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From the Private Secretary

2/9-5

SIR ROBIN BUTLER

CABINET OFFICE

GULF BUSINESS NOTE

The Prime Minister has considered the Gulf Business Note in your minute of 16 October to me. She wants to draw a distinction between issues which can go to OD(G) and those which she would wish to be handled on an even more restricted basis, because of undertakings concerning secrecy which she has given to the President. The upshot is as follows:

- the paper on Iraqi use of CW and BW can be considered at OD(G). But she thinks its usefulness limited because - inevitably - it does not take account of the discussions which she and the Defence Secretary had with Secretary Cheney. She will not want further discussion with US officials at this stage.
- She would not want the papers proposed in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 of your minute to come to OD(G). She will discuss the handling of these issues privately with the Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary.
- The paper on operational philosophy should be for her, the Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary only. That on US military objectives and priorities is not necessary in the light of the discussions which she and the Defence Secretary have had with Secretary Cheney, and CDS with General Powell. Equally, she does not think a paper on a wider range of allied objectives is appropriate at present. The full military presentation should be limited to her, the Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary.
- The paper on media handling should come forward to OD(G) in due course.
- The FCO should work on papers on Arab/Israel and a regional security structure to come forward to OD(E) or OD when ready.

SECRET

- She does not think elaborate papers are necessary on subjects which are regularly reviewed in OD(G). The Foreign Secretary will no doubt prepare short notes for the group on policy at the UN and on timing and modalities for withdrawal of British and American Embassies in Kuwait. A note on burden-sharing will presumably involve the Treasury who should be represented at discussion of it.

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CHARLES POWELL

17 OCTOBER 1990