

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

WH - SIT ROOM
TO BE SENT AS HAKTO
MESSAGE - RETAIN SINGLE COPY E.O.
SEN SCOWCROFT

19742-3, Faisal, Nixon letter

FLASH
RIYADH

E.O. 11652 - XGDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, SA, US

SUBJECT: Letter to the King from the President

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

1. Following is text of letter to King Faisal from the President for delivery at your audience with the King February 6 as well as additional guidance for your use during audience.

2. BEGIN LETTER:

Your Majesty:

I want to reply without delay to your letter of February 3, because in this difficult period in our relations it is important that there be full and honest communication between us.

Your Majesty will surely understand my deep concern and disappointment that your efforts to bring about a prompt end of the oil embargo against the United States have not succeeded. I have placed great confidence in the positive indications received from your Government and conveyed that confidence to the American Congress and people. Continuation of the

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

4

it would be helpful, tell him the following: You have received instructions for oral presentation to His Majesty that reflect in strong terms the sense of disappointment in Washington -- disappointment not only over failure to lift embargo but more fundamentally over serious blow this constitutes to the high hopes we have held that, for the first time in 25 years, we saw a real opportunity for progress toward a just and durable peace. This disappointment was all the more severe since, as seen from Washington, the position His Majesty conveyed to the President defers to the views of a radical government which has never shared the principles and objectives of Saudi Arabia and the United States. You have now been told, however, that a part of those instructions, in which we indicated we would have no alternative but to make public our exchanges with the Saudis about assurances on lifting the embargo, are being withdrawn because of our respect for the confidentiality of our communications with His Majesty's government and our desire to preserve that confidentiality. In conveying on the basis of your instructions the thoughts and considerations that are uppermost in the minds of the President and the Secretary, you want to express the hope that they will help His Majesty to understand the situation from the United States' perspective and to appreciate why the embargo has become so important

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

5

END

SEC 1

an issue of principle and dignity to the United States.

4. You should then draw on instructions we have sent you, omitting, however, reference to publication of our exchanges with Saudis and language about accepting no further assurances from Saudis, and modifying tone to extent you determine necessary to take King's sensitivities into account.

5. Re ~~Syrian-Israeli~~ Israeli disengagement, you may tell King following:

A. Immediately upon completion Israeli-Egyptian disengagement agreement, Secretary Kissinger turned his attention to question of disengagement on Syrian front. During Secretary's last visit to Damascus, President Assad for first time showed interest in disengagement and provided us ideas which, however, would require initial Israeli withdrawal considerably beyond October 6 lines and not repeat not merely to those lines as Prince Fahd says Assad told Saudis.

B. We conveyed Syrian ideas immediately to Israelis. Israelis have agreed in principle to enter disengagement talks with Syrians but first want Syria to fulfill Geneva Convention obligations by providing list of Israeli POW's and permitting Red Cross visits. POW issue is serious problem in Israel and for us, particularly since General

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE

6

Secretary Brezhnev in October assured us he would undertake to achieve Syrian cooperation on this question. Failure of Soviets and Syrians in this regard, after we conveyed Brezhnev's assurances to Israelis, has strained our credibility in Israel.

C. We have just passed Israeli position to President Assad together with following U.S. proposal which we have not discussed with Israelis but have put forward to Assad in effort to help get disengagement process started. We are now awaiting President Assad's response:

(1) We would convey to the Israeli Government the number of POW's Syria holds.

(2) The Syrian Government would send the list of POW's to its Interests section here in Washington.

(3) We would insist with the Israelis that they come up with a concrete proposal on disengagement which they would make available to me, in exchange for the list of POW's.

(4) As soon as the visit of the Red Cross takes place.

I would transmit Israel's concrete disengagement proposal to Assad and at the same time would insist with the Israelis that they send a high-level official to Washington with a view to discussing further modifications

SECRET/NODIS/CHEROKEE