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Authority

NND 35857

By AB NARA Date

7/15/01

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NEA; Off Leb, Ta, Syr, Iraq

POL 7 - visits, Miss

MISC. 1969

POL-7

BOX 6

Lot 72D4

NEA - Mr. Rodger P. Davies

March 13, 1969

NEA/ARN - Bryan H. Baas

Your Meeting with Ambassador Dupret in Brussels

During your meeting in Brussels with Ambassador Marcel Dupret, the following topics are very likely to come up:

Protection of US Interests in Iraq - You might express to Ambassador Dupret our profound appreciation for his outstanding defense of US interests.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul T. Bail - In particular, you might express our appreciation for his handling of the Bail case. This case was a tremendous burden on him both before he secured their release and in the period afterward when he was obliged to have them as house guests. Dupret may complain about our making a statement to the press while Mr. Bail was still in jail. If so, you may wish to point out to him that the press had already learned of Bail's imprisonment and that we were obliged to answer a question raised at the noon press briefing. Time factors prevented our clearing this in advance with Dupret.

Threat to Embassy Properties - You may wish to reiterate to Dupret the fact we have no intention of selling the Embassy property to the GOI. At the same time we do not wish to refuse outright for fear it would precipitate seizure of the Embassy. We fully appreciate the difficult position this puts Dupret in and we regret it very much, but we see no reasonable alternative. In this connection, reports I have received from various sources indicate that the GOI is in the process of taking over a number of buildings in the area of the Presidential Palace. Even the IPC headquarters, which you will recall are several blocks away, have been threatened.

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GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;

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2

American Officer on Dupret's Staff - Ambassador Dupret on several occasions in the past has asked that we assign a third secretary to the U.S. Interests Section of the Belgian Embassy as is provided for by our agreement with the GOI. We have refused and we still do not wish to send an officer. One reason is that he would be so completely circumscribed by Iraqi security that he would be able to perform no useful function other than housekeeping chores in the Embassy. This, in our opinion, does not justify the problems involved in trying to support and maintain communications with a lower ranking officer in Baghdad. Also, given the capriciousness of the Iraqis, he would be subject to being declared persona non grata on the least pretext.

Prospects for Resumption of Relations - You may wish to tell Dupret that our view from Washington is that the prospects for resumption of relations with the GOI are as remote as ever. The Iraqi Government is obviously hostile to the United States and the GOI has made it abundantly clear that it does not wish to resume relations. We do not intend to take the initiative, but we would be happy to consider the question should the Iraqi Government indicate an interest. You might add for Dupret's background that under the present deteriorating conditions in Iraq we are not particularly eager to resume relations. If and when relations are resumed, we would have very few conditions and the main ones would be (1) that the Iraqis agree in principle to compensate us for damage to the Embassy and the Consulate in Basra, (2) that the boycott of American goods be rescinded and (3) that overflights of US civil aircraft be permitted.

Basra Consulate - We have no intention of reopening our Consulate in Basra, and we therefore hope to sell the land and buildings. Under the present conditions in Iraq it is doubtful that there are many buyers, but we would be pleased to consider any offers. FYI FBO's asking price is \$1 million but this, of course, is subject to negotiations. Book value of the property is about \$500,000. End FYI.

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3

Security Situation - You might tell Dupret that our assessment is that the security situation in Iraq has deteriorated sharply over the last few months. It is not entirely clear to us who is in control in the country. For this reason we still have an outstanding instruction to all posts to advise Americans contemplating travel to Iraq that we do not think they should go there unless they have compelling reasons to do so. You may wish to invite Ambassador Dupret to comment on the situation in Iraq.

NEA/ARN:BHBass:dmg 3/13/69

Clearances:SCA - Mr. Smith
NEA/EX - Mr. Hallman~~CONFIDENTIAL~~DECLASSIFIED
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