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PER E.O. 13526

2009-0853-MK
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PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO CHARLES POWELL FROM
BRENT SCOWCROFT AT OPENING OF BUSINESS.

DEAR CHARLES:

AS WE GO THROUGH THE THIRD WEEK OF WAR, I THOUGHT I MIGHT STEP BACK
AND OFFER YOU A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE GULF. I WOULD
WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS. WE ARE THINKING ABOUT PUTTING TOGETHER A
MILITARY BRIEFING TEAM THAT MIGHT COME BY LONDON IN THE NEAR FUTURE
AND SHARE AN EVEN MORE DETAILED PICTURE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER,
SUPPLEMENTING THE INFORMATION WE ARE ALREADY SHARING DAY BY DAY.

THE MILITARY PICTURE IS QUITE PROMISING. THE FIRST PHASE OF OUR AIR
CAMPAIGN IS ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE. THE IRAQI AIR FORCE AND AIR
DEFENSE SYSTEM IS NOW POWERLESS TO INTERFERE WITH OUR OPERATIONS.
WE BELIEVE THE FLIGHT OF SOME OF THEIR AIRCRAFT TO IRAN IS SYMPTOMATIC
OF A DESPERATE JUDGMENT THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO HAVE EVEN
A CHANCE OF PRESERVING SOME OF THEIR BETTER AIRCRAFT FOR THE FUTURE.
WE HAVE NOTED THE ASSURANCES FROM TEHRAN ABOUT THESE AIRCRAFT.
WE DOUBT THEY WILL BE REEMPLOYED IN THE WAR AGAINST US. WE HAVE
SEEN NO SIGNS OF PREPARATION FOR SUCH USE AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT
TO PREPARE AND MAINTAIN THE AIRCRAFT FOR SUCH OPERATIONS WHILE THEY
REMAIN IN IRAN. THE IRANIANS WILL DISPOSE OF THESE AIRCRAFT IN
ACCORDANCE WITH IRAN'S INTERESTS. IF THEY ARE USED AGAINST US,
WE WILL BE READY TO DEAL WITH THAT.

OTHER OBJECTIVES IN THE INITIAL PORTION OF THE AIR CAMPAIGN INCLUDED
THE DISRUPTION OF IRAQ'S NUCLEAR, CHEMICAL, AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS
CAPABILITY AND DEGRADATION OF ITS NATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL
SYSTEM. THOSE OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED. WHERE PARTICULAR
FACILITIES SUFFERED ONLY PARTIAL DAMAGE, WE ARE NOW FOLLOWING UP TO
FINISH THE JOB. NATIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL, ALONG WITH COMMAND
AND CONTROL IN KUWAIT, CONTINUES TO BE HIT (19 OF 20 NATIONAL COMMAND
FACILITIES HAVE BEEN ATTACKED) AND CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE.

IRAQ RETAINS SUBSTANTIAL STOCKS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS. ALTHOUGH SOME,
SUCH AS MUSTARD GAS, MAY POSE A THREAT FOR SOME TIME TO COME, THE
NERVE AGENTS WILL DETERIORATE IN WEEKS AND BAGHDAD WILL HAVE
DIFFICULTY PRODUCING MORE OR FILLING THEM INTO MUNITIONS. IRAQ'S
DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, ELECTRICAL POWER GENERATION, AND PETROCHEMICAL
PLANTS HAVE ALL SUFFERED SEVERE DAMAGE AS WELL.

WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CAMPAIGN: THE ISOLATION
AND DESTRUCTION OF IRAQ'S FORCES IN KUWAIT. I SHOULD NOTE HERE THAT,
ALTHOUGH WE CONTINUE TO GIVE ATTENTION TO THE SCUD THREAT (PERHAPS
50-200 SORTIES A DAY), THIS EFFORT HAS ALREADY PAID OFF IN REDUCED

NUMBERS OF MISSILE ATTACKS AND IS NOT AN UNDUE BURDEN ON THE OVERALL CAMPAIGN. THERE IS ABUNDANT EVIDENCE THAT WE HAVE DISRUPTED IRAQ'S ABILITY TO SUPPLY ITS FORCES IN KUWAIT AND THAT THE BOMBING IS TAKING AN INCREASING TOLL ON THE FORCES THEMSELVES. IT ALSO APPEARS THAT OVER 75% OF THE IRAQI NAVY HAS BEEN SUNK OR DISABLED, AND SURVIVING CRAFT ARE INTERESTED ONLY IN THEIR OWN SURVIVAL. AS YOU KNOW, YOUR FORCES HAVE MADE AN ESPECIALLY LARGE CONTRIBUTION TO THIS NAVAL EFFORT.

RECENT IRAQI OFFENSIVE PROBES INTO SAUDI ARABIA, ALONG WITH ATTEMPTS TO REPOSITION THEIR FORCES -- POSSIBLY FOR FURTHER OFFENSIVE ACTION -- HAVE OFFERED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR AIRPOWER. WE BELIEVE OUR STRIKES MAY ALREADY HAVE BROKEN UP AT LEAST ONE ATTACK BY III CORPS AND HAVE CAUSED HEAVY LOSSES TO IRAQI UNITS. THE REPUBLICAN GUARDS ARE BEING HIT DAY AND NIGHT. ALTHOUGH THERE IS SADNESS HERE ABOUT ANY LOSS OF OUR SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN, IRAQ'S APPARENT EFFORT TO EMBROIL US IN COSTLY GROUND BATTLES IS PROVING COSTLY ONLY FOR BAGHDAD. THERE ARE SIGNS OF MORALE PROBLEMS IN THE IRAQI UNITS -- ONE INFANTRY DIVISION IS REPORTING THAT THOUSANDS OF ITS TROOPS HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE RANKS.

WE CERTAINLY DO NOT FEEL COMPLACENT. THERE MAY WELL BE ADDITIONAL MISSILE ATTACKS OR OFFENSIVE SALLIES. THE THREAT OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE IS QUITE HIGH, ALTHOUGH I BELIEVE WE ARE PREPARED TO MEET IT. THE AIR CAMPAIGN WILL CONTINUE. WE WILL NOT BE DRAWN INTO LAUNCHING ANY GROUND CAMPAIGN BEFORE WE ARE READY, OR BEFORE SUCH ACTION IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS. RECENT AIR ATTACKS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED IRAQ'S ABILITY TO LAUNCH ATTACKS THAT WOULD REQUIRE A SUBSTANTIAL COUNTER-OFFENSIVE BY THE MULTINATIONAL FORCES.

POLITICALLY THE COALITION REMAINS SOLID. OUR POSITION ON WHAT SADDAM MUST DO TO END THE WAR IS UNCHANGED. ALTHOUGH WE ARE ALREADY WORKING ON THE RANGE OF ISSUES INVOLVED IN WAR TERMINATION AND POSTWAR ARRANGEMENTS, AND WILL WANT TO DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS IN GREATER DETAIL WITH YOU SOON, THERE HAS BEEN SOME DISCUSSION ABOUT QUICK CONVENING OF A COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS ALL OF THE POLITICAL ISSUES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AS YOU MIGHT GUESS, WE THINK SUCH PLANS ARE PREMATURE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SPEAKING AGAIN WITH YOU SOON.

SINCERELY,
BRENT SCOWCROFT

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