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LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 November 1990

Dear Sir,

IRAQ/KUWAIT

Stephen Wall wrote to you on 5 November proposing three further amendments to the draft Directive for our military commanders in the Gulf. I am confident the Prime Minister would accept these. I hope you can now let me have a revised version as quickly as possible so that I can send it to General Scowcroft (less paragraphs 8 and 9).

I am copying this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Powell

Simon Webb Esq
Ministry of Defence

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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London SW1A 2AH

5 November 1990

13 (A-B)

Dear Charles,

Iraq/Kuwait

The Foreign Secretary has seen the position paper circulated under cover of Simon Webb's letter of 31 October to you and noted the procedures suggested for using it in discussion with key US contacts.

I enclose as an annex three proposed amendments to the position paper.

As far as the destruction of Iraqi NBC capability is concerned the Foreign Secretary is aware that the environmental effects and possible civilian casualties resulting from an attack on these targets is under study in the MOD. The results of this analysis will need to be considered when political clearance to engage these targets is given to the military commanders.

On handling, the Foreign Secretary thinks that there would be advantage in getting our views to the Americans as soon as possible so that they take them into account in preparing for President Bush's mid-November review. If the Prime Minister is content he suggests that you might send the paper less paragraphs 8 and 9 to Scowcroft. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary would reinforce the message with Mr Baker in their talks with him next week. An alternative would be to send them after Baker's visit, but that has now moved back to 9 November.

There are of course a number of political points we will wish to raise with the Americans in addition to those in paragraph 9 of the letter. For example we will need to discuss the handling of any move from the sanctions to the military option (including the Amir's letter), and how we deal with the political, military and economic results of hostilities and the way they are conducted, ie their impact on strategic objective (f). The Foreign Secretary is, however, content for them not to feature on a list of points which are essentially those affecting our military operations in the Gulf.

I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (MOD) and to Sir Robin Butler.

James Stephen Wall
(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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UK POSITION PAPER

1. Paragraph 1(d) add "by committing grave breaches of the Geneva conventions".

Comment. This reflects the wording of Security Council resolutions 670 and 674.

2. Paragraph 7(g) last sentence to read - "Where possible these concerns should be met by alternative methods of attack."

Comment. Strengthens an important political and presentational point.

3. Paragraph 7(h) add an additional sentence - "Some in theatre forces must be allocated to deal with the hostage and refugee problems."

Comment. Clearly front line troops should not be distracted from their main military task. But we need to persuade the Americans that planning and resources should be committed to dealing with our hostages/detainees and the enormous numbers of refugees that are likely to result from hostilities.