arrangements for our forces committed to NATO.



Deployment

9. In each case the overall time from a decision to the formation (drawn largely from BAOR) being available for operations in theatre would be about 8-9 weeks. This includes the time necessary to prepare for departure (including acquiring ships from trade), to deploy to the Gulf and to move forward and come to operational readiness. In both cases a very early in-theatre reconnaissance would be absolutely essential to refine the detailed requirements of the option selected and, in particular, to establish the extent of third line support required (for example the degree to which we could rely on existing arrangements for water distribution or casualty evacuation). It would also be essential to set in hand immediately procurement of items required for desert operations.

Costs

10. Until deployment details are clearer it is not possible to identify the additional costs likely to arise, but a very broad estimate of the initial transportation costs alone (around £15M in each case) makes it clear that these would be substantial (and, of course, recovery costs would be similar). Other additional costs are bound to arise for the procurement or modification of equipment to suit the particular conditions of the deployment. I must repeat my warning to OD(G) that the likely magnitude of these additional costs will certainly involve a call on the Reserve.

Conclusion

11. I have spoken to Alan Clark who is away for a couple of days. He believes we must send an integrated force (which an armoured brigade provides) but also consider adding some Lynx helicopters with anti-tank missiles. Previously we assumed that the US would provide helicopters, but I would look specifically at this issue and



consider further whether this should be added after the recce party has returned.

12. Both options would provide a strong political signal and both would respond to a military imbalance but it is clear that, from a military point of view, the US would prefer an armoured brigade. We believe that we could achieve sufficient battle availability of Challenger tanks with proper spares provision and support. Either could be sustained for an extended period (although the artillery option would make greater demands on the immediately available ammunition stocks). The armoured brigade would provide a much more effective and flexible overall fighting force, with a large number of its armoured fighting vehicles and its own artillery regiment in addition to its main battle tanks and, because of its more supporting role, the independent artillery brigade might also be seen as a less direct commitment.

13. I now plan to put the options to General Schwarzkopf tomorrow - making clear the advantages and risks in each. After hearing his comments, I will then circulate a full paper for discussion at OD(G) and OD on Friday.

Ministry of Defence

11H September 1990

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(Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence).

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THE ARMOURED BRIGADE

1. Task Organization. An armoured brigade consisting of an armoured reconnaissance squadron, 2 Challenger regiments, and an armoured infantry battalion together with artillery, engineer and integral first line logistic support numbers some 5150 men.

2. Logistic Support. Further third line, or line of communication, logistic support required to sustain the brigade between the rear maintenance area and the brigade positions numbers a further 2300 men. This will be dependent on a detailed in theatre reconnaissance to determine the degree of allied and host nation support. The numbers required could vary up or down as a result.

3. US Support. This brigade will be dependent on the US formation into which it will be integrated for additional combat support such as area Air Defence (normally provided by Rapier), general support artillery, reconnaissance and anti tank aviation support.

4. Capability. The armoured brigade provides a flexible and hard hitting all arms group capable of both defensive and offensive operations. It is well suited to manoeuvre operations in the open desert. It is sustainable in the long term through roulement.

5. Movement. Movement of the brigade to the Gulf by sea will take in the order of 30-40 days which includes the time required to collect together the STUFT, move to the port and load the shipping. Necessary preparations will have to have been completed beforehand. Any equipments needed for operations in desert conditions not obtained before departure, will have to be flown out to marry up with the brigade in theatre. On arrival in the Gulf the formation will need to unload, move forward up the line of communication, shake out, acclimatize for operations and conduct the necessary battle procedures, before it is ready for operations.

6. Summary of Main Equipments and Manpower.

MBT	114		
Warrior	70		
Scorpion	16		
Scimitar	20	<u>Manpower</u>	
Striker	4		
Milan	24	F Echelon	3500
Mortar 81mm	8	Immediate log sp	1650
M109	24		
Javelin	36		
			<u>5150</u>
		Third Line log sp	<u>2300</u>
		TOTAL	7450

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ARTILLERY BRIGADE WITH RECONNAISSANCE TROOPS

1. Task Organisation. An artillery brigade with reconnaissance troops is an ad hoc grouping that is unusual in that it combines 2 separate functions and is not a balanced grouping. The artillery brigade contains two field regiments (M109) together with the necessary engineer and immediate logistic support; this numbers some 4380 men. The reconnaissance element is provided by an armoured reconnaissance regiment with first and second line logistic support, strength 910 men. The total is 5290. This force would need to be integrated with a US formation.

2. Logistic Support. Although logistic support is included in the task organization there will be a need for third line support, either provided by the UK or from US resources. This L of C support would require additional manpower of about 2250. The exact amount of support required will depend on the results of a detailed in-theatre reconnaissance and the amount of allied or host nation support that can be provided.

3. US Support. This force would be dependent upon the US formation with which it is integrated for additional area air defence (normally provided by Rapier), meteorological data and any helicopter lift.

4. Capability. This force would almost certainly be split to different tasks, with the guns being used in one place and the reconnaissance troops being used in another. The M109 regiments would provide an enhancement in an area where there is an imbalance of forces. They would have to be completely integrated with the host US formation. The reconnaissance regiment would provide extra capability and might be used in a wide variety of tasks, but this is an area in which there are already sufficient US assets.

5. Movement. Movement of the force to the Gulf would take some 30-40 days which includes the time to collect the STUFT, the move to the port and loading as well as the 19-20 days sailing time. On arrival further time will be needed to unload, deploy to the area of operations, acclimatise and conduct the necessary battle procedure.

6. Summary of Main Equipments and Manpower.

<u>Equipment</u>		<u>Manpower</u>	
Scimitar	48	F Ech	2560
Striker	16	Immed log sp	2730
M109	48		<u>5290</u>
Javelin	36	3rd line log sp	2250
			<u>7540</u>

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11th September

Dear Charles,

FORCE OPTIONS FOR THE GULF

The Prime Minister might find the attached guide helpful, we reading the Defence Secretary's remarks at this evening.

Yours sincerely

Jim Goss

C. D. Pouch Esq.

OP GRANBY - ARMOURED BRIGADE DEPLOYMENT
MAIN EQUIPMENTS

1. CHALLENGER. Main equipment of Armoured Regiment.



Main Battle Tank with Chobham Armour.
57 tanks in Armoured Regiments.
Crew of 4.
120mm rifled gun, firing APFSDS
(armour piercing) ammunition to 2000
metres, HESH (high explosive) to 1500
metres. Carries 52 rounds main armament.
Thermal Imager night gun sight - range 3500m(+).
NBC protected.
Fuel range - 225 Kms.

2. WARRIOR. Main equipment of Armoured Infantry Battalion.



Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicle.
Excellent protection and manoevrability;
can keep pace with CHALLENGER MBT.
45 WARRIOR per battalion, at rate of one
per section.
Armed with 30mm Rarden Cannon and 7.62mm
Chain Gun.
Carries 10 men with their equipment.
II (Image Intensifier) night sight - range 1000m.
NBC protected.
Fuel range - 240 Kms.

3. SCIMITAR. Main equipment of Armoured Recce Regiment.



Light tracked recce vehicle.
48 SCIMITAR per regiment.
Armed with 30mm Rarden Cannon
(range 1500 metres)(165 rounds)
and 7.62mm GPMG.
II (Image Intensifier) night sight
(range 1200 metres).
Crew of 3.

4. STRIKER. Subsidiary equipment of Armoured Recce Regiment.



SWINGFIRE anti-tank guided missile
launcher vehicle on SCIMITAR chassis.
16 STRIKER per regiment.
Role to provide overwatch cover for
recce patrols.
Range 4000 m, carries 10 missiles.
Crew of 3.
TI (Thermal Imaging) night sight
(range 4000m).

5. M109. Main equipment of Armoured Brigade s Artillery Regiment.



Self-propelled 155mm artillery gun.
24 guns per regiment, in 3 batteries
of 8 guns.
Range 18,000m.
90 rounds per gun at 1st line.

6. JAVELIN. Air Defence weapon integral to Armoured Brigade.

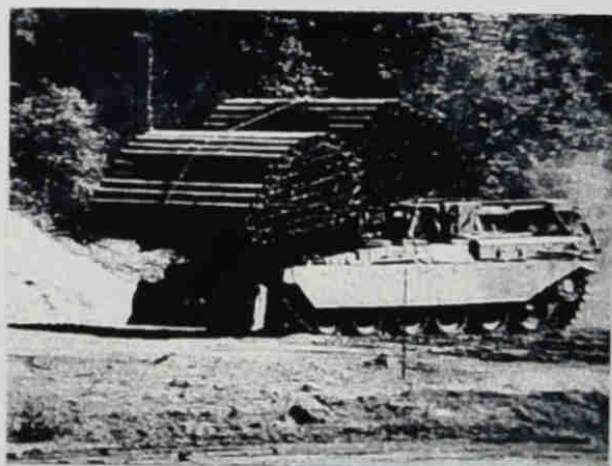


Hand-held Close Air Defence weapon. for point defence of key assets. SACLOS guidance (semi-automatic command to line-of-sight). Improved version of BLOWPIPE which was used in Falklands campaign. Designed to destroy head-on attacking aircraft before weapon release. Range 4500 - 5500m, maximum effective height 2000m. 12 JAVELIN in a troop, each mounted in a SPARTAN (based on SCIMITAR chassis).

7. Engineer Equipment.

A Close Support Squadron RE will provide troops, one each in intimate support of each battle group, each consisting of:

2 x AVRE, 2 x CET, one field troop.



AVRE

Turretless Chieftain chassis with "roof-rack" for carrying fascines capable of filling up to 8 metre gap.



CET

Lightly armoured earthmoving equipment. Capable of swimming.

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PRIME MINISTER

ADDITIONAL FORCES TO THE GULF

I attach the Defence Secretary's note fleshing out the two options for additional ground forces which we discussed yesterday. They are:

- a full armoured brigade.
- an artillery brigade plus a reconnaissance regiment.

He clearly inclines towards the former, although is not sold on it. Alan Clark also favours an armoured brigade plus helicopters. He intends to ask AVM Wilson to discuss both options with General Schwarzkopf today. The reaction is fairly predictable: offered a choice between what he has asked for and what he has not asked for, the General is likely to go for the former.

Meanwhile some-one has told the press that tanks are the most likely option (although the serious papers say the decision has yet to be taken). That makes it harder not to send them, since it would look like backing down. You have had Archie Hamilton's views and seen the Attorney General's minute: both of them very dubious about the advisability of sending tanks.

How do we stop the decision being effectively pre-empted? Not easy, but there are a number of points:

- my guess is that OD would go for the more cautious option (and the Chancellor will have the financial consequences much in mind) if it can be kept open until then.
- I can try to get a statement from Scowcroft that, whatever the military preference, the Americans would be happy with

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whatever we decide to send. This could be used publicly.

- you could see the Chief of Staff (but this will leak and look like a major crisis or disagreement).
- you can insist on a formal written recommendation from the Chief of Staff with assurances about Challenger's operational availability, as well as similar written assurances from the company.
- we can get some counter-briefing of the press done on the advantages of the artillery brigade option.

One point which comes out of the Defence Secretary's minute is that neither option would be operationally ready until 20 November at earliest.

All that said, if we are just thinking about the political impact - both domestically and internationally - there is no doubt that tanks play very well. But if it came to a conflict and the Challenger did not perform, the down-side risk would be very much greater than with artillery: at least loss of reputation, at worst needless loss of life.

C.D.P.

C. D. POWELL

12 September 1990

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10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

I don't think
you ever had the
time to read
the Defence Secretary's
minute attached to
my note.

mb

CAD

12/9.