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W. Maslin

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

24 June 1982

Call by the Prime Minister on the President of the
General Assembly on Wednesday 23 June

The Prime Minister, accompanied by Sir Anthony Parsons, Mr. David Summerhayes and me, called upon Mr. Ismet Kittani, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, at 1030 hours today.

Apart from passing references to earlier speeches in the Special Session on Disarmament and to the Lebanon, the conversation was confined to the Iran/Iraq war. Mr. Kittani said that Iraq had earlier made three proposals. First, there was a war going on and it should be stopped with a ceasefire. Second, there had been an occupation of Iranian territory but Iraq was now willing to vacate it and to withdraw to her own borders. Finally, there should be some kind of international arbitration process aimed at resolving the disputes which had originally led to the outbreak of war. Iran had turned down this approach by Iraq, maintaining that it was all a plot by Iraq to strengthen her own position. Iraq was therefore proceeding unilaterally. She had implemented a ceasefire under which Iraqi forces would open fire only in self defence, and she was withdrawing unilaterally to within her own borders. Iraq would try to involve the Security Council, with a view to getting a reasonable resolution on the matter. There were two envoys from Baghdad at the United Nations now, and they were seeing members of the Security Council.

In response to a question by Sir Anthony Parsons, Mr. Kittani said that Iran had seized on an offer which a number of Gulf countries had earlier made to contribute to a reconstruction fund for both Iran and Iraq and were now claiming that this was an agreement to pay Iran reparations. They were quoting figures and presenting the matter as an Iranian demand which the Arabs had accepted they would have to meet.

/Mr. Kittani

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Mr. Kittani went on to say that he was doubtful whether it would ever be possible to reach a compromise with Ayatollah Khomeini. He regarded all negotiations as wrong because they led to compromise and that was sacrilegious. He had got rid of the Shah and he believed that he had brought down President Carter. He saw President Saddam Hussein, by comparison, as a very little man. Khomeini was a vindictive man who believed "he had a direct line to Allah". Mr. Kittani said that he wanted Britain and Iraq's other friends to see the dangers of the situation. The Gulf countries were getting even more jittery than Iraq herself.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

C. A. WHITMORE

Brian Fall Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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