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IRAQ/KUWAIT: EMBASSIES IN KUWAIT

1. I ASKED KIMMITT ON 14 NOVEMBER WHETHER HE HAD ANY UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE POSITION OF THE US EMBASSY IN KUWAIT. OUR OWN COULD STAY THE COURSE UNTIL ROUND ABOUT THE END OF THE YEAR. WE WANTED HOWEVER TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE AMERICANS AS THE SITUATION EVOLVED.
2. KIMMITT SAID THE AMERICANS WERE DOWN TO TUNA FISH AND THAT THEY COULD GO INTO DECEMBER BUT NOT TO THE END OF THAT MONTH. THE AMERICANS HAD CONSIDERED REDUCING THE NUMBER OF THEIR DIPLOMATS, WHICH CURRENTLY STOOD AT 8. THE TROUBLE WAS HOWEVER THAT THEY COULD NOT BY DOING THAT GIVE ANY HELP TO THE 19 NON-DIPLOMATS IN THE COMPOUND. THEY HAD TO CONSIDER WHETHER OR NOT THE DEPARTURE OF SOME OF THE DIPLOMATS WOULD AFFECT THE MORALE OF THE NON-DIPLOMATS LEFT BEHIND. HIS TENTATIVE CONCLUSION WAS THAT THOSE IN THE COMPOUND WOULD HAVE TO STAY OR GO SO FAR AS POSSIBLE TOGETHER.
3. KIMMITT SAID THAT NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN OVER MOUNTING A RELIEF COLUMN. THE AMERICANS STILL LOOKED TO THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, THOUGH WITHOUT MUCH HOPE, TO DO SOMETHING. THE TROUBLE WITH A RELIEF EFFORT BY THE AMERICANS WOULD BE THAT IT MIGHT PROVOKE AN IRAQI REACTION WHICH COULD ESCALATE AT A TIME WHEN THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO DEAL WITH ONE. BUT OF COURSE THE AMERICANS DID NOT AT ALL LOOK FORWARD TO THE CLOSURE OF THEIR EMBASSY.
4. SCOWCROFT TOLD ME ON 13 NOVEMBER THAT A RANGE OF OPTIONS WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION, INCLUDING A PEACEFUL MISSION FOR REPROVISIONING, PERHAPS WITH UN OR RED CROSS MARKING. BUT HE EMPHASISED THAT ABSOLUTELY NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN. HE, LIKE KIMMITT, PROMISED TO TELL US HOW AMERICAN THINKING DEVELOPED.

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