

CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 2520
OF 182220Z OCTOBER 90
INFO IMMEDIATE ATHENS, MOSCOW
INFO ROUTINE ROME, PARIS, RIYADH, BAGHDAD, CAIRO, ACTOR

ADVANCE COPY

ATHENS PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY

ROME TELNO 860: IRAQ/KUWAIT: PRIMAKOV'S TOUR

SUMMARY

1. ADMINISTRATION WILL TAKE A TOUGH LINE ON THE COMPROMISE SOLUTION WHICH THEY EXPECT PRIMAKOV TO BRING TO WASHINGTON. DETAIL
2. ROSS (DIRECTOR, POLICY PLANNING, STATE DEPARTMENT) TOLD THE MINISTER ON 17 OCTOBER THAT PRIMAKOV WAS DUE IN WASHINGTON ON THE EVENING OF 18 OCTOBER. HE SAID THAT HE EXPECTED PRIMAKOV TO BRING A POSSIBLE PACKAGE FOR A COMPROMISED SOLUTION. SECRETARY BAKER WOULD QUOTE BEAT DOWN HARD UNQUOTE ON ANY SUCH PACKAGE. HE ARGUED THAT IF SADDAM HUSSEIN COULD IN ANY WAY BE HELD IN THE END TO HAVE ACHIEVED SOME SUCCESS AGAINST THE ODDS HE WOULD ACQUIRE MYTHICAL STATUS IN ARAB EYES. (ROSS DREW AN ANALOGY WITH NASSER AND SUEZ.) IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PALESTINIANS WOULD BE LIKELY TO LOOK TO SADDAM AS PROVIDING THE ANSWER TO THEIR PROBLEMS, THUS UNDERCUTTING EFFORTS TO PURSUE AN ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS. HE THOUGHT THAT THE EFFECTS IN EGYPT AND THE GULF OVER TIME WOULD BE HARMFUL, AND COULD EVEN ENSURE THAT A WIDER WAR WOULD IN THE END BECOME INEVITABLE.
3. ROSS CONCLUDED THAT WE SHOULD NOT GIVE ANY IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE FORCING THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE BECAUSE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN. WE ALSO HAD TO WATCH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS IN ISRAEL, LEST WE TEMPT THEM TO PREEMPTIVE ACTION. THIS ASSESSMENT LAY BEHIND THE ADMINISTRATION'S DETERMINATION TO REJECT ANY IDEAS PRIMAKOV MIGHT BE BRINGING FOR A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT. ROSS STRESSED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW FOR A FACT THAT THIS WOULD BE THE SOVIET MESSAGE, THOUGH IT SEEMED A REASONABLE GUESS. (COMMENT: HE WAS PRESUMABLY WORKING OFF THE REPORT FROM THE US EMBASSY IN ROME, RELAYED IN TUR). ROSS ADDED THAT IT WAS NOT HIS ASSESSMENT THAT GORBACHEV HIMSELF WISHED TO TAKE AN INITIATIVE BUT, RATHER, WAS CONTENT FOR PRIMAKOV TO SEE WHETHER SUCH IDEAS WOULD RUN.
4. ROSS SAID THAT BAKER HAD MADE CLEAR IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE

ON 16 OCTOBER THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE SEARCH FOR PARTIAL SOLUTIONS. HE WOULD UNDERLINE THIS IN HIS TESTIMONY ON THE HILL THIS WEEK.

5. BAKER DULY DID THIS. HE TOLD THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE ON 17 OCTOBER THAT:

QUOTE. THE PROSPECTS FOR A JUST AND LASTING PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ITS ARAB NEIGHBOURS WILL BE SHATTERED IF HE (SADDAM HUSSEIN) PREVAILS. SO, IT IS TIME TO CLEAR THE AIR ONCE AND FOR ALL ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SADDAM'S AGGRESSION IN KUWAIT AND THE OTHER CONFLICTS AND PROBLEMS IN THE REGION.

I WILL PUT IT TO YOU SIMPLY: DOES ANYONE SERIOUSLY THINK THAT IF THIS AGGRESSION SUCCEEDS, PROSPECTS WILL BE BETTER FOR PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS? CAN ANYONE SERIOUSLY BELIEVE THAT IF IRAQ WINS THIS CONTEST WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, IT WILL BE EASIER TO ELIMINATE CHEMICAL WEAPONS OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS OR NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE REGION? OF COURSE NOT. UNQUOTE.

6. WE SHALL ATTEMPT TO GET A READ-OUT OF THE BAKER/PRIMAKOV MEETING FROM STATE DEPARTMENT TOMORROW.

ACLAND

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DISTRIBUTION

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