

IMMEDIATE

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~~RESIDENT CLARK~~

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM BAGHDAD 300953Z OCT 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 579 OF 30/10/80

INFO IMMEDIATE WARSAW (DESKBY 301200Z) FOR P.S.

PRIORITY AMMAN, KUWAIT, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON AND BAHRAIN
INFO SAVING TO UK DEL NATO.

DESKBY 301200Z

KUWAIT TELS 619 TO YOU AND 38 TO US; LORD GEORGE-BROWN.

1. LORD GEORGE-BROWN VISITED BAGHDAD AT THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT HUSSAIN FROM 1330 HOURS ON 29 OCTOBER UNTIL 0800 HRS ON 30 OCTOBER. HE HAD A TWO HOUR MEETING WITH TARIQ AZIZ OF THE RCC AND THEN TWO HOURS WITH THE PRESIDENT. I BRIEFED HIM OVER LUNCH ON 29 OCTOBER, AND DICKSON DEBRIEFED HIM THIS MORNING BEFORE HE RETURNED TO KUWAIT. FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT HE TOLD DICKSON. ON SPARKES, GEORGE-BROWN'S REMARKS ARE IN MY IFT.

2. GEORGE-BROWN SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND SADDAM HUSSAIN WEARY, ALTHOUGH CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE WAR. TARIQ AZIZ HAD BEEN VERY RELAXED. THEY REALISED THAT THEIR EARLIER STRATEGY HAD BEEN WRONG, AND HAD SETTLED DOWN NOW TO A WAR OF ATTRITION.

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AZIZ HAD BEEN VERY RELAXED. THEY REALISED THAT THEIR EARLIER STRATEGY HAD BEEN WRONG, AND HAD SETTLED DOWN NOW TO A WAR OF ATTRITION. IRAQ HAD TAKEN THIS INTO ACCOUNT IN DECIDING IT NEEDED NEITHER MEN NOR MATERIAL HELP FROM OUTSIDE. IT HAD IN FACT REFUSED TWO SUCH OFFERS. IT HAD LOST ONLY ABOUT TWO PER CENT OF ITS ARMOUR. THE LOSSES OF MEN HOWEVER IN GETTING INTO KHORRAMSHAHR HAD BEEN HEAVY, AND THE PRESIDENT HAD DECIDED NOT (NOT) TO SEND INFANTRY OR ARMOUR INTO AHWAZ OR DEZFUL. HE HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ENTER ABADAN, BUT IT WAS COMPLETELY ENCIRCLED. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD BEEN ASTONISHED BY THE AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT WHICH THE SHAH HAD STOCKPILED, AND FREELY ADMITTED THAT THE IRANIAN WEAPONS AND AIRCRAFT WERE MUCH BETTER THAN WHAT IRAQ HAD. HOWEVER IRANIAN TROOPS WERE NOT CAPABLE OF USING THEM IN MANY CASES, AND MUCH HAD BEEN CAPTURED WITHOUT A FIGHT. THE IRANIANS HAD HAD HUGE LOSSES, EG. EIGHTY TWO TANKS IN TWELVE HOURS AT AHWAZ, AND TWENTY NINE IN THREE HOURS AT DEZFUL. ALL THE DIVISIONS OF IRAN'S FORCES WERE NOW COMMITTED IN THE SOUTH WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE IN TEHRAN. SADDAM REMARKED THAT THE WAY INTO IRAN WAS NOW OPEN FOR THE RUSSIANS.

3. SADDAM WAS INCENSED ABOUT THE APPARENT US WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE SPARE PARTS FOR IRAN IF THE HOSTAGES WERE RELEASED. ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD NOT AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR, IT WOULD CERTAINLY PROLONG IT, AND WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE WHOLE AREA. THE PRESIDENT TOLD GEORGE-BROWN THAT IF THE WAR CONTINUED, HIS POLITICAL FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE SEVERELY CURTAILED. HE HAS FOUND WHEN VISITING FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED IN THE WAR THAT THEY URGED HIM REPEATEDLY NOT (NOT) TO GIVE UP ONE INCH OF LAND GAINED. THIS WAS A FAIR REFLECTION OF PUBLIC OPINION, HE CLAIMED. HE WOULD HAVE FEWER OPTIONS OPEN TO HIM THE LONGER THE WAR CONTINUED. TARIQ AZIZ DID NOT AGREE WITH THIS VIEW AND SAID SO TO SADDAM .LC

HE SAID WITH QUOTE CHILLING DELIBERATION UNQUOTE THAT IF IRANIAN FORCES WITHDREW INTO THE CITIES, AS WAS OFTEN THE CASE WITH AN ARMY IN DIFFICULTIES, HE WOULD BE OBLIGED TO BOMBARD THEM INTO SUBMISSION. HE MENTIONED AHWAZ AND DEZFUL PARTICULARLY. IRAQI COLUMNS HAD IN FACT MOVED AWAY FROM AHWAZ AND DEZFUL BACK TOWARDS THE EASTERN BANK OF THE SHATT, SO AS TO MAKE QUITE CLEAR THAT THEY DID NOT HAVE DESIGNS ON IRANIAN TERRITORY. HE IMPLIED THAT IRAQI MILITARY EXPERTISE AND STRATEGY WERE NOT (NOT) UP TO THE TASKS OF CAPTURING THESE TWO CITIES.

4. SADDAM REPEATED THAT HE WAS PREPARED FOR A CEASEFIRE AT ANY TIME, AND HAD NO INTENTION OF RETAINING ANY IRANIAN TERRITORY. HE REQUIRED HOWEVER ABSOLUTE GUARANTEES ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE SHATT AL ARAB, AND THE OTHER AREAS WHICH HAD BEEN CONCEDED UNDER THE 1975 AGREEMENT, BUT WHICH HAD NOT BEEN HANDED OVER AND WHICH THE IRANIANS HAD THEN USED TO SHELL IRAQI POSITIONS FROM

THE SHATT AL ARAB, AND THE GULF.
UNDER THE 1975 AGREEMENT, BUT WHICH HAD NOT BEEN HANDED OVER AND WHICH THE IRANIANS HAD THEN USED TO SHELL IRAQI POSITIONS FROM SINCE 4 SEPTEMBER. NEGOTIATION WAS NOT (NOT) POSSIBLE IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, SADDAM CONTINUED, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH ANY ESTABLISHED CENTRAL AUTHORITY IN IRAN. IF THE WAR CONTINUED, THEN THERE WOULD ALSO BE A SERIOUS DANGER OF THE FRAGMENTATION OF IRAN WHICH (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT DESIRE IT) HE WOULD PROBABLY ENCOURAGE IF IT WOULD BRING THE WAR TO A SPEEDIER END. HE HAD MADE AN OFFER TO THE EXILED IRANIANS BAKHTIAR, JAM AND AMINI TO COME BACK AND TAKE PART IN THE RUNNING OF THE CAPTURED TERRITORIES. THEY HAD ACCEPTED THIS.

5. LORD GEORGE-BROWN TOLD US THAT WE MAY EXPECT TO HEAR THAT THESE EXILES HAVE AGREED TO SET UP SOME SORT OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

6. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT RULE OUT AN INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEE IN THE SHAPE OF A DEMILITARISED ZONE ALONG THE EASTERN BANK OF THE SHATT IF THAT WAS WHAT WAS REQUIRED TO ENSURE IRAQI SOVEREIGNTY AND AT THE SAME TIME ILLUSTRATE THAT IRAQ DID NOT WISH TO OCCUPY IRANIAN TERRITORY. LORD GEORGE-BROWN TOLD US THAT IN KUWAIT HE HAD LEARNED (POSSIBLY FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OR THE FOREIGN MINISTER) THAT THE WIDTH OF TERRITORY THE IRAQIS BELIEVED THEY NEEDED TO CONTROL BEFORE THEY WOULD CEASE THEIR ADVANCE INTO KHUZISTAN WAS A STRIP ELEVEN KILOMETRES WIDE FROM THE EASTERN BANK OF THE SHATT.

7. TARIQ AZIZ AND THE PRESIDENT DISAGREED COMPLETELY ON THE BRITISH POSITION. THE PRESIDENT THOUGHT THAT AN OFFICIAL LINE TOWARDS IRAQ WAS GOOD ALTHOUGH THE MKODIA WAS GENERALLY HOSTILE. HE HAD HAD SEPARATE REPORTS THAT TWO BRITISH AMBASSADORS IN OTHER CAPITALS HAD PUT IT ABOUT THAT WE WERE DISQUIETED THAT IRAQ HAD DONE SO WELL MILITARILY. TARIQ AZIZ SAID THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THESE AMBASSADORS WAS, IN FACT, TYPICAL OF HMG'S VIEW, AND THAT HMG HAD ALREADY MADE A DECISION TO FOLLOW THE AMERICANS IN RESUPPLY TO IRAN OF SPARE PARTS IF THE HOSTAGES WERE RELEASED. THE PRESIDENT THOUGHT THAT HMG HAD NOT (NOT) YET TAKEN SUCH A DECISION, BUT THAT IF THEY DID, THE RESULTS WOULD ~~BE~~ ^{BE}

& EXTREMELY DAMAGING TO UK INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THE ARAB WORLD. WHEN LORD GEORGE-BROWN ASKED WHAT SUCH DAMAGE WOULD AMOUNT TO, SADDAM HUSSAIN DID NOT ELABORATE. HE DID REPEAT HOWEVER THAT IT WOULD PROLONG THE WAR, WHICH WAS HARDLY IN LINE WITH HMG'S EXPRESSED WISH TO SEE IT BROUGHT TO AN EARLY END.

8. ON THE SUBJECT OF ARAB SOLIDARITY, SADDAM SAID THAT HE HAD SENT HIS MINISTER OF DEFENCE TO BAHRAIN WHEN THE AUTHORITIES THERE

8. ON THE SUBJECT OF ARAB SOLIDARITY, SADDAM SAID THAT HE HAD SENT HIS MINISTER OF DEFENCE TO BAHRAIN WHEN THE AUTHORITIES THERE SHOWED SIGNS OF FALTERING, AND THAT THEY WERE MUCH STIFFENED AS A RESULT.

9. THE INTERPRETER, MAZIN ZAHAWI, WITH WHOM LORD GEORGE-BROWN HAD A WORD WHILE WAITING TO SEE THE PRESIDENT, VOLUNTEERED THAT SOME SECTIONS OF THE IRAQI FORCES HAD BEEN VERY INEFFICIENT. FOR EXAMPLE THEIR RADAR HAD MISREAD THE BLEEPS AND SHOT DOWN A NUMBER OF THEIR OWN PLANES.

10. LORD GEORGE-BROWN SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD REMARKED THAT HE WAS VERY HAPPY THAT HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO RECEIVE THAT DAY THE CREDENTIALS OF THE NEW BRITISH AMBASSADOR WHO HAD MADE A VERY FAVOURABLE IMPRESSION ON HIM, AND WITH WHOM HE HAD ENJOYED HIS CONVERSATION (SUMMARY IN MY TEL NO 574 (NOT TO ALL)).

11. GEORGE-BROWN ASKED US PARTICULARLY TO RESPECT HIS CONFIDENCE. THE PRESIDENT HAD SAID THAT HE HAD NOT SPOKEN TO ANYONE ELSE IN SUCH FRANK TERMS, AND TRUSTED HIM. GEORGE-BROWN SAID THAT IF OTHER POINTS OCCURRED TO HIM HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO DIVULGE THEM ON RETURN TO LONDON.

12. SEE MY IFT, NOT TO ALL.

EGERTON

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