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By CM NARA Date 6-12-03

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

N. D. C. 20301

I-22212/73

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

1973-4-S, US, Israel

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Call of Kuwaiti Ambassador Sabah on Deputy Secretary Clements

Participants:

Kuwaiti SideAmbassador of Kuwait - Salim al-Sabah
Second Secretary - Abdulla AbdulrazzakUnited States SideDeputy Secretary Clements
Deputy Secretary's Military Assistant, BG Raymond B. Furlong, USAF
Acting Assistant Secretary Eagleburger
Deputy Assistant Secretary Noyes
ISA Country Director James Timberlake

Time: 1045 - 1130 hours, 5 April 1973

Place: Deputy Secretary Clements' Office, Pentagon

(S) Ambassador Sabah said his purpose in coming was to make a courtesy call on Mr. Clements and to meet his staff. In the interest of continuing the good relations between the two countries, he wanted us to feel free to consult his Embassy at any time. He mentioned the military team the U.S. is sending to Kuwait shortly. In response to Mr. Clements' questions about the team, Mr. Noyes said it would be headed by Colonel Kelly, who also headed the team last year. Mr. Timberlake added that the team would leave on 15 April for Kuwait, would consist of about six to eight members, and would be in Kuwait for about a week.

(S) Ambassador Sabah said the second purpose of his visit was to inform us about the situation between his country and Iraq. Mr. Clements said that Kuwait has been a balancing factor in its part of the world and that he admired the way Kuwait has handled its affairs. He noted his own extensive experiences any many friends in Kuwait. He asked how the U.S. could help Kuwait.

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SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652.
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(S) Ambassador Sabah replied that he hoped the problem between Kuwait and Iraq would be solved diplomatically. Iraqi representatives were due in Kuwait that weekend. Through the active mediation efforts of Egypt, Syria, the Arab League, and, especially, Yasir Arafat, he felt the talks would succeed. If they failed, Kuwait would take the issue to the Arab League. If that failed, Kuwait would turn to its friends for help. That is why Kuwait wanted to inform its friends.

(S) Ambassador Sabah then turned to the Arab-Israeli problem. He was glad that President Nixon intended to place greater emphasis on the Middle East. Kuwait has good relations with the U.S., and so do some other Arab states. Some Arab states, however, do not. It would greatly strengthen the U.S. position in the Middle East, and strengthen Kuwait as well, if the U.S. would help restore the balance in the Middle East and achieve a just and lasting settlement. Mr. Clements replied that the Arab-Israeli problem had been going on for some time and that he thought Kuwait's immediate problem transcended that. He felt the two problems were separate. If the Saudis found themselves in Kuwait's predicament, they would be more specific. Ambassador Sabah replied that Kuwait is an Arab country and involved in the Arab world; it is affected by general Arab problems and has forces along the Suez Canal. A just settlement, he reiterated, would strengthen the U.S. position in the Middle East.

(S) Mr. Clements asked the Ambassador if he really thought the mediation effort would succeed in getting Iraq to yield. The Ambassador said yes; Iraq had counted on Kuwait's weakness to enable it to succeed. Instead, Kuwait had shown great firmness; and the people, half of whom are non-Kuwaitis, had shown themselves solidly behind the government. It is also in the interest of the mediators, particularly Arafat, to obtain a settlement.

(S) Mr. Clements said that he was not surprised to hear of the loyalty shown by the Kuwaiti people. He was pleased to receive the Ambassador's optimistic views. He himself had been more concerned. The Ambassador replied that it was his job to be optimistic. He was prepared, however, to take a plane to Kuwait on Sunday if the mediation effort failed.

Memorandum of Conversation

Prepared by:

James H. Timberlake
OASD(ISA)WESA RegionApproved by: Acting Assistant Secretary
of Defense (ISA)

Date: 18 Apr 1973

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