

SECRET

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Jp 01180

MR POWELL

ms
Prime Minister
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The Gulf

The Prime Minister may wish to see
the attached telegram from our Defence
Attaché in Washington on US military
planning. It accords broadly with the
picture I was given last week.

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PERCY CRADOCK

30 October 1990

SECRET

WHENCE THE POSSIBLE NEED TO GOOK TO ENCOI LOWEALONE

VBE

REFERRED TO

MR GOULDEN

F.D.A.

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SECRET
PP FCOLN
PP NEYOR
FM DCCUK TO MODAD
231715Z OCT
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FM BDS WASHINGTON
TO MODUK
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SECRET UK EYES ALFA EXCLUSIVE
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EXCLUSIVE FOR MODUK FOR CDS AND DCDS(C). FCO FOR GOULDEN (AUS).
UKMIS NEW YORK FOR MR CLIFF. FROM DA
SUBJECT: KUWAIT

1. SUMMARY. REAPPRAISAL OF MULTINATIONAL OPTIONS IN KUWAIT. TIMINGS NOW POINT TO LIMITED IDEAL PERIOD 5 DEC - 14 JAN FOR OFFENSIVE ACTION. SAUDIS TO OPEN US PR CAMPAIGN. ARAB MULTINATIONAL FORCE NATIONS MAY HAVE US COMMITMENT FOR OFFENSIVE WHOSE AIMS MUST INCLUDE REMOVAL OF IRAQI THREAT TO REGION. INFLUENTIAL JCS OFFICERS NOW CONSIDER UN INVOLVEMENT OR LONG HAUL NO CONFLICT CONTAINMENT OPTIONS.
2. ON RETURN TO CAPITAL I HAVE HAD SERIES OF CALLS ON FORMAL (DIRECTORS JCS J3 AND VICE DIRECTOR J5) AND INFORMAL CONTACTS TO ASSESS AND READVICE CURRENT US OPTLONS. BOTH CONTACTS POINT TO STIFFENING SAUDI POSITION TO AVOID THE NIGHTMARE OF IRAQ SIMPLY COMPLYING WITH UN SCR 661. JCS STRESSED NO CHANGE TO DETERRENT/DEFENCE MISSION, PREOCCUPATION WITH EXTENDED TOURS OF DUTY/ROTATION, AND SOBER REALITY OF MILITARY TASK IF GIVEN EITHER OFFENSIVE MISSION.

3. SAUDI. MY INFORMAL BUT RELIABLE CONTACTS ARE SURE THAT SAUDI, EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN COMMITMENTS WERE CONDITIONAL UPON US AGREEMENT AT KENNEBUNKPORT THAT MISSION WAS TO RESTORE SECURITY OF REGION BY REMOVING MAIN IRAQI THREAT AND RESTORATION OF KUWAIT SOVEREIGNTY. US TROOP LEVELS UP TO THAT POINT WERE CAPPED BY SAUDIS BUT THERE WAS NOW NO CEILING. GIVEN CONTINUING AND PRESENT ISRAELI (TEMPLE MOUNT UN SCR 672) DIFFICULTY, IT WAS ALLEGED THAT PRINCE BANDAR WAS ORCHESTRATING MAJOR US PR CAMPAIGN LINKED TO SAUDI FAVOURED NATIONAL STATUS FOR US DEFENCE SALES. THIS WOULD CHIME WELL AS CONGRESSIONAL AND BUDGET PRESSURES DRAW DOWN DEFENCE EQUIPMENT PROGRAMME. SAUDIS WOULD PREFER OPERATIONS OVER BY RAMADAN AND MAJORITY OF WESTERN FORCES OUT OF SAUDI OR AT LEAST RELOCATED TO KUWAIT BY HAJ. JCS CONFIRM THAT SAUDIS HAVE NOT IMPOSED THIS AS A CONSTRAINT AND JCS VIEW JAN AS OPTIMUM TIME. IF OPS OVERRAN INTO HAJ, SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD BE BLAMED FOR CANCELLATION, NOT THE ALLIES. JCS VIEW THIS THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE PSYOP MILEAGE IN THIS. BY LATE JAN DUST STORMS AND PROXIMITY TO RAMADAN REDUCE OFFENSIVE WINDOW AND SAUDI PREFER ASSAULT IN PERIOD END NOV - MID JAN WITH DECEMBER AS BEING OPTIMUM FOR BOTH LAND AND AIR OPS. BANDAR WAS REPORTED AS PRIVATELY HAVING APPROACHED UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH SERVICE FACILITY FOR FOUR MILLION ANTHRAX VACCINE DOSES.

4. US BUILD UP. J3 TOLD ME THAT BY 5 DEC US WOULD HAVE COMPLETED PLANNED BUILD UP TO 250,000 WITH LOGISTIC SUPPORT OF 30 DAYS INTENSE RATE. CURRENTLY JCS JUDGE THAT THEIR (AND OTHER) FORCES ARE TOO WEAK AT PRESENT FOR A SHORT BLITZKREIG CAMPAIGN WHICH RAISES PROBABILITY OF EXTENDED SLOG WITH HIGHER CASUALTY RATIO. AIR CAMPAIGN LIKELY TO TAKE 6-8 DAYS. DIRECTOR J3 STILL CONFIDENT OF WINNING GIVEN ADDITIONAL TIME FOR BUILD-UP. HE STATED THAT 416 X MIAI 120MM TANKS WERE BEING MOVED FROM GERMANY. HE STRESSED THAT THESE WOULD REPLACE PRESENT M60 AND M1 105MM TANKS AT FRONT LINE (COMMENT - THIS WILL SURELY RAISE TRAINING CONVERSION AS WELL AS LOGISTIC PROBLEMS) AND SAID THAT THERE WAS NO LINKAGE AT PRESENT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF REINFORCEMENT FROM EUROPE. HOWEVER WE KNOW THAT THE DECISION ON ROTATION WILL BE TAKEN AT MONTH END AND THAT THE JCS/ARMY OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO LIFT 82 AB DIV (COMPLETE) OUT AT FIRST ROTATION NOW LIKELY TO BE AT 179 DAY POINT. HE ALSO ADDED THAT FOR THE US TO BE CONFIDENT OF VICTORY, A FURTHER TWO HEAVY DIVISIONS WOULD BE REQUIRED (REPLACING BOTH 82ND AB AND 101 AASLT DIVS). THE DIFFICULTY IS THAT ONLY REMAINING DIVS IN US ARE QUOTE BOBTAILS UNQUOTE (2 X REG BDES, 1 X RES BDE). HENCE THE POSSIBLE NEED TO LOOK TO EUCOM FOR FUTURE ROTATION/REINFORCEMENT. THIS BRINGS WITH IT COMPLICATIONS FOR

CFF. USAF ARE ALREADY TRICKLING ROTATION OF CREWS WITHOUT
DEF AUTHORITY AND USN HAS SUSTAINING 6 MONTH NAVAL OP TOUR
POLICY. IT WAS CLEAR THAT JCS REGARD TOTAL FORCE CONCEPT AS OP
LIABILITY BUT FACE PRESSURES FROM CONGRESS TO CALL OUT OP
RESERVES.

5. LONG HAUL OPTIONS. VDIR J5 GAVE ME FURTHER INSIGHTS INTO
HOW THIS DIRECTORATE (SUPPORTED HE SAID BY CJCS) SAW
MULTINATIONAL OPS. THEY NOW BELIEVE UN MANDATE ONLY REALISTIC
OPTION IF OFFENSIVE ACTION REQUIRED AND WERE SEIZING
OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT THINKING ON QUOTE CO-EXECUTIVE UN
THEATRE AGENCY UNQUOTE WOULD BE SHARED SAUDI/US COMD (WITH
CINCENT REALLY DIRECTING OPS) BACKED BY LOCAL POLITICAL AND
MILITARY MULTINATIONAL COMMITTEES. DIRECTOR JCS EARLIER HAD
CONFIRMED THIS POSITION STRESSING NO MSC STRATEGIC DIRECTION
ROLE BETWEEN SECURITY COUNCIL AND THEATRE EXECUTIVE AGENCY. JCS
THINK SOVIET POSITION INHIBITED BY WLSH TO AVOID COMMITMENTS OF
TROOPS (AFGHANISTAN MEMORIES) BUT INCREASING AFFECTED BY
STRIDENCY OF CRITICISM FROM RELATIVES OF HOSTAGES, THEREFORE
ENGAGEMENT OF MSC PROFILE COULD BE AN IMPORTANT SOVIET
MILESTONE. IF PRESSED BY NEED TO KEEP SOVIETS ON LINE UP TO AN
ARTICLE 42 UN SCR, JCS WOULD ACCEPT ADVISORY SIDELINE ROLE TO
SECURITY COUNCIL.

6. NON-CONFLICT CONTAINMENT OPTION. J5 WERE NOW PREPARING
LONG HAUL NO-CONFLICT ASSESSMENTS. PREDICT SANCTIONS IN CERTAIN
AREAS (TYRES AND AIRCRAFT LUBRICANTS WERE CITED) ALREADY
DISABLING IRAQ BUT IF TIGHT SANCTIONS SUSTAINED THIS COULD
CONSIDERABLY REDUCE OP EFFECTIVENESS AND PERMIT REDUCTION OF
WESTERN FORCES. WHEN PRESSED ABOUT IRAQI WITHDRAWAL FROM KUWAIT
THEY INFERRED THIS MAY HAVE TO AWAIT COUP. PROSPECT OF STARVING
CHILDREN OR HOSTAGES COULD BE AVERTED BY RELEASE OF HUMANITARIAN
AID.

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