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FM BAGHDAD 100710Z JUN 81

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 304 OF 10//6/81

INFO PRIORITY: VIENNA (FOR UK REP TO IAEA) TEHRAN, UKMIS NEW YORK
WASHINGTON, PARIS AND TEL AVIV

SAVING TO UKDEL NATO, AMMAN, MOSCOW, STOCKHOLM

MY TEL NO 293 (NOT TO VIENNA): ISRAELI ATTACK ON NUCLEAR PLANT

1. AT A MEETING OF THE TEN ON 9 JUNE, CALLED TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS
OF THE ATTACK, ROCALVE (FRANCE) GAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
OBTAINED FROM FRENCH SOURCES AT THE NUCLEAR RESEARCH CENTRE
(PLEASE PROTECT HIS CONFIDENCE):-

(A) INTIMIDATION OF STAFF WORKING ON THE PROJECT DATED BACK
TO 1979, WELL BEFORE THE FIRST (IRANIAN) RAID OF 27 SEPTEMBER
LAST YEAR. STAFF OR THE WIVES (AND ALSO ITALIANS ASSOCIATED
WITH THE PROJECT) REGULARLY RECEIVED LETTERS SIGNED BY THE
"COMMITTEE FOR THE ISLAMIC LIBERATION OF IRAQ" WARNING THEM TO
DESIST FROM ADVANCING THE PROJECT, OR ELSE. THERE HAD BEEN
SABOTAGE IN FRANCE AT THE FACTORY MAKING ELEMENTS FOR THE PLANT IN
1979 SEMICOLON TWO ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AGAINST STAFF IN
FRANCE (ONE SUCCESSFUL) IN EARLY 1980 SEMICOLON THE IRANIAN RAID
WHICH HAD DAMAGED THE WALLS OF THE PROJECT BUT NOT THE MAIN
REACTOR ON 27 SEPTEMBER 1980 SEMICOLON AND THEN THE ISRAELI RAID
OF 7 JUNE 1981.

(B) THE ISRAELI RAID HAD BEEN HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL.
AN UNIDENTIFIED NUMBER OF PLANES HAD COME IN LOW, DROPPED THEIR
DELAYED ACTION BOMBS AND THEN SOARED UP TO A GREAT HEIGHT
IMMEDIATELY ABOVE THE PLANT, GIVING THE IMPRESSION TO OBSERVERS
IN THE FRENCH CAMP ADJACENT THAT THE ATTACK ITSELF HAD BEEN HIGH
ALTITUDE (PARA 2 OF MY TUR). SOME BOMBS APPEARED STILL NOT (NOT)
TO HAVE EXPLODED IN THE RUINS OF THE OSIRAK COMPLEX, WHICH HOUSES
THE TWO TAMMUZ FRENCH-SUPPLIED REACTORS, DETAILED EVALUATION OF
THE DAMAGE SEMICOLON

(C) THE MOST SERIOUS SINGLE PIECE OF DAMAGE WAS THAT THE DOME
OF THE TAMMUZ-1 40 MEGAWATT REACTOR WAS CRACKED.
IT WOULD HAVE TO BE REBUILT COMPLETELY, AND THE QUESTION WAS WHO
WOULD TAKE ON SUCH A JOB SEMICOLON

(D) THE MISSING FRENCHMAN HAD DIED OF ASPHYXIA CAUSED BY NOXIOUS
GASES FROM EXPLODING BOMBS. HIS BODY WAS UNMARKED SEMICOLON

(E) LUCKILY THERE HAD ONLY BEEN 4 OR 5 FRENCH
COLLEAGUES WITH HIM, AND A NUMBER OF IRAQI WORKMEN TIDYING UP,
WHEN THE ATTACK CAME AT 1837 LOCAL ON 7 JUNE SEMICOLON

(F) ABSENCE OF CONTAMINATION HAD BEEN RECONFIRMED SINCE THAT
EVENING, BUT AN INTERNATIONAL CHECK (EG BY IAEA EXPERTS, AS
IN JANUARY) WAS URGENTLY NECESSARY SEMICOLON

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(G) THE SMALLER, TAMMUZ-2 500 KILOWATT TRAINING REACTOR SITED BESIDE TAMMUZ-1 WAS UNDAMAGED, BUT IT WAS TINY AND BARELY WORTH "TAKING OUT" SEMICOLON

(H) COMPLETION OF WORK ON BOTH TAMMUZ REACTORS, AND THEIR GOING CRITICAL, HAD BEEN ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 1980 BUT WAS DELAYED AFTER THE IRANIAN ATTACK UNTIL AT LEAST SEPTEMBER 1981. HE COULD NOT (NOT) SAY HOW MUCH FURTHER DELAY WOULD NOW BE CAUSED BY THE 7 JUNE RAID.

(I) COLONNA (ITALY) ADDED THAT SOME OF THE ITALIAN-MADE "HOT-CELL" LABORATORIES HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO THE SITE THIS MARCH, BUT THE PRESENCE OF UNEXPLODED BOMBS HAD SO FAR PREVENTED INSPECTION OF DAMAGE TO THEM SEMICOLON

(J) ROCALVE ADDED THAT THE FRENCH ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION WAS CATEGORIC THAT THE SMALL AMOUNT OF ENRICHED FUEL ON SITE COULD NOT (NOT), AFTER USE, HAVE ENABLED IRAQ TO MANUFACTURE AN ATOMIC BOMB CLANDESTINELY "IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE".

2. IT WAS THE GENERAL OPINION THAT THE 7 JUNE RAID MARKED A TURNING POINT IN IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, THOUGH IRAQ COULD DO LITTLE OR NOTHING TO RETALIATE IN THE SHORT TERM. I ASKED MY COLLEAGUES WHETHER THE IRAQIS MIGHT BE TEMPTED, AS A GESTURE, TO RENOUNCE THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF THE N.P.T. SINCE THEIR NUCLEAR PROGRAMME WAS IN RUINS AND THERE SEEMED LITTLE HOPE OF REVIVING IT, AT LEAST ON IRAQI SOIL, FOR YEARS TO COME. THOSE PRESENT THOUGHT THIS WAS UNLIKELY, IF ONLY BECAUSE IRAQ WOULD HAVE TO TURN TO FRANCE, ITALY, BRAZIL AND PERHAPS PAKISTAN FOR MORE NUCLEAR TRAINING THAN EVER IN THOSE COUNTRIES, AGAINST THE DAY WHEN IT MIGHT BE SAFE TO RESUME A NUCLEAR RESEARCH PROGRAMME WITHIN IRAQ. GERMANY (HOLZHEIMER) SPECULATED THAT COULD ONLY HAPPEN IN FACILITIES CONSTRUCTED, AT GREAT COST, UNDERGROUND.

3. ROCALVE, WHO APPEARED VERY TIRED, HAS BEEN SUMMONED TO PARIS FOR CONSULTATIONS AND LEAVES HERE ON 12 JUNE, IF BAGHDAD AIRPORT IS OPERATING NORMALLY AT NIGHT BY THEN

4. MY IFT 305, NOT TO ALL, COVERS THE NEXT PART OF OUR DISCUSSION, ON THE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK FOR IRAQ'S CONDUCT OF THE WAR WITH IRAN.

EGERTON

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

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2
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