

CONFIDENTIAL

Wing.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~8307022~~ 218 2111/3

MO 3/9/4/2

20th October 1980

to Paul

MP

Prime Minister

(2)

Dear Michael,

Paul - 20/10

GULF OF OMAN PATROL

You wrote on 14th October conveying the Prime Minister's agreement to the strengthening of our naval presence in the Persian Gulf area. This is to let you know that on the latest timings we have HMS ALACRITY will join HMS COVENTRY in the Gulf of Oman on Wednesday, 22nd October.

We are assuming that there will be a need to maintain two warships (plus afloat support) on patrol in the Gulf of Oman for the foreseeable future. We can provide this presence up until the beginning of December by detaching ships on rotation from the RN Task Group but thereafter the patrol will be conducted by ships sailed from the UK.

I should perhaps also mention that we are looking urgently at the possible threat of mining in the Persian Gulf and at ways of dealing with it. This is one of the subjects being pursued within the current Naval Staff talks with the United States, but for our part we have taken the precaution of placing four mine-hunters on notice: they could arrive in the Gulf within six weeks of a decision to sail them. A naval clearance diving team could however be got there inside a week.

I am copying this letter to Paul Lever (FCO) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Your ever,
David Omand

(D B OMAND)

M O'D B Alexander Esq

CONFIDENTIAL

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-920 7000



20 OCT 1980

