

PRIME MINISTER

TALK WITH PRESIDENT BUSH

You are to speak to the President at 1230. He leaves for Helsinki later today.

← You will want to tell him about the parliamentary debate. The Government has solid bipartisan support for the joint UK/US policy. The only major point of contention is whether it is *advisable* necessary to go back to the United Nations for further authority before using force to eject Saddam Hussain from Kuwait. You have resisted the argument that a further UN Security Council resolution would be needed. We must retain full legitimate freedom of action. But your legal advice is that we shall need a further request from the Amir to cover use of force to recover Kuwait, because the earlier request dealt only with economic measures. Our people are discussing this with American officials (who seem to be rather resistant). We must get the legalities right.

← You should say you were grateful to the President for seeing Secretary Brady and had a good talk with him. We shall certainly contribute to multilateral assistance to Egypt, Turkey and Jordan. You have not yet had a chance to talk to the Chancellor about the details. But the figure mentioned by Brady for a UK contribution this year (\$100 million) sounds about right. You hope that the Americans will press not only Germany, Japan and the oil-rich countries, but some of the wealthy neutrals as well.

← You should tell the President that you announced yesterday that we shall be sending additional forces to the Gulf. We have not yet decided exactly what the composition will be but hope to announce this early next week. [You may not want to commit yourself absolutely to ground forces. The Chief of Staff are still battling away over various options, including more Tornados

and/or an aircraft carrier as an alternative to ground forces].

You might then turn to the Helsinki meeting with Gorbachev. You will want to tell him about the message which you have sent Gorbachev (copy attached). You have indicated very strongly that we hope the meeting will give a clear signal to Saddam Hussain that the US and the Soviet Union should stand together in their determination to see the US Security Council Resolutions implemented, preferably by sanctions but by other means if sanctions don't work. You understand this is broadly in line with US intentions (see attached telegram from Washington about the meeting). You might go on to suggest that the President should encourage Gorbachev to pull out all Soviet military advisers. Their presence gives the wrong signal: we must isolate Saddam Hussain as completely as possible. (You may like to offer to send the President a copy of your message to Gorbachev.)

← You might ask whether Jim Baker managed to sort out apparent command and control problems with the Saudis during his visit there.

← You might mention to the President that you intend to be in Eastern Europe during the week 16-22 September and on current plans will go ahead with the visit. But you will be available at any time by telephone and ~~have~~ secure communications. →

C.D.P.

C. D. POWELL  
6 September 1990  
a:\Bush (kk)

## House of Lords

*Thursday, 6th September, 1990.*

The House met at half-past two of the clock, having been called together by the Lord Chancellor, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 14:

The LORD CHANCELLOR on the Woolsack.

*Prayers—Read by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*

### The Gulf

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (The Earl of Caithness) rose to move, That this House takes note of the developments in the Gulf and of Her Majesty's Government's response to them.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I welcome this opportunity to give a full account of events and of the Government's actions. Iraq has illegally invaded, occupied and attempted to annex Kuwait; our armed forces have been deployed in response to requests for assistance to deter further aggression by Saddam Hussein and under Article 51 of the UN Charter in pursuance of decisions of the Security Council intended to bring about Iraq's unconditional withdrawal. British civilians together with others in Iraq and Kuwait are caught up in the crisis, and are being used as hostages. The Government welcome the full participation of your Lordships in this important debate.

Your Lordships will recall that in July Iraq and Kuwait became involved in a dispute over oil pricing and production levels, and over mutual obligations resulting from the production and sale of oil during the Iraq-Iran war. Saddam Hussein also introduced the question of Iraqi territorial claims on Kuwait. The claims by successive Iraqi governments that Kuwait, as part of the former Ottoman province of Basra, was an integral part of Iraq are without legal basis. Kuwait has enjoyed full and recognised independence since 1961 and is a full member of the United Nations.

As the dispute developed, Iraq deployed troops in forward positions near the border with Kuwait. Following active Arab diplomacy, notably by President Mubarak of Egypt, Iraq and Kuwait agreed to bilateral talks in Jeddah on 1st August with the prospect of a further round in Baghdad. The Iraqi Government gave explicit assurances to Egypt and Saudi Arabia that they had no intention of invading Kuwait. Despite his assurances to other Arab governments and leaders, Saddam Hussein ordered Iraqi forces to invade Kuwait in the early hours of 2nd August. They did so under the pretext of responding to a request for assistance from a non-existent revolutionary government, which they alleged had overthrown the government of Kuwait. Saddam Hussein then established a puppet regime consisting entirely of Iraqi officers. He later claimed to have annexed Kuwait, which he now describes as a province of Iraq.

The invasion was a flagrant breach of faith. It shows that Saddam Hussein cannot be taken at his word. It is equally a flagrant and indefensible breach of international law. The invasion comes at a time when events in Eastern Europe and the ending of the Cold War had opened up new opportunities to establish a just system for the settlement of disputes and conduct of affairs between nations: for the government of world events by the rule of law. This peaceful and hopeful process has been challenged by Saddam Hussein. This is why claims that the invasion of Kuwait is purely an inter-Arab dispute are not sustainable. It is an international issue, affecting world security, world oil supplies, and world economic stability. Let me stress that it affects the security and confidence of all small states, not only those in the Middle East. If Iraqi action is unchecked none of them will be able to feel secure, and unwelcome ghosts of the 1930s will be raised.

The world has responded with speed, unanimity and resolve. On 2nd August, the very day of the invasion, the Security Council adopted Resolution SCR 660 condemning the invasion and calling for Iraq's unconditional withdrawal. On 4th August the European Community and its member states took measures to protect Kuwaiti assets, to freeze Iraqi assets, to embargo oil and to stop arms sales to Iraq. It also agreed to work for comprehensive economic sanctions in the Security Council. Two days later, when Iraq failed to comply, the Security Council adopted Resolution SCR 661 imposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions on Iraq.

The Security Council has since adopted three further resolutions, declaring Iraq's annexation of Kuwait null and void, condemning Iraq's actions against the foreign community in Kuwait and Iraq, and authorising UN member states to take necessary measures against shipping to ensure the strict implementation of sanctions. As was pointed out at the time, this includes the use of minimum force.

Let us not forget that not one single country voted against any of these resolutions. The United Nations has been truly united. A clear objective has been agreed: to bring about the unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti government. The means the world has chosen are universally implemented, comprehensive, economic sanctions. And full UN authority has been given for their effective enforcement.

Iraq is vulnerable to sanctions. Its economy is based almost totally on the export of a single commodity, oil, through a limited number of identifiable outlets. These can be monitored and, if necessary blockaded. Iraq is also heavily dependent on imports, not only of food, but also of other commodities. And it has limited currency reserves following the war with Iran. That means that co-ordinated, determined pressure can force President Saddam to think again. Rigorous implementation of sanctions by the whole world is vital to make the policy work.

We pay tribute to the governments of countries in the region. The leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and

[THE EARL OF CAITHNESS]

Turkey have acted with wisdom and courage. Many members of the Arab League have shown great resolution, and we applaud the members of the Gulf Co-operation Council who have roundly confronted Iraq. They have backed the UN at great difficulty and risk to themselves. For a number of countries, supporting sanctions will bring serious economic hardship. We are already considering how the international community can help them—especially those not bearing the direct cost of military deployment.

Britain has been in almost continual close consultation with the other permanent members and has played a full role in this remarkable international response. We have helped to steer those resolutions through the Security Council and we have helped to set up a United Nations Sanctions Committee to ensure that implementation is closely monitored.

We have also been active outside the United Nations. We have worked closely with the United States and with France and other partners in NATO, the Western European Union and other European Community countries to ensure that we have been working together for the same goals. The European Community countries, under the presidency of Italy, have co-operated particularly closely in protecting the safety of their nationals in Iraq and Kuwait.

But we must not forget the nationals of other countries. Some of the countries bordering Iraq are facing severe difficulties from the many thousands of refugees—Egyptians, Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis—fleeing from Saddam Hussein. Both they and the refugees themselves need help until passage home can be arranged. We have already made available £1.4 million for refugee relief and we shall also be providing further help through the European Community. I can announce that we are making an immediate further contribution of £2 million to the relevant international organisations. This brings our total humanitarian relief so far to £5.4 million.

Our other, equally urgent, objective has been to deter further Iraqi aggression against Saudi Arabia or other countries in the region. In this the United States have given a firm and rapid lead. American forces were sent very rapidly, and Britain's own forces followed soon thereafter. The Government have co-ordinated with our American allies in planning a collective defensive response to the military threat from Iraq in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and at the request of states in the region. We acted together. If we had not done so there is reason to believe that Saddam Hussein would have gone further.

The detail of the action we have taken will be familiar. We have deployed a squadron of Tornado F3 air defence aircraft, a squadron of Tornado GR1 aircraft to provide day and night anti-armour capacity and a squadron of Jaguar aircraft for ground support. We have also deployed a number of Nimrod air surveillance aircraft. One Royal Navy destroyer and two frigates are in the Gulf. A second destroyer is on its way, as are three mine clearance vessels. Those

ships are accompanied by a number of support vessels. In all we have some 11 ships in the area, over 40 aircraft and 2,500 men. We expect to send additional forces. Their composition is under consideration.

So let there be no misunderstanding. That deployment, like that of the United States, is at the request of governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other states in the area. In the case of Bahrain, its government invoked our treaty of friendship. The deployment is for defensive and deterrent purposes.

Several of our European partners have since joined us, as well as a number of Arab and Commonwealth countries. We believe that the forces now on the ground in the region are sufficient to deter further aggression and that the threat to Saudi Arabia and to international oil supplies has been met. The costs of such a military operation are of course enormous. They must be shared by the community of nations, including those whose security we are safeguarding. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are already offering some support.

The Iraqis must now comply with the further international requirement for them to withdraw from Kuwait. How they do so is for them to decide. But comply they must. Sanctions are the means the world has chosen to press them. They are of course a peaceful means; but other means are available and it would be unwise and give Saddam Hussein unnecessary comfort to rule out their use.

We are all shocked by the Iraqi Government's action in rounding up foreign nationals for use as a human shield. It is abhorrent and a further breach of humanitarian law. We are all deeply concerned for their well-being. The Government are in constant contact with Iraqi representatives in London, New York and Baghdad and have made clear that if there are illegal actions against our people we shall hold Iraqi officials individually responsible. We have also been in contact with the International Red Cross, which shares our view that Iraq's action is in contravention of the Geneva conventions on treatment of civilians.

The recent release of some women and children is welcome. I am delighted that we have been able to arrange for transportation of so many women and children from Kuwait to Baghdad on their homeward journey. Let us not forget that these people should never have been detained. Their release does not make the detention of their sons, husbands and fathers any less reprehensible.

**Noble Lords:** Hear, hear!

**The Earl of Caithness:** Our ambassador in Baghdad is doing his utmost to protect British citizens. In Kuwait we and some 30 other countries have refused to comply with Iraq's illegal attempt to close embassies and to prevent them offering protection to their citizens. Despite encirclement by Iraqi troops and other harassment, our ambassador, Michael Weston, and his small staff of volunteers continue to offer what help they can to the beleaguered British community. The House, I am sure, will join me in