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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 December 1985

Dear Peter,

**PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
OF IRAQ**

The Prime Minister met the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq this morning. Mr Tariq Aziz was accompanied by Mr al-Haddawi and by the Iraqi Ambassador in London. HM Ambassador Baghdad was also present.

The Prime Minister greeted Mr Tariq Aziz as a very welcome visitor to Britain. Mr Tariq Aziz said that he brought regards from President Saddam Hussain, who had asked him to stress the importance which he attached to strengthening the bilateral relations between Britain and Iraq. Iraq was well satisfied with the results of the recent visit to London by the Minister of Trade. They would like to see political contacts given the same priority.

Iran-Iraq War

Mr Tariq Aziz said that the war was not just a matter of concern to Iraq and Iran. It carried grave dangers for the whole region, particularly for the Gulf. Iraq was confident of its ability to defend itself but would like to see western countries taking a more direct interest in efforts to find a solution to the conflict. He appreciated the position taken by the British Government. The most pressing need was to get across to the Iranians the wider dangers of a continuing conflict and the penalties for their own people. The Iranians were not prepared to negotiate and constantly set absurd preconditions. Iraq was ready to talk either directly or indirectly to Iran and to use whatever channels of mediation appeared to offer the best prospects of success. But Iraq felt that other Governments were not making the political effort required to bring pressure on Iran to negotiate.

The Prime Minister said that we felt frustrated. Appeals to Iran appeared to have little effect. We had

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terminated the supply of weapons to Iran and even the supply of items which might possibly have a military application. Nonetheless Iran was continuing to receive weapons through Libya and Syria. We constantly raised the issue of the Iran-Iraq war in international meetings. It would be helpful to have a more precise idea of what particular action the Iraqi Government would like us to take.

Mr Tariq Aziz said that this was a subject on which the two Governments could exchange views. He would follow it up with the Foreign Secretary and officials. The basic need was for more political pressure on Iran. He was convinced that pressure on Iran would produce results in the long term. People in Iran were sensitive to external opinion. Iraq appreciated the efforts which Britain had made towards limiting the flow of weapons to Iran and was acting through the Soviet Union to stop supplies from Libya, Syria and North Korea.

The Prime Minister asked whether Iraq expected a further Iranian offensive. Mr Tariq Aziz thought that military operations against Iraq were largely a function of domestic political developments in Iran. There appeared to be instead difficulties at present, which made a new offensive more likely. But Iraq would succeed in crushing any attack. The Prime Minister referred to the support which Iraq received from the Gulf states. Mr Tariq Aziz observed that the Gulf States knew that, if Iraq were to lose the war, it would be doomsday for them.

The Prime Minister enquired about progress with the new oil pipeline through Saudi Arabia. Mr Tariq Aziz said that the first phase had been finished and exports through it were now running at 350 thousand bpd. The main pipeline would take another two years to complete and would enable Iraq to export 1.7 million bpd. There was also agreement with the Turkish Government to increase the capacity of the pipeline through Turkey to 1.5 million bpd by late 1986 or early 1987. He referred to the sad lack of responsibility shown by the Syrian Government in shutting the pipeline through Syria. Syria was the odd man out in the region.

#### Smith and Hagger

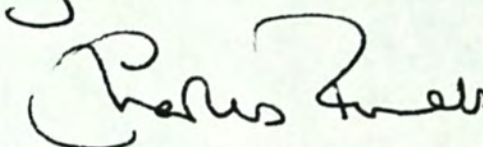
The Prime Minister said that she wished to raise the cases of Mr Smith and Mr Hagger. Both men had served sentences which seemed to British public opinion to be unfairly long in relation to the offences they had committed. These offences did not involve violence, as was the case with Salem Hassan, who had been convicted of murder. We very much hoped that President Sadam Hussain would consider clemency for Mr Smith and Mr Hagger.

Mr Tariq Aziz said that he would report the Prime Minister's remarks to President Sadam Hussain. Although the cases were not similar to that of Salem Hassan from the legal and technical point of view, Iraq also had to take account of popular feelings. It would not be understood if Mr Smith and Mr Hagger were to be released without any kind



of development in the situation of Salem Hassan. He was not proposing anything specific and recognised the sensitivity of the issue. But it would be helpful if representatives of both governments were to meet to discuss possible human and legal solutions. The Prime Minister said that there was no comparison between the two cases and therefore no scope for bargaining. Salem Hassan had been convicted of terrorist murder. Mr Tariq Aziz said that Iraq was strongly opposed to violence. The Prime Minister repeated that she hoped that Mr Tariq Aziz would convey her strong appeal to President Sadam Hussain.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence), John Mogg (Department of Trade and Industry) and to Stephen Boys Smith (Home Office).

Yours sincerely,  


(Charles Powell)

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.