



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 December 1990

Dear Charles,

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IRAQ/KUWAIT: POSITIVE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

We agreed earlier this month to send you progress reports every three weeks in future.

Saddam Hussein's propaganda continues to play on "peace" themes, seeking to present the Americans and ourselves as aggressors, to link the crisis to the Palestinian question and to divide the allies. Much has been made of reluctance by some in the US Congress to support military action. The hostages were used with some success to divert public attention in the West from the central issues.

The recent release of the hostages makes it easier for us to keep attention focussed on our main themes, which are: the strength of international support for the Security Council Resolutions requiring complete Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti government, which form the non-negotiable basis for a solution to the crisis; the illegality and brutality of the Iraqi occupation and the progressive destruction of Kuwait; and emphasising that Saddam Hussein faces a powerful and united military force against which he cannot win.

We continue to provide briefing notes, updated weekly, covering these themes and dealing with other important points. These include the Palestinian dimension - and our rejection of linkage. Recent reporting from posts shows that our extensive output of television, radio and press material on the crisis continues to be widely used by the media in Arab and other Islamic countries including Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan. In particular, our six television programmes on atrocities and destruction in Kuwait have been broadcast in whole or in part throughout the Gulf region.

The Kuwaitis, who were lamentably slow at first, have recently begun to put their own case much more effectively. The UN Security Council debate on the rape of Kuwait helped to galvanise them into action, with support from us.



They have begun television broadcasting from Saudi Arabia to Kuwait, making their own material - including interviews with the Foreign and Defence Secretaries earlier this month - and using what we supply. The two London-based organisations, the Association for Free Kuwait and the Campaign for Free Kuwait, have good professional advice and are mounting lively campaigns in the United Kingdom. The Saudi performance still leaves much to be desired. Access for foreign journalists to the Kingdom remains inadequate and senior Saudis are generally reluctant to put their case before the media. However, a Saudi Information Mission to London earlier this month went well, and Prince Abdulla bin Faisal bin Turki who led it has appeared widely on British television.

In the coming weeks we shall continue to urge the Kuwaitis and Saudis to further efforts. (The multiplier effect here is important, since they create outlets for our material while feeding us with their own.) We shall produce more television material on the atrocities committed in Kuwait. We are interviewing many returned hostages about conditions there. We are also taking every opportunity to show Arab audiences the powerful and multinational character of the military force facing Iraq.

We are sending information packs on the Gulf crisis to selected politicians, leading journalists and church leaders in the United Kingdom under letters from FCO Ministers.

I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (MOD) and Len Appleyard (Cabinet Office).

James,
Shepha Wall
(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

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10 Downing Street

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