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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

LIMITED ACCESS

Meeting of the NSC/Deputy Committee Meeting

DATE: August 2, 1990
LOCATION: Cabinet Room
TIME: 8:05 - 9:30 a.m.

SUBJECT: Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait (S)

PARTICIPANTS:

WHITE HOUSE

The President
The Vice President
Brent Scowcroft
John Sununu
Boyden Gray
Roman Popadiuk
Andy Card

OVP

The Vice President
Carnes Lord

NSC

Richard Haass
Sandra Charles

STATE

Robert Kimmitt
John Kelly
Thomas Pickering

Treasury

Nicholas Brady
John Robson

JUSTICE

Richard Thornburgh
William Barr

JCS

Colin Powell
David Jeremiah
Norman Schwarzkopf
Burwell Barr

CIA

William Webster
Richard Kerr

ENERGY

James Watkins
John East
John Tuck

OMB

Richard Darman

DOD

Richard Cheney
Paul Wolfowitz



Minutes

The President opened with a statement for the press condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that was published by the White House Press Secretary. He also responded to a series of questions. (U)

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The President: First, I want to thank you for coming. And to thank the NSC, State, DoD and CIA for the long and sleepless hours. I thought we should get together to figure out what has happened and the implications. Brent will open and then we'll have an intelligence update. (S)

General Scowcroft: It would be most useful if at the outset we could have a summary of the situation from Bill Webster, then what we have done diplomatically from Bob Kimmitt; and from Nick Brady on the economic actions we've taken. Then we will turn to an analysis of our objectives, outline a strategy, and discuss further choices. (S)

DCI Webster: There were seven divisions on the border yesterday morning. Since the attack, which occurred between 6:00 pm and 1:00 am our time, four divisions were moved. One came down the road from the western quarter. Several planes have landed since 1:00 am at the airport. They are also getting support from the sea. Their first announcement was that the government had fallen. The second announcement was that there had been a coup, and that a group had requested the Iraqi government's help. (S)

The President: That got a laugh at the UN. When they were asked to identify the people, they couldn't, and everyone laughed. (S)

DCI Webster: They have moved forces from the Iranian border. This is a major intervention. (b)(1)

Governor Sununu: Was there any violence toward the royal family? (S)

DCI Webster: No. There was some fighting. The U.S. Embassy is okay. I imagine they are able to hear artillery firing from where they are. (S)

Governor Sununu: Is the Kuwaiti royal family anywhere around the world being harassed? (S)

DCI Webster: There are no reports of that. There are 20,000 Kuwaiti troops, and some other Arab forces. At the Arab League they have passed a resolution of condemnation. There was no call for armed action. When the fighting was reported, Moscow said nothing officially. NATO and Japan have condemned the invasion and called for Iraq's withdrawal. The stock market in Tokyo is down; oil prices are increasing. The British have declared this a grave threat to regional peace. It appears there was no military objective but Kuwait. (S)

Mr. Kerr: The fighting continues. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Governor Sununu: Any gold assets inside Kuwait? (Ø)

DCI Webster: We don't know. (U)

Mr. Kimmitt: We made a statement on July 18, basically reaffirming our commitments in the Persian Gulf. We defined our principle interests as protecting freedom of navigation, the free flow of oil, a strong commitment to the individual and collective self-defense of our friends. Since then we have been in close contact with Kuwait, the UAE and Saudi Arabia. After the Jeddah talks, we issued a statement on sovereignty and the need for a peaceful resolution. It went out at midday. We sent a cable to our allies asking them to weigh in to get Iraq to reverse its military deployments, and had contacted the British and French about their military deployments. (Ø)

In the post invasion period, the White House issued a statement at Kuwait's request. A second longer one was issued to answer questions. The Iraqi Ambassador was called in. He didn't know anything beyond what Tariq Aziz had said -- that their government had been asked to respond to a coup by a new government. We have briefed Foley, Michel, Mitchell and Dole, and answered questions. At the UN, the Security Council in a strong manner passed a resolution condemning Iraq's invasion and calling for the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces. It passed 14 to nothing with Yemen abstaining. (Ø)

Mr. Haass: Reportedly, they were unable to vote because didn't have any instructions. (Ø)

The President: That could be serious with Saudi Arabia as their neighbor. (Ø)

Mr. Kimmitt: Our diplomatic posts have been contacted. Bonn, Paris, the EC and the Italians are already working with us. We have sent special instructions to Cairo for the Islamic foreign ministers' meeting at the OIC. They are convening an Arab League meeting. (Ø)

The President: Is any country supporting Iraq? (U)

Mr. Kimmitt: None. China and Yemen hesitated at first, but China came around and Yemen abstained because they had no instructions. After you signed the executive order on sanctions and the economic freeze, we sent a cable asking others to do the same thing. Treasury is also working its network on an assets freeze. There was a British cabinet meeting at 0700 our time to

consider what to do; there are no results yet. Some are skeptical about whether to go along. It was the same thing with Libya and Iran. We also have asked for economic sanctions on arms supplies from the Soviets, France, Italy and China. Baker and Shevardnadze will be talking on this. It remains to be seen whether supplies will be cut a lot though. Lastly, there is no report of any US citizen hurt or killed. There are 3,800 Americans in Kuwait and 270 Embassy staff; and 500 Americans in Baghdad, with 42 Embassy officers. (S)

The President: What have been Iran and Israel's reactions? (S)

Mr. Kelly: There has been media reporting but no editorial comment. (U)

Secretary Cheney: Arens is saying I told you so. (S)

Mr. Kerr: Iraq was sending a delegation to Iran. That has been delayed. (S)

Secretary Brady: The President signed two executive orders. One prevents imports and exports. The other prevents other transactions, and freezes Kuwaiti assets. The G-7 countries have been contacted. The freeze is being implemented by the Fed in New York. Instructions have been transmitted. (S)

General Scowcroft: Will others follow? (U)

Mr. Robson: Responses have been wobbly so far. We have to figure it out. (S)

Secretary Brady: If you marry Iraq's military might with the money it gets daily, the combination of economic with military power is the principal thing to think about. Without their oil, they don't have a source for funds. If they are able to sell Kuwaiti oil, then it is a problem. (S)

Mr. Kelly: We can ask Saudi Arabia, UAE and others to up production. (S)

Secretary Brady: A shortage of oil won't matter. (S)

The President: Would there be a shortage? There's a hell of a lot already proven or produced. (S)

Governor Sununu: It won't work unless there is a boycott of both Kuwait and Iraq with preference to others. (S)

Secretary Brady: Japan gets 98 percent of its imports from there. They need it for their whole economy every day. The idea would be to shut it off, but add to supply. This will affect the money Iraq will have. Like stopping the Soviet pipeline. Even so, Iraq has potential economic power. (S)

Governor Sununu: That's why it is important to freeze assets in London and New York to protect against an event like this. Why not ask the UK and signal to the other Arabs that integrity of Kuwait depends on this in the face of an illegitimate government in Kuwait. This is inconsistent. We should send a message to the rest to recommend or not on assets. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: In 1979 we froze assets here and in London. We had a shoot out with the UK on the extraterritorial reach law. Arab countries operate out of US banks. The UK picked up the paranoia. They were concerned about London as a banking center with the reunification of Germany. That would be counterproductive. I expect we would get support for a freeze. The Bank of England has special procedures on withdrawals. Under our system the best way would be don't fight it. (S)

Mr. Robson: We will get on the Finance Minister and Central Bank. (S)

Secretary Cheney: On Nick's point, if economic and political sanctions only are in effect, Iraq could become a major oil power overnight. The rest of the world badly needs oil. They have little interest in poor Kuwait. It may be difficult to organize a good package of economic sanctions. (S)

General Scowcroft: Let's hear about our military posture. (S)

Secretary Cheney: The INDEPENDENCE is enroute from Diego Garcia to the North Arabian Sea. It has been accelerated and should be there in four days. There are 7 ships in the Persian Gulf with the Middle East Force. There are tankers in the UAE: 2 KC135s. 2KC10s were sent to Diego Garcia. It may be necessary to use them with carrier air in the northern Gulf. (S)

General Powell: There are also 2 KC135s in Diego Garcia. They are on standby. We are ready for a rapid TACAIR deployment for Saudi Arabia if they agree. As to possible future options, I will let the CINC brief you. (S)

Mr. East: The oil output from Iraq and Kuwait is 4.8 million barrels per day. They have a capacity of 6.2 million. So they have plenty of overproduction capacity. 2 million barrels a day could come off worldwide production and not affect the inventory. If you remove Iraq and Kuwait, you would want to keep worldwide production constant. There is 3.3 million barrels excess capacity in Saudi Arabia that they are not using. And there is the pipeline from Saudi Arabia and Turkey to Iraq. Most of Kuwait's oil goes through the Gulf. There is an interesting opportunity. Saudi Arabia could come up to full capacity to make up the 1.6-1.7 going through Turkey. We should consider discussing this with them. The market is skittish. Oil is

already up \$3 to \$23 a barrel. The market response won't stay. We need to move to individual stability in sources of supply. If we close the pipelines, it would bring down worldwide consumption. (S)

General Scowcroft: It would be a significant event if the US were to say that this small fracas is of little concern. That signal would send shock waves throughout the Middle East, including Israel and Iran. This has great value to the US position and oil in the Middle East. Unfortunately, we don't have the option to be inactive in reversing this. (S)

The President: No one here would disagree. (U)

Mr. Darman: In the longer term, Iraq could hold many governments hostage with its military and economic potential. There is some evidence of how changes in the Persian Gulf and Middle East will affect the long term picture. One standard point we don't have is how far we're prepared to go. We have approved a DoD role, using military force and capability. But there is a distinction between what to do to defend Saudi Arabia and to liberate Kuwait. It is vital that our response be firm. We need to show leadership, otherwise there will be longer term consequences. This is akin to the Persian Gulf conflict when we supported Iraq. It's the same principle. Our commitment was not as great during the Iran-Iraq war, but it was significant in protecting the area. (S)

Secretary Cheney: The military significance is different. (S)

General Powell: The combination of air and land operations shows the effectiveness of Iraqi military. In hours we saw a different color of Iraqi military than now. On defending Saudi Arabia and liberating Kuwait, there should be a great national interest in this. For several weeks the CINC and the JCS have prepared military options should the need arise.

Tier one, is a single surgical strike into Iraq to respond directly to Iraqi action, beyond a full scale invasion of the whole country; and,

tier two, a much more significant involvement of US forces to defend Saudi Arabia which puts forces in place if you want to consider military options to liberate Kuwait. (S)

General Scowcroft: There is no difference on US interests. There are three categories: military, economic (with the US in the lead) and diplomatic with the international community. The US should not be out in front. The question is what can we do. (S)

General Powell: The CINC will discuss Tier one and how fast we can move on Tier 2. (S)

General Schwarzkopf: We have seven combatants in the Gulf; the LASALLE is in Bahrain. They presently are arranged against an attack in the south. Three are on a high state of alert and in a defensive posture. Two US flag tankers are underway. The ships in the Gulf have 5 inch guns and Tomahawks. With the five inchers, in four hours they could target Al Bakr oil terminal. There are AHIP helicopters with HELLFIRE missiles that also can target their oil terminals. The TOMAHAWK gives you more capability to hit more targets, like their ground forces and chemical weapons and missiles. They can also hit economic targets. They are limited however, and they need ground imaging to program. We don't have good data for that. It would take 10 days to examine the TOMAHAWK options to include targets from the south all the way to Baghdad. (S)

The carrier battle group has hit a storm with 16 foot seas, but it should be on station on the seventh. It has limited strike options: with 14 aircraft you could have two strikes surged to three per day. The maximum options would be to have 31 with 2 strikes per day. Their targets would be military targets in the south because of the distance to the carrier. (S)

The President: I understand we don't bring it into the Gulf because of its vulnerability. (S)

General Schwarzkopf: If the Strait of Hormuz were closed, we would. (S)

The President: The Strait could be closed by Iraq, or by Iran. (S)

General Schwarzkopf: By anyone sinking a ship. We will add B52 capability with the carrier for protection. The B52s could go in Cairo West or Diego Garcia which would require UK permission, or Guam which we could do unilaterally. There would be 3 B52s. Tankage would be a problem without regular base access. We have a wide range of options for targets: military, troops, and economic. The B52s could engage in a stand off attack with cruise missiles targeting Baghdad. We could do all this unilaterally. We have a TACAIR package on standby. In 3 days we could deploy F-15s and F-16s. The F-15s would be on alert in Saudi Arabia to protect Saudi Arabia. We could launch a strike into Kuwait with them. Host nation support would be needed to execute this option. They would have the same targets. (S)

General Scowcroft: The Saudis have said no to TACAIR. (S)

Governor Sununu: Where would they go? (C)

General Schwarzkopf: Dhahran Air Force base. We have an op plan on the books that we have rehearsed. It was devised to protect

the Saudi oilfields. It acknowledges that if Iraq launched a full scale attack, there would not be enough force to defend Kuwait. Kuwait would be lost under this plan. It calls for a Marine Expeditionary Force, a regular landing team, four army divisions including rangers and special forces, and TACAIR on the southern border. Iraq has two weaknesses: a highly centralized leadership, so we need to knock out their headquarters, and Iraq has never fought over long distances. They had short supply lines with Iran. There may be an inability to support long lines. We would need to hit their command and control and supply lines. We are confident if these forces were introduced, we could stop an Iraqi attack into Saudi Arabia. We would need strategic lift and time to deploy. If we decided to attack, then it would be more difficult and we would need more forces. There are one million Iraqi troops. We would need more time to build a force to attack Iraq. It would require 20 TACAIR squadrons, B52s at either Cairo West or Diego Garcia, and a carrier battle group in the Red Sea, North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden. (S)

General Scowcroft: And it would take nineteen days to deploy. (S)

General Schwarzkopf: It would take 20 days to move with partial mobility. We would need more advance warning than we presently have.

In the case of NEO evacuation, in a permissive environment, they could drive out or take air charters. In an uncertain environment, they could use cars, MAC flights. We have five helos to get the 75 last people to the ships there. In an uncertain and worsening environment, we would need to insert troops to secure an airfield and to open evacuation routes. (S)

The President: You have obviously done a lot of thinking on this. (S)

General Scowcroft: Let's step back. The most significant option economically is oil. Iraq is very dependent on oil for income. There are some things we can do: shut off the two pipelines, tell tankers going into Kuwait to stop -- in theory it's easy, but in practice it will be difficult -- and do anything useful to get the Turks and the Saudis to shut down the pipeline. We should mount an embargo of Kuwaiti and Iraqi oil purchases. Clearly this would be the most damaging. One-fourth of US consumption is from Iraq. (S)

Mr. East: World oil is fungible. It would be made up on the market. Japan gets oil from UAE and Kuwait. (S)

The President: Who buys Iraqi oil? (S)

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Mr. East: Europe and the Far East import 610,000 barrels a day. Saudi Arabia could make this up. Production could go up 2 million barrels with Saudi excess. We could also declare an emergency and use the SPR. This would send a signal. (S)

Mr. Darman: Whoever buys it today, there will be new middle men to get it into the market. (S)

The President: That's why closing the pipeline is important. (S)

Mr. Darman: If you shut it off physically, it might work. Otherwise it won't. (S)

Secretary Brady: We haven't analyzed this much, how the operation works, who sells and how. (S)

Secretary Cheney: The question is whether it makes sense for us to interfere in the oil flow. (S)

General Scowcroft: But there is this threat. (S)

The President: I agree. Nick should do an analysis on market consumption. I also agree with Dick. If we don't cut it off, it will be sold on the spot market. (S)

Secretary Watkins: One half of their oil goes through Turkey. (S)

The President: We also need an analysis of Iran's role. There is hatred between them. I can't believe Iran won't look to gain from this. What about Iran? (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: There has been a rapprochement, but it has been more on the economic side. From the intelligence, we should be able to find out. Also there was a message from Iraq to Iran. (S)

The President: If Iran and Iraq joined their militaries, we would have a bigger problem. This maybe an opportunity for us to do better. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: Prince Turki called on behalf of King Fahd. He supports economic sanctions, focusing on diplomacy in the Middle East, and helping the Asians get oil to them. (S)

The President: What about chapter 7 sanctions?

Ambassador Pickering: We are ready to lead in to chapter 7 sanctions. We are prepared to do battle, but we should have an easier time to bring in China and the Soviets. It will be a hard fight. We need more than votes. We need to see what Iraq does. We need to expend a lot in capitals. The way open to sanctions is here. We need to get an international reaction. (S)

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The President: We need to underpin chapter 7. International sanctions will give us security cover. They will give some spine to Saudi Arabia and others to take difficult actions, like closing the pipeline. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: The Arabs have been disappointing. The more they shrink, they tougher it will be for us. We need calls to Fahd and Mubarak telling them to step up to the plate. They need to do so because it is in their interest. Also a message to the Amir to give visibility to the legitimate government. We don't recognize the new puppet entity. We also should go to the Europeans, Asians and others, but our focus should be on the Arabs. (S)

Secretary Brady: I was thinking about the balance of power in the Middle East. They give thirty million dollars a day to their military machine. Why was Iraq after Kuwait? If Iraq's military was strong plus their money supply, what changed? Could they repeat this tomorrow? (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: In the Persian Gulf NSD 26 signed last year the Iraqi threat was not that dramatic. We need to accelerate a review of that. (S)

Governor Sununu: What about the scenario of Iraq staying and annexing Kuwait? Is that an option? (S)

Secretary Brady: Iraq strategically wants to add the rest of Middle East. (S)

Mr. Darman: They have lots of options, but not enough to decide their objectives. At a minimum, this show is symbolic. At most, this sounds like a symbolic response, which would not have much effect. There also needs to be a distinction -- to defend Saudi Arabia and liberate Kuwait. There is a chance to defend Saudi Arabia if we do all that's possible. On liberating Kuwait, I sense it's not viable. Therefore we would need an intermediate option if we can't liberate Kuwait, one to limit Iraqi power with an annexed Kuwait. If so, then we can affect Iraq's short term actions; for example if Saudi Arabia is willing to increase production in the short term, then Iraq would see prices drop. (S)

Governor Sununu: Saudi Arabia should not only shut off the pipeline, but displace Iraq's oil with theirs. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: We have looked at a NEO evacuation for Kuwait. We have Baghdad numbers, but not for all our citizens. There is a plan to remove officers, and unofficial Americans. There is the possibility of a commercial evacuation from Baghdad and Kuwait. We will need to work with the military if things worsen. We

looked at breaking relations, but decided not to at this point. The safety of U.S citizens is important and we need someone in Baghdad and here to deal with and to protect Americans there and in Kuwait. For now, we should focus on economic sanctions and consider these steps later. (S)

Secretary Brady: What has Israel said? (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: (Defense Minister) Arens said Israel wants to sit and talk and provide assistance. We have urged restraint on the military option. (S)

The Vice President: Arens is coy. Israel is prepared to defend itself but it won't attack. Israeli forces are tough. But this is an international responsibility, it is not Israel's problem. (S)

The President: I wonder about world opinion if they did something. (S)

Attorney General: There would be an air of indifference from our allies. (S)

Secretary Cheney: The question is what are Iraq's military options. Their pipelines are inside. We have friends who depend on fungable oil. Iraq could interfere with Saudi oil to the United States by moving into Saudi Arabia. If they screw with the oil supply, what then? (S)

General Scowcroft: We should look at the embassy and the pipeline question. Also the Deputies Committee recommended other economic sanctions. There are no military sales or credits. It is not really meaningful, but takes care of 3 congressional bills that are in force. (S)

The President: On the mention of economic sanctions, we should tell Congress now to pass a resolution putting conditions on Iraq. By executive order we should move on what ever there is and suspend it all. We can do that unilaterally without other countries now. Otherwise, we'll get stuff from the Hill so counter productive that we can't live with it. They also should pass a resolution commending the UN, and approving what the Administration has done. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: It's still highly likely they are looking to keep sanctions on the Farm Bill. I still see them doing this even with your action. I agree we want the White House and the Executive out front in command and telling Congress. You should call the leaders. (S)

The Vice President: They could force a break in diplomatic relations. (S)

The President: We would tell them we have US people there working in diplomatic channels, and that would be counterproductive now. They could put it in, but not in a binding resolution.

Governor Sununu: You might need to call Foley from your plane. (Ø)

Mr. Gray: Subsidiaries may be a hole. There is a question of irritating foreign governments. (Ø)

The President: We need to get a remedy on that. Let's talk to our allies. (Ø)

General Scowcroft: There are a number of calls for you to make. Bill, you need to look at covert action against Saddam. (Ø)

Mr. Kimmitt: What about a presidential message to Saddam Hussein -- something asking why the big surprise. (Ø)

The President: This group should meet again tomorrow. (Ø)

Mr. Darman: We need to look at fundamental changes, and consider next steps from there. The time to do something is now with public support. If we wait 12-14 days to take action, there will not be as much support.

The President: For the military, protecting U.S. life should be under the heading of military business. We need any information we can get. We should hone up our options no matter how much force it takes. We don't want to make statements that force us in until we know the situation.

We at the outset made a statement. While not that profound, it could be rendered meaningless if we don't do something. (Ø)

Secretary Cheney: Saudi Arabia and others will cut and run if we are weak. (Ø)

General Powell: Should we put out a strong redline on Saudi Arabia as a vital interest? I think there is no choice. The question is do you lay it out to the public. (Ø)

The President: I agree. We must not overlook the other major powers. The Soviets so far their reaction has been positive. We can get them to kick in. That is, no adventurism, but get them to agree to some action. US/Soviet relations are good, but we don't want to overlook the Soviet desire for access to warm water ports. We don't want to resurrect that. Maybe something positive like a joint statement. The next step is in New York with the Soviets, UK, France and China. In New York we should press to put the heat on Saudi Arabia and the others. We should

be careful drawing the redlines we need to and throwing Kuwait to Iraq. We need to keep our chin out. We also need to decide how long to sit tight on another resolution. (S)

Mr. Kimmitt: We need to go at the Saudis again on a TACAIR deployment. (S)

The President: For the defense budget, this incident strengthens the arguments for a quick-response, ready force. (S)

Mr. Kerr: The Arab League is meeting in Cairo. President Mubarak and President Zayyid are going to Jeddah today or tomorrow. The Amir of Bahrain is abroad and so is Sultan Qaboos. (S)

The President: Let's get sanctions in place before noon. We'll make leadership calls from the plane. (S)

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