

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 450

CONFIDENTIAL

FM MUSCAT 040938Z OCT 87

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 283 OF 4 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, JEDDA,
BAGHDAD, AMMAN, ROUTINE BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, ABU DHABI, DUBAI, DOHA

WASHINGTON TELNO 41644 IRAQ/IRAN/OMAN

1. I COMPARED NOTES WITH MY AMERICAN COLLEAGUE THIS MORNING. WE AGREED LARGELY ON HOW AND WHY THE PROPOSED IRAQI OPERATION HAD BEEN PUT ON AND THEN CALLED OFF, THOUGH I DID NOT REPEAT NOT REVEAL MY CONVERSATION WITH BENNETT (PARA 7 AND 8 OF MY TELNO 279). WILEY SAID THAT WHEN HE SAW THE SULTAN IN SALALAH ON 1 OCTOBER TO DELIVER THE ORAL MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, THE SULTAN HAD TAKEN THE LINE THAT HE HAD KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT THE TIME LIMIT HE HAD PUT ON THE IRAQI OPERATION (TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE FORMAL JAQI REQUEST ON 26 SEPTEMBER) WOULD RENDER ITS IMPLEMENTATION IMPOSSIBLE (IE PRECISELY THE INTERPRETATION ZAWI HAD GIVEN ME ON THE SAME DAY BUT ALLEGEDLY AS HIS OWN PERSONAL THOUGHT). NEVERTHELESS THE SULTAN HAD GIVEN WILEY AN ASSURANCE THAT THE EPISODE WOULD NOT BE REPEATED. ZAWAWI HAD BEEN AT PAINS TO EMPHASISE THAT AMERICAN REPRESENTATIONS HAD NOT BEEN A DECISIVE FACTOR IN CALLING OFF THE OPERATION.

3. GENERAL JONES HAD COME AND GONE. HE DID NOT CALL ON THE SULTAN, BUT WILEY WAS CONFIDENT THAT HIS TALKS WITH ZAWAWI AND GHAZALI, TOGETHER WITH HIS VISITS TO MASIRAH AND TO THE US FLEET IN THE AREA, HAD GIVEN HIM A USEFUL FEEL FOR THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE OPERATING HERE.

4. AS REGARDS THE ACCESS AGREEMENT ASPECT (PARA 2 OF TUR) WILEY SAID THAT THE IRAQI EPISODE HAD RAISED IN AN ACUTE FORM THE DELICATE QUESTION OF THE PRECISE APPLICATION OF THE VERY GENERAL ASSURANCES GIVEN IN THE PRESIDENT'S CONFIDENTIAL LETTER^R TO QABOOS (DETAILS OF WHICH WILEY HAS NEVER REVEALED TO ME). HE WAS CERTAIN IN HIS OWN MIND THAT THE ASSURANCES DID NOT EXTEND TO ATTACKS PROVOKED BY THE OMANIS THEMSELVES, BUT FURTHER ELUCIDATION WOULD NO DOUBT BE REQUIRED.

CONFIDENTIAL

15.

CONFIDENTIAL

5. WHAT WAS EXERCISING WILEY ABOVE ALL ELSE WAS THE LEAKS REPORTED TODAY FROM BOTH WASHINGTON AND LONDON. HE WAS CLEAR (AND DEPRESSED) THAT THERE HAD BEEN A DELIBERATE LEAK IN WASHINGTON ABOUT AMERICAN ACTIVITY IN CONTAINING THE CONFLICT IN THE GULF AREA. WHILE THE LEAK WAS UNDERSTANDABLE IN ELECTORAL TERMS IT WAS BOUND TO UNDERMINE OMANI CONFIDENCE AND MAKE THEM EVEN LESS PREPARED TO CONSULT BEFORE EMBARKING ON SUCH VENTURES AS THE IRAQI OPERATION. WILEY ALSO REFERRED TO ALLEGED LEAKS IN LONDON TO THE EFFECT THAT BRITAIN HAD MODERATED US REACTIONS TO THE IRAQ/IRAN CONFLICT (PERHAPS A GARBLED ACCOUNT OF THE INTERVIEW REPORTED IN VERBATIM 119/80). HE EXPECTED BOTH OF US TO BE TAKEN TO TASK BY THE OMANIS. I HAVE HAD NO SUCH INDICATIONS SO FAR, ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT THE OMANIS WERE ANGERED BY PHILIP WHITFIELD'S REPORT ABOUT AN IRAQI MILITARY PRESENCE HERE (PARA 6 OF MY TELNO 279).

LUCAS

IRAQ/IRAN STANDARD

MED	MAED
NENAD	TRED
NAD	ERD
UND	ECON D
EESD	CONS D
ECD	CONS EM UNIT
WED	CABINET OFFICE
ES4SD	

ADDITIONAL DISTN.

IRAQ/IRAN

2

CONFIDENTIAL