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8 February 2007

Our reference 0796-06

Jonathan Bloch
20 Woodland Rise
London
N10 3UG

Iraq Policy Unit
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Tel: 020 7008 8087
Fax: 020 7008 4119

Dear Mr Bloch

I am writing regarding your e-mail of 25 September 2006 requesting under the Freedom of Information Act - all documents relating to the funding and support of the Iraqi National Congress by the British Government for the years 2002-3.

I am pleased to inform you that we have finally completed our deliberations regarding International Relations. A copy of the information we hold is enclosed.

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If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an review of our decision, you should write to.

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the



Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Alex Partridge

Alex Partridge
Iraq Policy Unit
Email: alex.partridge@fco.gov.uk

cc:

4 March 2002



6

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AF

Handwritten: NBR04/002/02

Stamp: RECEIVED BY SECRETARY OF STATE 05 MAR 2002

WORK OFFICER	RECEPTION
NAME	PA

Iraq: Request from the Iraqi National Congress (INC) for a Call on the Prime Minister

You asked for advice on a request from the Iraqi National Congress (INC) for a call on the Prime Minister. I recommend that the Prime Minister not agree to a meeting with the INC.

The FCO maintains regular contact with the INC at both official and ministerial level. The INC have asked for a meeting with Ben Bradshaw which has been arranged for 12 March. A meeting at a Prime Ministerial level would be a significant departure from previous practice. The INC would see it as a significant policy change and a sign of increased UK support. Such a meeting would fuel speculation about military action against Iraq and plans to overthrow Saddam.

Handwritten signature

Private Secretary

10 Downing Street

From:

Date: 04 March 2002

cc:

To:

PS

**SUBJECT: IRAQ: IRAQI NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC) REQUEST FOR CALL
ON THE PRIME MINISTER**

1. The INC have asked for a call on the Prime Minister. No.10 have asked for advice. I
attach a self-explanatory draft minute to PS/No10.

Iraq Section

MED

Tel:

Fax:

NO. OF ATTACHMENTS: 1

United Nations

A/56/27-S/2002/181

**General Assembly
Security Council**Distr.: General
20 February 2002
English
Original: ArabicGeneral Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 166Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

**Letter dated 18 February 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

On instructions from my Government, I wish to inform you that the so-called "Iraqi National Congress", based in London and Washington, issued a statement on 13 February 2002 in which it claimed responsibility for sabotage operations during the past seven months against Iraqi civilian facilities, including refineries, pumps and oil pipelines, and said that it had rockets and booby-trapped cars in these operations.

While the United States of America and the United Kingdom claim to be seeking to combat terrorism, they are continuing to apply the same old policy of sheltering, harbouring and arming terrorist groups that seek to undermine stability in numerous countries and permitting such groups to announce such terrorist operations through their offices opened in London and Washington and financed officially by the United Kingdom and the United States.

International law is an indivisible whole, and the principles governing terrorism are an indivisible whole. The United States-United Kingdom selective practices of proclaiming the combating of terrorism, on the one hand, and harbouring terrorists on the other, jeopardize the goal of combating terrorism, as well as constituting a breach of international peace and security, particularly since the United Kingdom chairs the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which imposes on it the obligation to be in the forefront of the battle against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and not to provide a clear example of double standards with regard to terrorism.

I request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdul Munim Al-Kadhbi
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

02-25753 (B) 210202 210202



TOTAL P.02

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT CASE 0796/06
FUNDING AND SUPPORT OF THE IRAQ NATIONAL CONGRESS BY THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR THE YEARS 2002 – 2003**

DIGEST

The relevant part of ... a briefing for FCO Minister dated 4 February 2002 from FCO official in Middle East Department to FCO official in Ben Bradshaw's Office.

Ben Bradshaw meeting with Iraqi opposition: 6 February

“ UK policy however does not include support for regime change. There are legal restraints to actively promoting regime change and it is doubtful that an external opposition group such as the INC would have the ability to bring it about.”

The relevant part of ... a minute (*FCO internal memo*) dated 25 February 2002 from FCO official in Middle East Department to FCO official in Ben Bradshaw's Office.

Iraqi National Congress request for a meeting with Mr Bradshaw

“As you are aware, the Iraqi National Congress (INC) have requested a meeting with Mr Bradshaw to update him on INC activities (letter attached). I recommend that Mr Bradshaw agrees to this meeting.”

“... Both the INA and SCIRI have suspended their membership of the INC and it would not be appropriate for the two groups to see Mr Bradshaw together, not would they be likely to agree to such a proposal.”

“Mr Bradshaw met the INC in the margins of the Labour Party Conference in October last year.”

“... Talk in the US of military action against Iraq has included the INC being the focus of any attempt to overthrow Saddam. We should therefore maintain regular Ministerial contact with the INC.....”

The relevant part of ... a briefing for FCO Minister, Ben Bradshaw's meeting with The Iraqi Opposition, dated 4 March 2002 from FCO official in Middle East Department to FCO official in Ben Bradshaw's Office.

Iraq: Mr Bradshaw's meeting with the Iraqi opposition: 5 March

“ UK policy however does not include support for regime change. There are legal restraints to actively promoting regime change and it is doubtful that an external opposition group such as the INC would have the ability to bring it about.”

The relevant part of ... a briefing for FCO Minister, Ben Bradshaw's meeting with The Iraqi National Congress, dated 11 March 2002 from FCO official in Middle East Department to FCO official in Ben Bradshaw's Office.

Iraq: Mr Bradshaw's meeting with the Iraqi National Congress: 12 March

"UK policy however does not include support for regime change. There are legal restraints to actively promoting regime change and it is doubtful that an external opposition group such as the INC would have the ability to bring it about."

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 20 November 2002 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London to British Embassy Amman.

Iraqi Opposition Sitrep

"An opposition delegation met Head/MED on 20 November and informed him, that they would hold the conference in the UK between 10-15 December and asked for help with visas."

"UK's current policy is to stay in touch with the thinking of opposition groups who may have a role to play in shaping a post-Saddam Iraq through meetings and other contacts".

"Regular, routine meetings between opposition representatives and officials, occasional higher level contacts:.....; INC/Ben Bradshaw March; G4 +2/Director MENA August; Preparatory committee of conference/Head MED November."

The relevant part of... Telegram dated 11 April 2003 from British Embassy Washington to Foreign and Commonwealth London.

US/Iraq: Hillsborough Follow Up

".... it would be useful if the Prime Minister could make clear to the President that the process should not be used to crown Chalabi."

Iraq Policy Unit
FCO
2 February 2007

plans. But I could make no promises about speedy visas. Visas for many of the countries from which their supporters would be coming did need careful scrutiny and this took time. I could give an undertaking that this could be completed in the dozen or so working days now left.

5. The group asked whether I was advising them to postpone the conference. I said I could not advise on that. It was for them to make their own decisions. All I could do was take note of their intentions.
6. As a parting shot the group asked whether the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary would be prepared to attend the conference. I made clear this was out of the question.
7. You asked whether there was any official UK involvement in the conference. There is none.

As with previous meetings I would not recommend that a UK minister or senior official attends this meeting, if indeed it goes ahead. But I think it would be right to send along a relatively junior observer perhaps from Research Analysts.

Head, Middle East Department

Tel:
Fax:

P 8
014/1002

From:
Date: 22 November

cc: PS/Mr O'Brien
PS/PUS

Heads: UND, Sec Pol, Press
Office
Special Advisers

Private Secretary

PROPOSED MEETING OF IRAQI OPPOSITIONISTS, LONDON,
18-19 DECEMBER

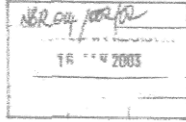
1. You asked for a note on the present position.
2. Representatives of the six leading Iraqi opposition groups called on me on Wednesday morning.
3. The group therefore proposed to meet in London starting on 10 December and asked for my permission to do so. They also urged us to be ready to issue visas rapidly.
4. In reply I said that I had no authority either to authorize or prevent a private meeting. The group had held many meetings here before. They knew they must make their own arrangements and abide by the law. So I merely took note of their

Proposed Meeting of Iraqi Oppositionists, London, 10-15 December

The Foreign Secretary was grateful for your minute of 22 November. He has commented that it was "good advice". The Foreign Secretary thinks that, while staying clearly within the rules, we should give any visa applications from the Iraqi oppositionists the benefit of the doubt, and try to expedite the applications without providing a fast track.

25 November 2002

cc: PS
PS/Mr O'Brien
PS/PUS



Heads: UND
Sec Poi
Press Office
Special Advisers