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MY TELNO 2157 : IRAQ/KUWAIT : NEW REGIONAL SECURITY
ARRANGEMENTS

SUMMARY

1. ADMINISTRATION DO NOT ENVISAGE ANY SINGLE SECURITY STRUCTURE, BUT RATHER A WEB OF INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS BASED ON THE STATES OF THE REGION AND INVOLVING OUTSIDE POWERS. THEY EXPECT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC, AS WELL AS MILITARY, CONCERNS TO BE ADDRESSED, AND RECOGNISE THE NEED TO DEAL WITH THE ISRAELI DIMENSION.

DETAIL

2. FOLLOWING THE FALSE START OF BAKER'S SUGGESTION, IN HIS CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY OF 4 SEPTEMBER, THAT THERE MIGHT BE A NEW REGIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURE ANALOGOUS TO NATO (MY TELNO 2145), POLICY PLANNING STAFF IN STATE DEPARTMENT WERE ASKED TO LOOK AT POSSIBLE POST-CRISIS SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GULF REGION. WE HAVE SPOKEN TO ROSS (DIRECTOR POLICY PLANNING) AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS ABOUT THIS.

3. STATE ADMIT THAT IT IS PREMATURE TO GO INTO DETAIL, BUT HAVE REACHED SOME BROAD TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS. FIRSTLY, THEY THINK THAT POST-CRISIS SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS HAVE TO BE BASED AROUND THE STATES OF THE REGION AND CANNOT BE IMPOSED FROM OUTSIDE. BUT, SECONDLY, THEY BELIEVE THAT OUTSIDE POWERS HAVE INTERESTS TO DEFEND AND A CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE TO THESE ARRANGEMENTS, AND WOULD THUS NEED TO BE PLAYERS. THIRDLY THEY DO NOT THINK THAT ANY SINGLE ORGANISING CONCEPT WILL DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH THE PROBLEMS LIKELY TO BE FACED, OR THE RANGE OF COUNTRIES WITH A LEGITIMATE INTEREST. WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND IS A QUOTE BUILDING BLOCK APPROACH UNQUOTE, IN WHICH A WEB OF COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIPS, PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS ARE STRENGTHENED OR CREATED. FOURTHLY, THEY ENVISAGE THESE BUILDING BLOCKS AS ADDRESSING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL

ASPIRATIONS AS WELL AS THE MILITARY DIMENSION.

4. THE ADMINISTRATION DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE GONE MUCH BEYOND THESE BROAD PRINCIPLES. HOWEVER, THEY ARE CLEARLY WRESTLING WITH SOME OF THE PROBLEMS THROWN UP BY THESE PRINCIPLES. ROSS TOLD THE MINISTER ON 17 OCTOBER THAT, IN HIS VIEW, WE HAD TO RECOGNISE THAT SOME OF THE REGIMES IN THE REGION WERE ANACHRONISTIC. THEY HAD TO LOOK FOR WAYS OF BROADENING THEIR POLITICAL BASES. THE KUWAITIS WERE SHOWING THE WAY IN THIS REGARD. EQUALLY, ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, ROSS THOUGHT THAT A MORE SYSTEMATIC WAY HAD TO BE FOUND FOR THE QUOTE HAVES UNQUOTE OF THE REGION TO FUND THE QUOTE HAVE NOTS UNQUOTE IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE AREA AS A WHOLE. ROSS ALSO FELT THAT ARRANGEMENTS DESIGNED TO REDUCE REGIONAL TENSIONS WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE ISRAELI COMPLICATION. HE THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE A ROLE FOR CBMS IN THIS CONTEXT. HE RECONGISED THAT ANY ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FACT THAT ARAB PARTICIPANTS SAW ISRAEL, JUST AS MUCH AS IRAQ, AS A SOURCE OF HOSTILITY. THIS WAS AN ADDED REASON FOR PROGRESS OVER THE ARAB/ISRAEL ISSUE.

5. AS REGARDS THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE GULF, THE ADMINISTRATION ENVISAGE A STAGED WITHDRAWAL GIVING TIME FOR REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE PUT IN PLACE. THEY WOULD OPPOSE ANY ATTEMPT BY SADDAM HUSSEIN TO LINK IRAQI AND US WITHDRAWALS. THEY CLEARLY EXPECT ALMOST ALL US GROUND TROOPS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE PENINSULA, BUT ARE WORKING ON IDEAS FOR MAINTAINING A MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA. THEY WOULD EXPECT TO MAINTAIN THEIR NAVAL PRESENCE WHICH, AS BAKER AND OTHERS HAVE POINTED OUT, HAS BEEN A FIXTURE SINCE 1949. THEY ALSO SEEM TO BE THINKING IN TERMS OF SIGNIFICANT PRE-POSITIONING, AND BELIEVE THAT THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED WITH VERY FEW US PERSONNEL ON THE GROUND, PERHAPS BY MAKING MORE USE OF DIEGO GARCIA. ROSS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN AN AIR PRESENCE IN THE REGION, PERHAPS ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS THUS AVOIDING THE NEED FOR AN OVERT STATIONING COMMITMENT.

6. THERE CONTINUES TO BE SOME PUBLIC INTEREST IN POST-CRISIS SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY IF SADDAM HUSSEIN WERE TO WITHDRAW WITH HIS MILITARY CAPABILITY INTACT. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THIS DURING HIS TESTIMONY ON THE HILL THIS WEEK, SECRETARY BAKER SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO CONTINUE AN

INTERNATIONAL ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST IRAQ COVERING CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AS WELL AS WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. MORE GENERALLY, HE SAID THAT REGIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE PRIMARILY THE CONCERN OF COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. BUT IF THOSE COUNTRIES CONCLUDED THAT ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION WAS REQUIRED, THEN THE US OUGHT AT LEAST TO BE WILLING TO CONSIDER PROVIDING IT.

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