

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

PS/Mr Waldegrave

Secretary of State's meeting with Mr Heath: Iraq

The Secretary of State saw Mr Heath alone this afternoon. Mr Heath first described his dinner with King Hussein of Jordan. It was clear nothing new had emerged. The King had complained about how misunderstood/broke the Jordanians were. The Crown Prince had bemoaned the fact that Jordan's GDP was down by 55%.

In Iraq, Mr Heath had found Saddam Hussein very calm, well informed and lucid, as was Tariq Aziz. There were two further groups of hostages for whom Mr Heath had some hopes. One was a group of 80 nurses. Saddam Hussein had said that they would be allowed out if they were replaced. Mr Heath had pointed out that this was unrealistic and hoped that he might have made some impression. Saddam Hussein had said that those involved in building his guest house could go when the work was finished. Saddam Hussein had claimed that they were Irish but Mr Heath had pointed out that they were from Northern Ireland, and thus British.

Mr Heath said it was clear from what Saddam Hussein had said that he was convinced that Britain and the United States wanted a war. He was convinced of this from our talk of reparations and war trials. Saddam Hussein had said that, since he had no nuclear weapons, he would have to rely on CW in the event of war. Equally, he had to make use of hostages, though this was regrettable because of the Arab tradition of hospitality.

There had been a lot from Saddam Hussein about the history of Kuwait and a rebuttal of the charge that he had deceived Mubarak and King Fahd in July. Saddam Hussein had thought that all the help he had received from the Gulf Arabs during the war with Iran had been a gift. But the Gulf Arabs had then asked for it back. The British were supposed to be so moral. Why were we impressed by the Al Sabah who spent most of their time with prostitutes?

Saddam Hussein had said that he was in direct touch with the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia, though he had asked Mr Heath not to talk about the second.

Mr Heath had drawn the conclusion that the best way forward was an Arab-type negotiation which would allow Saddam Hussein to withdraw with some concessions. Mr Heath had told Saddam Hussein that his hostage policy would not in fact

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

CDB

Pin Pin

000

26/11

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

shield installations from attack.

Mr Heath told the Secretary of State that his use of the words "grisly and repulsive" in the House would have exactly the wrong effect in Iraq. Mr Heath was critical of the trend of our policy.

Mr Heath did not raise the case of Ian Richter.

25 October 1990


for (J S Wall)

cc: PS/PUS
Mr Fairweather

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL