

DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 21, 2006

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Authority: 100-969000
By: NARA Date 5/31/07

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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Memorandum

POL-13
Aug 13

TO : NEA - Mr. Sisco
THRU : NEA - Mr. Atherton
FROM : NEA/ARN - Talcott W. Seelye
SUBJECT: Disclosure of U. S. Efforts on Behalf of Iraqi Jews

DATE: May 20, 1971 NEA/ARN

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Despite our request to use discretion with information re status of Iraqi Jews being provided him in a letter dated April 21 (see attached), Senator Javits released the full text of this letter on May 3 to the Jewish Telegraph Agency. Inter alia our letter states that we requested UN High Commissioner for Refugees Prince Sadruddin Khan to intercede with the Iraqi President on behalf of Iraqi Jews then being detained by the Baghdad regime. The Prince is now understandably concerned that this disclosure will compromise his position vis-a-vis the Iraqis. We too are concerned because we had endeavored to play down our involvement on behalf of the Iraqi Jews lest the Iraqi Government believe we have been orchestrating a campaign against it and therefore decide not to relax its pressure against the Iraqi Jewish community. The fact that the Iraqi News Agency has now focused on this item underscores our concern.

We have asked Ambassador Symms in H to convey our regret over this disclosure to Senator Javits attention. At the same time we have contacted Mr. Tawfic Raby, the Iraqi Jew most active in organizing efforts on behalf of his co-religionists and expressed our dismay about the possible negative effect this disclosure may have on our future attempts to help the Iraqi Jews. He expressed his full understanding of our concern and said he would also speak to Senator Javits' office.

See it done

** JTA report (attached) says Javits released the letter. It could be, of course, that it was released or*

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otherwise let out by Javits' office without the Senator's ok.

NEA/ARN:TJScotes:jm



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Confirmation
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By MB NARA Date 5/3/02

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April 21, 1971

Honorable Jacob K. Javits
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Javits:

The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter of April 2 concerning recent reports of arrests of Iraqi Jews. The Department has been following the situation very closely, in particular Assistant Secretary Sisco and the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs as well as Ambassador Finger at the UN.

As you know, we have no diplomatic or consular relations with the Iraqi Government and our access to that government is, therefore, limited. When we first started receiving reports of arrests of Iraqi Jews, however, we approached the British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Swiss Governments and asked that they consider interceding on behalf of those being detained. In the meantime, we instructed the Belgians, who represent us in Baghdad, to express our concern to the Iraqi Government about the plight of those arrested who were relatives of American citizens. We also exchanged information with the Israeli Embassy here in Washington. Finally, we were in close contact with Prince Sadruddin Khan, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who at our request stopped in Baghdad during an Asian tour and made personal inquiries and appeals to the President of Iraq on behalf of the Iraqi Jewish community. These approaches and appeals have apparently been successful and we are now pleased to report that according to reliable information all those arrested have been released. We will certainly continue to watch developments in Iraq closely and will endeavor to do what we can.

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Javits

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By MB NARA Date 5/3/07

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Given the unpredictable situation in Iraq, I am sure you can appreciate the need for discretion with regard to the release of the above information.

I trust that this information has been responsive to your inquiry. If you have any further questions, however, please let us know.

Sincerely,

David M. Abshire
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Drafted by:
NEA/ARN:TJScotes:bdf
#7105130

Clearance: NEA/ARN - Mr. Killgore
NEA - Mr. Boyatt
H - Amb. Symmes