

## ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL

FM BAGHDAD

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1135

OF 021845Z SEPTEMBER 90

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, WASHINGTON, KUWAIT, ABU DHABI, AMMAN

INFO IMMEDIATE MUSCAT (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

MUSCAT FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY

MY TELNO 1126 (NOT TO MUSCAT): EVACUATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM IRAQ AND KUWAIT.

1. THE FRENCH CHARGE TOLD US ON THE EVENING OF 2 SEPTEMBER THAT PERMISSION FOR THE SPECIAL AIR FRANCE FLIGHT, SCHEDULED TO DEPART FROM BAGHDAD AT MIDNIGHT, HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN. WHEN HE RAISED THE MATTER AT THE MFA HE WAS TOLD THAT NO SPECIAL FLIGHTS BY FOREIGN AIRLINES COULD NOW BE PERMITTED. THE DECISION TO THIS EFFECT WAS FINAL. JANIER WAS TOLD THAT WE COULD THUS EVAUCATE OUR NATIONALS BY IRAQI AIRWAYS (IA) SCHEDULED SERVICES TO AMMAN OR BY MEANS OF CHARTER FLIGHTS, ALSO BY IA, ON THE SAME ROUTE.

2. JANIER SUGGESTED THAT THE MISSIONS AFFECTED MIGHT MEET VERY SOON TO CONSIDER WHETHER AN IA CHARTER ON THIS BASIS MADE ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL SENSE FOR EVACUATING OUR COMMUNITIES. ONE CONSIDERATION WAS THAT CAPACITY ON IA, THOUGH VARIABLE, WAS GROWING (THERE HAD FOR EXAMPLE BEEN THREE FLIGHTS TO AMMAN ON 1 SEPTEMBER). TRAVEL ONWARDS TO EUROPE FROM AMMAN COULD BE BY CHARTER OR BY SCHEDULED SERVICES.

## COMMENT

3. THERE MAY WELL BE SIMPLE COMMERCIAL MOTIVES BEHIND THE IRAQI DECISION (IA ARE, INCIDENTALLY, AT PRESENT INSISTING ON PAYMENT IN HARD CURRENCY BY EXPATRIATES, WHICH CAUSES ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS). HOWEVER THAT MAY BE, THE RESULT IS THAT EVACUEES ARE LEFT WITH THE CHOICE BETWEEN THE OVERLAND ROUTES TO JORDAN AND TURKEY (INVOLVING HORRENDOUS PROBLEMS AT THE FRONTIERS) AND FLYING IA AND THUS BEING SUBJECT TO IA'S UNPREDICTABLE SERVICES. SINCE IA ALSO INSIST ON THE PRODUCTION OF A PASSPORT AND EXIT VISA BEFORE THEY ACCEPT BOOKINGS, THE LATEST DECISION COULD ALSO FURTHER

DISRUPT ATTEMPTS TO ARRANGE SMOOTH AND SPEEDY ONWARD EVACUATION FROM KUWAIT VIA BAGHDAD.

4. ON 3 SEPTEMBER I SHALL BE SUPPORTING JANIER IN THE CALLING OF AN EARLY MEETING OF EC HEADS OF MISSION (PLUS PERHAPS THE US CHARGE) TO DISCUSS THE WAY AHEAD. FOR THOSE WITH SMALL COMMUNITIES HERE AND RELATIVELY FEW CITIZENS LEFT IN KUWAIT THE PROBLEM WILL NO DOUBT SEEM MANAGEABLE. FOR US AND THE AMERICANS AT LEAST, THE PROSPECT IS OF ALMOST TOTAL RELIANCE ON IA FOR THE EVACUATION OF SOME HUNDREDS OF OUR NATIONALS. SINCE THE ALTERNATIVE IS SO UNAPPETISING IT MAY WELL BE THAT WE SHOULD MAKE THE BEST OF IT AND ACTIVELY COOPERATE WITH IA. THE FIRST STEP MIGHT BE A JOINT IA CHARTER FLIGHT TO AMMAN TO CLEAR AS MANY AS POSSIBLE OF THE EXPATRIATES NOW IN BAGHDAD WHO ALREADY HAVE EXIT VISAS (SUCH AS THOSE WHO WOULD HAVE CAUGHT THE AIR FRANCE CHARTER). FROM AMMAN ONWARD TRAVEL COULD PERHAPS BE BY AIR FRANCE OR ATLANTIC VIRGIN, OR BOTH. *all three, British Airways*

WALKER

*Sordanian Airways?*

YYYY

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