

Iraq

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FM MUSCAT 180816Z OCT 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 298 OF 18 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE HMY BRITANNIA, (FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY), WASHINGTON,

PRIORITY JEDDA, KUWAIT, BAHRAIN, DOHA, ABU DHABI, DUBAI

INFO SAVING PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK

MY TELNO 297: IRAN/IRAQ

1. MOBERLY AND I HAD A FURTHER SESSION WITH QAIS ZAWAWI LAST EVENING AT HIS SUGGESTION. IT EMERGED THAT HE HAD SEEN THE US AMBASSADOR EARLIER IN THE DAY. YUSUF ALAWI (UNDER SECRETARY MFA) WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK, WAS ALSO PRESENT.

2. ARISING OUT OF HIS LATEST ENCOUNTER WITH MY AMERICAN COLLEAGUE, ZAWAWI MADE THE FOLLOWING PARTICULAR POINTS:-
 - A) THE OMANIS HAD SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE TERM "INTERNATIONAL FORCE" WHICH THE AMERICANS SEEMED TO BE USING IN THE CONTEXT OF NAVAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING. THEY WOULD PREFER SOME MORE AMBIGUOUS PHRASE:
 - B) THEY SAW THE NEED FOR THOSE CONCERNED (IE AMERICANS, FRENCH AND OURSELVES) TO ESTABLISH A UNIFIED NAVAL COMMAND WITH WHOM THE OMANIS COULD DISCUSS THE DEVELOPING SITUATION, RATHER THAN HAVING TO DEAL WITH EACH BILATERALLY:
 - C) HE HOPED THAT OUR OWN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMERICANS WOULD LEAD TO A DEFINITE CONTINGENCY PLAN. HE REALISED THAT THIS COULD NOT BE READY FOR SOME WHILE BUT HE WOULD BE IN LONDON IN EARLY NOVEMBER AND LOOKED FORWARD TO FURTHER DISCUSSIONS THEN, THOUGH THE OMANIS WOULD OF COURSE MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THIS EMBASSY MEANWHILE.

3. THE AMERICANS HAD OFFERED TO SHARE WITH THE OMANIS INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM AWACS, BUT THE OMANIS HAD RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY. BEFORE REACHING ANY FIRM AGREEMENT IN THIS REGARD THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHAT IT MIGHT INVOLVE IN THE WAY OF ANY AMERICAN TEAM OR SPECIAL INSTALLATIONS IN OMAN. BY THE SAME TOKEN, IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF CURRENT CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US, ZAWAWI HAD MADE CLEAR TO WILEY THAT THE OMANIS WISHED THE DISCUSSIONS TO MOVE SLOWLY AT A PACE DICTATED BY THE OMANIS.

4. YUSUF ALAWI WAS FULL OF THE IDEA THAT THE AMERICANS WERE CONTEMPLATING A SPARES-FOR-HOSTAGES DEAL WITH THE IRANIANS. MOBERLY COMMENTED THAT THIS POSSIBILITY HAD BEEN RAISED WITH HIM IN OTHER GULF STATES, AND HE HAD TOLD THEM THAT WE CONSIDERED IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY.

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15. OUR

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5. OUR CONTACTS WITH ZAWAWI DURING MOBERLY'S VISIT HAVE BEEN HIGHLY SATISFACTORY AND BODE WELL FOR CONTINUING CLOSE CONSULTATION AS THE REGIONAL SITUATION DEVELOPS.

FCO PASS SAVING TO PARIS AND UKMIS NEW YORK

LUCAS

[REPEATED AS
REQUESTED]

IRAQ/IRAN STANDARD

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IRAQ/IRAN

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