

*Prime Minister*

(1)

CONFIDENTIAL  
FM WASHINGTON  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 1933  
OF 152108Z AUGUST 90  
INFO IMMEDIATE RIYADH, BAGHDAD  
INFO PRIORITY CAIRO, AMMAN, ANKARA, PARIS, BONN, MOSCOW  
INFO PRIORITY KUWAIT, ACTOR

*Background for the  
proposed telephone  
conversation with  
Sheikh Sabah.*

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*H-H,  
Cullis  
Report  
u.s.  
Saudi  
Arabia  
Ottogerson*

US/KUWAIT: SHAIKH SABAH IN WASHINGTON  
SUMMARY

1. SHAIKH SABAH CALLS ON BUSH, BAKER AND CHENEY TO EXPRESS KUWAITI GRATITUDE. US TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE KUWAITIS TO MAINTAIN HIGH PUBLIC PROFILE AND TO CONSIDER ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES BEARING THE BRUNT OF UN SANCTIONS.

DETAIL

2. WHEN I CALLED ON COVEY (PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, MIDDLE EAST) ON 15 AUGUST, I ASKED ABOUT SHAIKH SABAH'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON. COVEY SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN THE PRESIDENT AND BAKER AND WOULD SEE CHENEY TODAY (THE LATTER AS A COURTESY AND TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR US SUPPORT). SABAH HAD NOT HIMSELF HAD MUCH OF SUBSTANCE TO RAISE WITH THE AMERICANS, BUT THE VISIT HAD GIVEN THE KUWAITIS SOME VISIBILITY AND OFFERED THE AMERICANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUT ACROSS THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A - THE KUWAITIS SHOULD MAINTAIN A HIGH PUBLIC PROFILE. THEY SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY WERE STILL A GOVERNMENT AND HAD BOTH FRIENDS AND RESOURCES.

B - THE US WOULD OFFER ADVICE ON HOW BEST TO CONDUCT A PROGRAMME OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. THEY HAD ALREADY SUGGESTED THAT THE KUWAITIS APPOINT AN APPROPRIATE AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE, WHO SPOKE ENGLISH AND COULD HANDLE THE PRESS. COVEY NOTED THAT THE KUWAITIS NEEDED TECHNICAL ADVICE IN THIS AREA. THEY DID NOT KNOW QUITE HOW TO PROCEED. BUT THEY WERE MAKING EFFORTS: THEY HAD OPENED A QUOTE RESISTANCE RADIO STATION UNQUOTE IN CAIRO, WHICH THE US WOULD HELP SUPPORT.

C - THE KUWAITIS MIGHT ALSO THINK ABOUT SUPPORT FOR COUNTRIES WHO WOULD BEAR THE BRUNT OF UN SANCTIONS. CHIEF AMONG THESE WAS JORDAN, ALTHOUGH PERSUADING THE KUWAITIS TO ASSIST HERE WOULD NOT BE EASY. THEY HAD GIVEN JORDAN ECONOMIC HELP FOR YEARS AND FELT BETRAYED. COVEY THOUGHT THAT GIVEN QUOTE WELL-FRAMED ADVICE

UNQUOTE FROM THE US AND UK, THEY WOULD AGREE TO CONTRIBUTE. BUT KING HUSSEIN WOULD HAVE TO BE SEEN TO BE IMPLEMENTING SANCTIONS EFFECTIVELY. AFTER JORDAN WOULD COME TURKEY, FOLLOWED BY TROOP CONTRIBUTORS LIKE EGYPT, MOROCCO AND EVEN SYRIA (COVEY COMMENTED ON THE IRONY HERE: SYRIA WAS STILL ON THE US TERRORIST LIST, BUT THE US WERE LOBBYING ON THEIR BEHALF FOR KUWAITI ASSISTANCE).

3. COVEY NOTED THAT KUWAITI SUPPORT FOR JORDAN DID NOT HAVE TO BE PUBLIC. INDEED, THE MORE DISCREET, THE BETTER. THE KUWAITIS HAD ALWAYS BEEN GENEROUS, BUT THEY NEEDED NOW TO BE PURPOSEFUL AND TO FOCUS THEIR DIPLOMATIC AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES. THE US WERE TRYING TO ENCOURAGE AND REINFORCE THIS PROCESS.

MEYER

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HD/AMD  
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MR PRIDDLE, DEPT OF ENERGY  
MR W D REEVES CABINET OFFICE  
MR D J GOWAN CABINET OFFICE  
MR BARRASS, CABINET OFFICE  
(BY TUBE H29)  
PS/NUMBER 10 DOWNING ST  
SIR P CRADOCK,  
(NO 10 DOWNING ST)  
CABINET OFFICE DIO  
(BY TUBE H29)  
SIR ROBIN BUTLER, CAB OFFICE  
AUS (C) MODUK  
HD/SEC (O) (C) MODUK  
MR LS SMITH BANK ENGLAND  
EMERGENCY UNIT  
RESIDENT CLERK

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