

PRIME MINISTER

19(A-B)

MEETING OF MINISTERS: THE GULF

You have a meeting of Ministers before Cabinet tomorrow to discuss the latest developments in the Gulf. We had to cancel last Monday's meeting. The main points to cover are set out below.

DIPLOMATIC

Activity at the United Nations

You mentioned to President Bush the idea of a presentation to the Security Council on Iraqi brutality in Kuwait. He was enthusiastic. We should now be pursuing this vigorously.

The new development is an attempt by the Non-Aligned to table an unsatisfactory Resolution on the prospects for a peaceful solution and on post-withdrawal arrangements. We are trying to get this pushed away into the future.

The Security Council is likely to return to the Palestinian question this week.

Hostages

A number of hostage missions are in progress or about to start: Herr Brandt, the former Danish Prime Minister, the former New Zealand Prime Minister and the Belgian Red Cross. But we managed to scotch attempts to get EC or UN backing for Brandt's mission.

Meeting with King Hussein

You might give a quick account of your meeting with King Hussein. His main pre-occupation was with the economic and political situation in Jordan, which he painted in very gloomy terms. He did not attempt to sell you any particular peace initiative. His subsequent speech to the World Climate Conference was rather disgraceful.

Message from Mr Gorbachev

You will see in your box that Mr Gorbachev has sent you a message in reply to your's about the situation in the Gulf. It is a reasonably robust statement of the Soviet position and to that extent reassuring.

Secretary Baker's Visit

Secretary Baker's visits seem to have been quite successful so far. He is reported to have agreed command and control arrangements with the Saudis. There are also suggestions that the Chinese Foreign Minister told him that China would not block a UN Resolution authorising force against Iraq. Secretary Baker will be seeing you on Friday.

Sanctions

Evidence of malfeasance still abounds. There are now intelligence reports that substantial numbers of trucks are still crossing from Jordan to Iraq through the desert.

Embassies in Kuwait

The President clearly remains deeply preoccupied about the US Embassy in Kuwait, and said that Secretary Baker would wish to discuss this with you.

Meanwhile, officials have prepared a paper (in the folder) about the position of the British and American Embassies. They recommend we should question that the Americans reprovise their Embassy: should avoid a joint withdrawal: and should review the position of our own Embassy in mid-November.

MILITARY

US Forces

The President confirmed to you today that the US would be sending additional forces to the Gulf. He did not demur when you said we must be ready to initiate military action by early January at latest. You offered help with transport for US forces: and said that we would see what reserves we could make available in Germany, to be moved to the Gulf if necessary.

[NOT ALL THOSE PRESENT WILL BE AWARE OF THE FULL DETAILS OF YOUR TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT AND MY TALK WITH SCOWCROFT]

C.D.P.
Charles Powell

7 November 1990

c: Ministers (MJ)

P.T.O.