

IMMEDIATE

UNCLASSIFIED  
FM WASHINGTON  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 3102  
OF 210003Z DECEMBER 90  
INFO IMMEDIATE ACTOR

IRAQ/KUWAIT; MR HEATH'S TESTIMONY TO THE  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE (HASC)

## SUMMARY

1. MR HEATH TELLS HASC THAT SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAQ CAN WORK ;  
WAR WOULD BE TOO COSTLY; DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT  
SHOULD BE PURSUED; ROOM FOR FURTHER ARAB INVOLVEMENT. JORDAN  
TREATED SHABBILY.

## DETAIL

2. MR EDWARD HEATH GAVE TESTIMONY TO THE ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (HASC) CHAIRED BY  
ASPIN (D-WISCONSIN) ON 20 DECEMBER. HE SPOKE FOR NEARLY THREE  
HOURS.

3. MR HEATH SAID SADDAM DID NOT TRUST EITHER THE UK OR US.  
TALK OF WAR TRIALS AND REPARATIONS REINFORCED SADDAM'S VIEW THAT  
THE COALITION'S AIM WAS HIS DESTRUCTION AND THAT OF IRAQ (WITH A  
SUBSEQUENT REDISTRIBUTION OF TERRITORY TO TURKEY, IRAN AND  
SYRIA). SADDAM THOUGHT THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO USE ATOMIC  
WEAPONS AGAINST HIM, AS PROBABLY WOULD ISRAEL. SADDAM HAD  
CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS AND WOULD HAVE TO USE THEM ; HE  
HAD NO ALTERNATIVE.

4. MR HEATH SAID THAT SADDAM WAS CLEVER AND ASTUTE. HE HAD  
TOLD SADDAM THAT HOLDING THE HUMAN SHIELDS WAS ONLY HURTING HIS  
CAUSE. THERE WAS WORLDWIDE ABHORRENCE. HE HAD TOLD SADDAM THAT  
BRITISH HOSTAGES WOULD NOT DETER MRS THATCHER FROM BOMBING  
STRATEGIC SITES. SADDAM HAD ASKED, IF HE WITHDREW, WHAT  
GUARANTEE WOULD HE HAVE THAT THE COALITION WOULD NOT FOLLOW HIM  
TO BAGHDAD. MR HEATH HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE ARAB LEAGUE COULD  
PROVIDE A BUFFER.

5. MR HEATH EMPHASISED THE NEED FOR A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. THE  
ARABS, AND PARTICULARLY THE ARAB LEAGUE, HAD TO BE ALLOWED  
GREATER ROLE. THE COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WAR WOULD BE  
EXTREMELY HIGH FOR BOTH SIDES (SADDAM RECOGNISED THIS). WAR  
WOULD CAUSE HATRED TOWARDS THE WEST AMONG ARABS THAT COULD LAST  
FOR DECADES. SANCTIONS COULD STILL WORK, BUT MR HEATH WOULD NOT  
GIVE A TIMESCALE.

(EB/CHY)

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6. ON THE TARIQ AZIZ /BAKER VISITS, MR HEATH IMPLIED THAT THE US WAS SHOWING INSUFFICIENT FLEXIBILITY. HE HOPED THE TALKS WOULD GO AHEAD AND WOULD PROVE FRUITFUL. HE REGRETTED THAT THE CALL IN UNSCR 660 FOR IMMEDIATE INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT HAD LARGELY BEEN IGNORED. KING HUSSEIN HAD BEEN TRYING FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION ; NOBODY HAD GIVEN HIM ANY CREDIT. OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION JORDAN WAS SUFFERING THE MOST. THE ATTITUDE OF BOTH THE US AND BRITAIN HAD BEEN QUOTE YOU DO EXACTLY AS WE TELL YOU AND THEN WE WILL SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP UNQUOTE.

7. ASPIN ASKED IF MR HEATH THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE A CHANGE IN UK GULF POLICY AS A RESULT OF MRS THATCHER'S RESIGNATION. MR HEATH SAID THAT HE DOUBTED THAT BRITISH POLICY WOULD CHANGE GREATLY, BUT HE HOPED THAT MR MAJOR WOULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION.

8. MR HEATH'S APPEARANCE WAS PART OF A SERIES OF HASC HEARINGS ON THE GULF. OTHER INVITEES THIS WEEK HAVE INCLUDED FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE AND FORMER UN AMBASSADOR JEAN KIRKPATRICK. SEVERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SAID THAT MR HEATH WAS THE MOST IMPRESSIVE WITNESS IN NEARLY TWO WEEKS OF HEARINGS.

9. THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS SECRETARY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT MR HEATH'S POINT THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS REFERRED TO IN UNSCR 660 WERE NOT BEING PURSUED WITH ENOUGH VIGOUR. FITZWATER SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION DISAGREED. THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL WENT TO AMMAN OFFERING TO HAVE TALKS. HE FOUND NO ENCOURAGEMENT. THE US HAD OFFERED TALKS, WITH FIFTEEN SEPERATE DATES. THERE WAS STILL NO RESPONSE FROM SADDAM HUSSEIN.

WOOD