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FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT TO YEMEN

SUMMARY

1. PRESIDENT SALEH GOOD HUMOURED BUT COMBATIVE. BUT BOTH HE AND FOREIGN MINISTER SAY YEMEN IS OBSERVING SANCTIONS AND DENY THE PRESENCE OF ANY IRAQI FORCES OR ARMS ON YEMENI SOIL. SALEH STILL KEEN TO PLAY A MEDIATING ROLE BUT CONCERNED TO AVOID AN EMBARGO ON YEMEN AND WORRIED ABOUT OIL SUPPLIES. FOREIGN MINISTER IRYANI GIVES A MORE REASONED VERSION OF YEMENI POLICY. FOR CALL ON THE PRESIDENT SEE BELOW. CALL ON IRYANI IN MIFT.

DETAIL

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE CONGRATULATED SALEH ON YEMEN'S UNIFICATION. WE WERE READY TO HELP THE NEW YEMEN. SALEH SAID HE HAD BEEN GRATEFUL FOR BRITAIN'S SUPPORT FOR UNIFICATION AND SPOKE WARMLY OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE IRAQI PROBLEM WAS TO SOME EXTENT A RESIDUE OF THE BRITISH LEGACY. NO-ONE COULD SOLVE THE MAGICIAN'S PROBLEM EXCEPT THE MAGICIAN HIMSELF. YEMEN HAD NEVER APPROVED OF THE VIOLATION OF TERRITORY BY FORCE AND OPPOSED THE ANNEXATION OF KUWAIT. THEY WERE ALSO AGAINST THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN POWERS IN THE REGION. THEY DID NOT FAVOUR TOTAL EMBARGOES AS SUCH AND WERE TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE CRISIS. THE BIG POWERS WERE ESCALATING THE CRISIS. THE ROLE OF THE UK WAS PARTICULARLY PROMINENT BECAUSE OF THE SHARP STATEMENTS MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER. THE BIG POWERS SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR PEACE. THE BRITISH PRESS WAS TRYING TO IMPLICATE YEMEN IN WHAT WAS GOING ON BUT YEMEN WAS NOT A PARTY TO THE PROBLEM.

3. SALEH SAID THAT THE BIG POWERS HAD SHOWN NO CONSISTENCY. WHY HAD WE NOT ACTED TO GET THE RUSSIANS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN OR TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE PALESTINIANS, THE LEBANON, SOUTH AFRICA AND PANAMA? WAS THIS CASE DIFFERENT BECAUSE THE ARABS WERE WEAK? THE BIG POWERS WOULD NOT SUFFER. THEIR OIL IMPORTS WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED

BECAUSE THE EXPORTING STATES NEEDED THE REVENUE. IT WAS NOT WESTERN INTERESTS THAT WERE IN DANGER, THOUGH ALL WOULD SUFFER IN A WAR.

4. THE SECRETARY OF STATE TOOK THE PRESIDENT UP ON HIS REFERENCE TO THE WEAKNESS OF ARAB STATES. WE HAD JUST SEEN A SMALL, WEAK STATE OVERRUN IN A DAY. IT DID NOT MAKE SENSE TO WAIT AND TALK TO THE AGGRESSOR ABOUT COMPROMISE. IT WAS VITAL TO SAY STRAIGHT AWAY THAT AGGRESSION WAS WRONG AND MUST BE REVERSED. THE FOREIGN FORCES WERE THERE AT THE INVITATION OF THE COUNTRIES THAT FELT THREATENED. THERE WERE TWO POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS, OF WHICH THE PEACEFUL ONE WAS THE BEST ONE. SALEH, AS A MILITARY MAN, WOULD KNOW THAT, DESPITE WHAT SOME OF THE PRESS SAID, A WAR WOULD NOT BE OVER IN AN AFTERNOON.

5. SALEH SAID THAT A POLITICAL SOLUTION WAS POSSIBLE PROVIDED THE MILITARY OPTION WAS RULED OUT. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT WE WERE CONCENTRATING ON MAKING ECONOMIC SANCTIONS EFFECTIVE. THAT WAS THE WHOLE TREND OF US POLICY. SALEH SAID THAT IF IT WAS TRUE THAT OUR FORCES HAD GONE TO THE GULF TO PROTECT THOSE STATES AGAINST AGGRESSION AND THERE WAS NO FURTHER AGGRESSION, THEN BY WHAT RIGHT COULD THERE BE A MILITARY OPTION? IF WE HAD THE SAFETY OF KUWAIT AND ITS PEOPLE AT HEART, WE SHOULD NOT TAKE A STEP THAT WOULD DESTROY KUWAIT UTTERLY. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT WE COULD NOT ALLOW SADDAM HUSSEIN TO REMAIN IN KUWAIT OR TO BENEFIT FROM HIS AGGRESSION. WHAT IF HE HAD LEGITIMATE RIGHTS ASKED SALEH? THOSE, SAID THE SECRETARY OF STATE, COULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED BY AGGRESSION. THEN WE HAVE A PROBLEM SAID THE PRESIDENT.

6. IRYANI SAID THAT, BEFORE THE INTERVENTION OF THE WEST, ALL THE ARAB LEADERS HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IRAQ HAD LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND HAD BEEN PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT SECESSION OF TERRITORY. WHY SHOULD THE EUROPEANS TAKE A STRICTER VIEW? SALEH ADDED THAT THE ARAB COUNTRIES HAD ONLY STARTED TO TAKE A STRICT VIEW AFTER THE INTERVENTION OF FOREIGN POWERS. OF COURSE, SAID THE SECRETARY OF STATE, BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN FRIGHTENED BEFORE THE WEST HAD ITS MILITARY FORCES ON THE GROUND. WE WERE NOT TAKING A EUROPEAN OR A WESTERN VIEW. WE BELONGED TO ONE COMMUNITY AND THE UN WAS THERE TO PROTECT SMALL STATES. IT WAS STRIKING HOW CLOSE THE UN RESOLUTIONS AND THOSE OF THE ARAB LEAGUE WERE TO EACH OTHER. SALEH ATTEMPTED TO ARGUE THAT THE ARAB LEAGUE RESOLUTIONS WERE NOT LEGITIMATE BECAUSE THEY HAD NOT BEEN TAKEN BY CONSENSUS. THE GULF STATES SHOULD REALLY ONLY COUNT AS ONE VOTE. THE WAY THE WEST WAS GOING, WE WERE LISTENING TO UNDEMOCRATIC LEADERS AND LOSING THE TRUST OF THE ARAB MASSES. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT WE HAD

OVERWHELMING PUBLIC SUPPORT. SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD LOSE. HE WAS USING WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS A SHIELD. HE HAD DENTED THE CAUSE OF THE PALESTINIANS. THE ONLY QUESTION WAS WHETHER HE WOULD LOSE BY PEACEFUL OR BY OTHER MEANS. TO SOME EXTENT, YEMEN HELD THE KEY TO PEACE OR WAR.

7. SALEH SAID THE OTHER ARABS SHOULD UNDERSTAND YEMEN'S POSITION. THEY WANTED YEMEN TO BE WITH THEM ALL THE WAY BUT THAT WOULD RULE OUT A MEDIATORY ROLE AND THEN YEMEN WOULD BE USELESS IN A CRISIS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT WHAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WANTED OF YEMEN WAS CLEAR ACCEPTANCE OF UN ECONOMIC MEASURES. WE DID NOT ALL HAVE TO SING THE SAME TUNE BUT IRAQI WITHDRAWAL FROM KUWAIT HAD TO COME FIRST. SALEH SAID THAT THIS SHOULD HAPPEN IN PARALLEL WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS FROM THE REGION. SADDAM HUSSEIN HAD TO BE GIVEN A WAY OUT. OTHERWISE, WHEN YOU CORNERED A CAT, IT BECAME ALMOST LIKE A TIGER. THAT, SAID THE SECRETARY OF STATE, WAS SADDAM HUSSEIN'S PROBLEM. IF A MAN BROKE INTO YOUR HOUSE, YOU DID NOT BARGAIN WITH HIM - YOU GOT RID OF HIM. SALEH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS WAS TRUE. HE DID NOT THINK THERE WAS A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN US. YEMEN DID NOT SUPPORT THE ANNEXATION OF KUWAIT. THEY ADHERED TO SANCTIONS. THEY WERE NOT RECEIVING IRAQI TANKERS. THEY DID NOT HAVE IRAQI ROCKETS, TANKS OR PLANES ON THEIR SOIL. BUT THEY DISAGREED WITH THE METHODS WE WERE USING. WE SHOULD MAKE USE OF YEMEN'S GOOD RELATIONS WITH IRAQ TO FIND A WAY OUT. IF IRAQ WOULD NOT PLAY, THEN YEMEN WOULD BE ENTIRELY WITH US.

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SPOKE OF THE IMPACT ON WESTERN OPINION OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S DETENTION OF FOREIGN NATIONALS. SALEH SAID HE WAS READY TO HELP. IF IRAQ COULD BE GIVEN A GUARANTEE THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ATTACKED, THEN SALEH COULD GO AND GET ALL THE FOREIGNERS OUT. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THE ARGUMENT WAS THE OTHER WAY ROUND. BY HOLDING THE HOSTAGES, SADDAM HUSSEIN WAS MAKING IRAQ LESS SAFE. SALEH SAID SADDAM HUSSEIN WAS DOING NO MORE THAN THE JAPANESE HAD DONE IN WORLD WAR II. YES, SAID THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AND THEY HAD BEEN TRIED AND HANGED AS WAR CRIMINALS.

9. SALEH SAID THAT YEMEN WAS EFFECTIVELY IN AS TIGHT AN EMBARGO AS IRAQ. THEY WERE GETTING NO IRAQI OR KUWAITI OIL. THE BRITISH COUNSELLOR IN ADEN HAD BEEN WATCHING THE SHIPPING TRAFFIC, JUST WAITING TO TELL THE WORLD THAT YEMEN WAS BREAKING SANCTIONS. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY COULD GO TO ADEN AND HODEIDA TO SEE FOR HIMSELF. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT DIPLOMATS WERE NOT OBLIGED TO GO ROUND THE WORLD WITH THEIR EYES SHUT. SALEH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WAS NO OBJECTION TO OBSERVATION

PROVIDED THIS WAS DONE LEGALLY.

10. SALEH SAID THAT HE WANTED THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO EXPLAIN YEMEN'S POSITION TO THE ARAB WORLD. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT SALEH WAS THE MAN TO EXPLAIN HIS OWN POSITION TO THE ARABS. THEY WERE NOT LISTENING OR THINKING, SAID SALEH. THEY WERE BLINDED BY KUWAIT. HOW COULD THE AL-SABAH BE LEADERS WHEN THEY HAD BEEN THE FIRST TO RUN AWAY? IF THE AMIR HAD STAYED TO FIGHT, YEMEN WOULD GLADLY HAVE SENT FORCES TO SUPPORT HIM.

11. THE SECRETARY OF STATE REFERRED TO THE DAMAGE DONE BY SADDAM HUSSEIN (AND ARAFAT) TO THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE. BUT THE PROBLEM WAS NOT FORGOTTEN AND WE MUST FIND A WAY TO CARRY IT FORWARD. SALEH SAID THAT THE ISSUE HAD BEEN ON THE BACK BURNER FOR A LONG TIME. IF THE WEST DEVOTED TO THE ISSUE 10 PER CENT OF THE EFFORT THEY WERE GIVING TO KUWAIT, THEN IT WOULD BE SOLVED.

COMMENT

12. SALEH IS, IN THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW, A ROGUE. HE WILL GO ON TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT FOR SADDAM HUSSEIN, IN PARTICULAR A DEAL INVOLVING MUTUAL WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES. THE SECRETARY OF STATE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS WAS NOT ON. AT THE SAME TIME, THE YEMENIS WERE AT PAINS TO SAY THAT THIS DISPUTE WAS NOT THEIR DISPUTE AND THAT, ALTHOUGH THEY DISAGREED WITH SANCTIONS, THEY WERE OBSERVING THEM. THE PRESIDENT TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE DISAGREED ABOUT THE NON-SUPPLY OF FOOD AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES BUT THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT YEMEN WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO SUPPLY EITHER. BOTH HE AND IRYANI WERE ADAMANT THEY WERE NOT INVOLVED MILITARILY WITH IRAQ. THE YEMENIS ARE CLEARLY FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE IN THEIR ISOLATION AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE MADE IT PLAIN THAT THE WILLINGNESS OF OTHERS TO HELP DEPENDED ON THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH UN SANCTIONS. SALEH SAID HE WAS IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH KING FAHD BUT NONETHELESS ASKED THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO TELL THE SAUDIS THAT HE WANTED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THEM. HE ALSO ASKED THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO TELL THE AMIR OF KUWAIT THAT HE HOPED HE WOULD NOT CALL IN YEMEN'S OUTSTANDING BILLS FOR KUWAIT OIL.

13. FCO PLEASE ADVANCE TO PS/NO 10.

DUGGAN

MUNRO