



Thank you.
Who will be with me?
Charles? Andrew?
Robin B?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 December 1990

Prime Minister

Dear Charles,

Can we do
brief Mr. Kinnoch or
Nashley evening in your room
in the home.

Gulf

Thank you for your letter of 12 December about the Prime Minister's intention to brief the Leader of the Opposition on the Gulf crisis on 17 December.

Release of the Hostages

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The release of the hostages has tended to overshadow other developments on the Gulf in recent days. The Prime Minister might indicate that we believe Saddam Hussein probably acted because he realised the hostage policy was doing him no good and to put the Iraqis in a better position for their contacts with the Americans. We have acted promptly to get over 800 of our people out; the vast majority on charter aircraft which we have organised. In all, we have now evacuated about 1400 people from Iraq and Kuwait. We have met and assisted the hostages on arrival, with the cooperation of other government departments, notably the DSS: these arrangements seem to have gone well.

The great majority of our citizens have now left Iraq and Kuwait. We are strongly urging the rest to go too. We estimate that the community remaining in Kuwait now numbers about 40. We expect the number in Iraq to be down to about 90 by 17 December. From now on most of those leaving will probably make their way out of Iraq on scheduled flights via Jordan. But we will be prepared to charter further aircraft if needed. Inevitably, a hard core (mainly British wives of Iraqi and Kuwaiti citizens and those who have chosen to make their lives in Iraq and Kuwait) will choose to stay.

The staff of our Embassy in Kuwait will probably be withdrawn on 16 December. Mr Weston and Mr Banks are expected to arrive in London on 18 December. It will be impossible to provide those in Kuwait with consular assistance thereafter (before their withdrawal Mr Weston and Mr Banks were in touch with as many as possible to urge them to leave). We may also need to thin out our staff in Baghdad as a precaution against the outbreak of hostilities. (Mr Walker, our Ambassador in Baghdad, is in London for consultations to discuss this and other issues. He will return after Christmas.)

British communities in war risk countries

copy please

The Prime Minister will wish to explain the background to the revised consular advice agreed by OPD(G) on 12 December, which we intend to issue on 17 December. There are some 50,000 British nationals in the Gulf, many in countries at direct risk from Iraqi military action. It is unlikely we will get much warning of an outbreak of hostilities. We have decided to issue



advice aimed at reducing the size of our communities in the main danger areas: Bahrain, Qatar, the eastern region of Saudi Arabia, and the cities of Riyadh and Tabuk. About 19,000 British nationals live in these areas, of whom about 7,000 will be directly affected by the advice.

We are concerned not to cause alarm or separate families unnecessarily. But by advising dependants to leave these areas we can significantly reduce the numbers at risk. We consulted the Americans and our EC colleagues in advance: but, as in Iraq, we have much the largest western community in the area and are concerned that we should give them the best advice we can. We anticipate that those affected will have time to leave on normal commercial flights.

US/Iraqi contacts

The Prime Minister might recall that the Iraqis have suggested their Foreign Minister should go to Washington on 17 December for talks with Secretary Baker and President Bush. The Americans are unlikely to agree before a date is fixed for Mr Baker's visit to Baghdad. The US Administration are insisting this visit take place before 3 January: the Iraqis have proposed 12 January in an attempt to spin out the process. After his meeting with Baker in Houston on 10 December, Shevardnadze said publicly this was too late. The Prime Minister might tell Mr Kinnock that President Bush has assured him that there will be no dilution of the basic message to Saddam Hussein at their meetings with the Iraqis. The release of the hostages has not reduced either their opposition to negotiations or their determination to see the relevant Security Council Resolutions implemented in all their parts. Like us they would much prefer a peaceful solution (see below) but are prepared to use force if necessary.

The Prime Minister might go on to give an account of the European Council's discussions and statement on the Gulf. He might explain the guidelines set for the Presidency's meeting with the Iraqi Foreign Minister after his talks in Washington, to ensure that the Iraqis are given a robust statement of the Twelve's determination to see them out of Kuwait. He might add that the French have confirmed that they will reinforce their troops in the Gulf, while the Germans have indicated that they are working to sustain public support for our common policy.

Finally, the Prime Minister might mention that there is broad agreement on the desirability of a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Five before Baker goes to Baghdad (though the Chinese may still play hard to get). The Russians told us on 10 December that Shevardnadze highly valued this initiative. But it is unlikely to be possible to fix a date before Baker's plans are clearer.

Peace initiatives

The Prime Minister might explain, if necessary, that both the Iraqis and the Kuwaitis have denied media reports of negotiations over ceding the southern end of the Rumaila oil field and leasing the two disputed islands of Bubiyan and Warba to Iraq. He might add that the Iraqis appear to have shown no readiness to comply with the UN Resolution to the President of Algeria on his recent visit to



Baghdad, and that the determination of Egypt and Saudi Arabia as well as Kuwait to resist an 'Arab Solution' remains firm. Further 'peace initiatives' are to be anticipated in the run-up to 15 January.

Will we go to war? Why not wait longer?

Following the debate in the House of Commons on 11 December, Mr Kinnock is likely to probe the Prime Minister's thinking on the timing of any hostilities and perhaps argue that sanctions should be given more time to work. The Prime Minister will want to judge how far to take him into his confidence but could make the following points:

- SCR 678 is not a call to arms. It sets a date after which those Governments assisting Kuwait will be authorised to use all necessary means (including force) to secure the implementation of Security Council Resolutions on the Gulf crisis;
- no decisions have yet been taken on the use of force. The multinational force will not be fully operational by 15 January. Weather conditions in the Gulf are likely to make a campaign difficult much after the beginning of April. The Saudis would also be reluctant to see hostilities commence after the beginning of Ramadan (mid-March), though on past precedent there would be nothing to prevent fighting continuing into Ramadan;
- sanctions are having some effect but are unlikely of themselves to be enough to persuade Saddam Hussein to withdraw within this timescale. The test of their effectiveness is not whether they are inflicting damage on the Iraqi economy (they are) but whether they will bring Saddam to withdraw. The arguments against waiting longer are:
 - the international coalition has held together partly because it expects to succeed in driving Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The foundation-stone for this is the belief of the Arabs in the resolve of the US and UK to go to war if necessary. They are as aware as us of the time-window for military action. If Saddam Hussein does not withdraw, and if we do not use force, they are likely to conclude that we do not have the resolve to fight. Indeed, it would be hard to gainsay this. The Americans could not maintain their forces at their present level indefinitely in the Gulf. If they do not go into action within the time-window, they will be obliged to withdraw some of their forces. We, too, would find it difficult to maintain our forces indefinitely. Once the Arabs conclude that we are not prepared to fight, they are likely to conclude that Saddam Hussein will win - they have no faith in sanctions. And they want to come out on the winning side. Under those circumstances, Kuwaitis and others are likely to try to strike a deal with Saddam which may leave him in the advantageous position that we have sought to avoid;
 - the Middle East cannot be stable if the Arabs perceive their natural leader to be Saddam Hussein with his massive army. The situation would become still worse if, as we fear, he were able to develop nuclear weapons in the next few years;



- no decision has been taken on military action. Much hangs on the Americans and their ability to keep public opinion on-side. But the possibility of military action between 15 January and April is a real one;
- the longer we wait the more Saddam Hussein will be seen to have successfully driven a coach and horses through the accepted rules of international behaviour. We cannot afford to be seen to let him get away with this;
- the continued despoliation of Kuwait, both in terms of damage to property and Iraqi efforts to drive the Kuwaitis from their country;
- too much delay will give the Iraqis even more opportunity to build up their defences and make the job of ejecting them more difficult and costly in terms of human lives;
- Mr Kaufman's argument that, while hating the idea of war over Kuwait, we have even more the idea of a war throughout the Middle East at a later date if Saddam is allowed to win now.

The Prime Minister will wish to emphasise that we are not looking for war: our aim is to get Saddam out of Kuwait in accordance with the Security Council Resolutions: it would clearly be much better if this could be done without bloodshed.

Israel

The Prime Minister might mention that we are following Israeli reactions to the Gulf crisis carefully. Mr Shamir outlined to him Israel's fears that a peaceful settlement which left Saddam Hussein in charge, with his military machine intact, would pose a grave threat to Israel. We continue to make it clear to the Israelis that their intervention would be fatal for the alliance and to reassure them, as best we can, that we will not settle for a solution which leaves Iraq in a position to destabilise the region.

Defence issues

The Prime Minister may wish to give the Leader of the Opposition some details of British military deployments, drawing on the enclosed sheet. Some 35,000 UK personnel are now committed to the Gulf, from all three services. About 17,000 are already in theatre. Around a further 15,000 Army personnel, with RAF helicopter support, are being deployed to form 1st (British) Armoured Division, which will be fully operational in Saudi Arabia by the end of January.

The agreed command arrangements for UK forces in Saudi Arabia stipulate that any military action by British forces, other than in self-defence, should be agreed with the Saudi and US commands, and that British forces will act in accordance with the 'overall strategic guidance' of the Saudi Supreme Commander.

British forces in the Gulf are under operational command of the UK Joint Commander at RAF Strike Command, High Wycombe, and operational control of British Forces Commander Middle East in Riyadh. Although ultimate national command would be retained, it is likely that tactical control of British forces would be delegated



to a US Commander. Equally, a US brigade may be assigned to 1st Armoured Division's tactical control.

The main units in the Gulf are four destroyers and frigates, 7th Armoured Brigade alongside the US Marines in north-east Saudi Arabia, air-defence Tornados at Dhahran in north-east Saudi Arabia, ground attack Tornados at Tabuk in north-west Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and ground attack Jaguar aircraft in Bahrain.

Visits to the Gulf

The Prime Minister will wish to consider whether to give Mr Kinnock advance notice of the visits to Saudi Arabia, Oman and Egypt planned by himself and, to Saudi Arabia only, by The Prince of Wales, over the Christmas period.

I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (MOD).

Jws.
Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

SECRET
OPERATION GRANBY - UK FORCES COMMITTED AS AT 130700Z DEC 90

2

CLASSIFIED FIGURES

a) In theatre	17005
b) Outside theatre	16513
Total UK Forces committed	33518

PUBLIC FIGURES

a) In theatre	About 17000
b) Outside theatre	About 18000
Total UK Forces committed	About 35000

DD/FF in theatre		MCMVs in theatre		ROYAL NAVY			RFA's/LSUs in theatre			Outside Theatre		
Ship	Personnel	Ship	Personnel	Ship	RFA	RN	Unit	ETA/Loc	Personnel	Unit	ETA/Loc	Personnel
HMS CARDIFF	297	HMS ATHLETIC	47	RFA PORT GRANGE	158	66	HMS DULVERTON	Royalth	50	HMS LEDBURG	Royalth	50
HMS LONDON	304	HMS CATTISTOCK	47	RFA DULDANCE	44	136	12 x SEA KING	Yeovilton	310			
HMS BRAZEN	252	HMS HURWORTH	48	RFA ORANGELEAF	58	5						
HMS GLOUCESTER	285	HMS HERALD (Conv ship)	136	RFA RESOURCE	159	5						
Ashraf bc. FSU	104			RFA ARGUS (PCRS)	85	298						
				ZUIDERKUIJ		21						
				SR GALAHAD	56	3						
				SR PERCIVAL	55	6						
Total RN personnel in theatre				2060	* - 2 Dutch ships supporting UK vessels and operating in Sea Kings from RFA Q. 94			Total RN pers outside theatre			410	
Total RFA personnel in theatre				815				Total RFA pers o/s theatre			0	

Armia Roulement
 Vessels in
 included in
 totals)

Ship	Personnel	Destination	ETA	Replacing/by

Ships taken up from trade **48**

Other LSUs in use **2**

ARMY

Divisional Troops		1st British Armoured Division - in theatre				4th Brigade		1 BR) Armd Div - outside theatre				
Personnel	Total	7th Armoured Brigade		4th Brigade		Personnel	Total	Personnel	ETA/Loc	Total		
Fighting Echelon	374	Fighting Echelon	4600	Fighting Echelon	3	Divisional Troops	9969	4th Bde (incl. 458 BCRs)		4873		
2nd Line Support	2	2nd Line Support	4153	Support elements of 4 Brigades included in (Divisional Troops table)		Equipment	ETA/Loc	Total				
3rd Line Support		3rd Line Support				Challenger MBT		77				
Battle Casualty Regt		Battle Casualty Regt	196			Warrior AFV		192				
Total Divisional Troops	378	Adml support elem	1336	Total 7th Arm'd Bde	10285	Total 4th Brigade	3	M109 155mm SP gun		96		
Equipment Total		Equipment Total		Equipment Total		Equipment Total		M10 Howitzer		38		
M109 155mm SP gun		Challenger MBT	145	117	Challenger MBT			MLRS		13		
M10 Howitzer		Warrior AFV	128	101	Warrior AFV			Lynx helicopters		23		
MLRS		Scorpion	22	17	Scorpion			Gazelle helicopters		23		
Paper		Scholar	25	20	Scholar			RAPIER		32		
Lynx helicopters		M109 155mm SP gun	28	24	2StrAr			AVLB, AVRE, CET		66		
Gazelle helicopters		Javelin	47	35	M109 155mm SP gun			Javelin		47		
					AVLB, AVRE, CET							
Total other Army support personnel in theatre: signals, medical, engineers, Javelin detts, Armia, miscellaneous												
Total 1 British Armd Div in theatre								10664	Sign/Int deta	Cyprus	13	
Total Army personnel in theatre								11481	Total 1 Div pers o/s theatre			14842
								* - total no of equipment in theatre, inc dust	Total Army pers o/s theatre			14856

ROYAL AIR FORCE

In Theatre			Unit			Loc			Outside Theatre		
Unit	Loc	Pers	Unit	Loc	Pers	Unit	ETA/Loc	Personnel	Unit	ETA/Loc	Personnel
18 x TORNADO F3	Dhahran		10 x TORNADO GR1	Tabuk		4 x F4 Phantom + sup	Cyprus				
HQ 4 Wg + LAS	Dhahran	525	4 x TORNADO GR1 ALARM	Tabuk	523	1 x RAPIER sqn	Cyprus	639			
12 x JAGUAR GR1	Muharraq		HQ 3 Wg RAF Regt	Tabuk		1 x RAF Regt LAS	Cyprus	9			
13 x TORNADO GR1	Muharraq		3 x NIMROD MR2	Deeb		HQ BF Cyprus	Cyprus	200			
4 x VC10 TANKER	Muharraq	861	3 x VC10 TANKER	Seeb	209	4 x Tornado GR1A	EDM	9			
RAF Regt RAPIER and LAS	Muharraq		3 x C130	Riyadh	80		14 Jan 91				
5 x Puma	Al Jubayl	395	1 x HS 125	Riyadh	7	12 x CHINOOK		400			
Jaguar support	Thumrait	15	Miscellaneous	All locations	152	4 x PUMA					
Total RAF personnel in theatre			2889	Total RAF pers o/s theatre			1248				

Total US forces in theatre 261973
 as at 130700Z Dec 90

Total Reservists employed on Regular duty	208	Total Reservists deployed to theat	13
Total personnel in HQBFME	188	Total medical personnel in theatre	2024
SECRET			
		Total female personnel in theatre	318