EMBASSY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF IRAQ
1801 P STREET, N.W.
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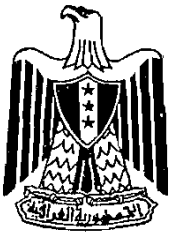
(202) 483-7500



سفارة
الجمهورية العراقية
واشنطن

8635961

The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq presents its compliments to the Department of State, Office of Protocol, and has the honor to enclose herewith the letter addressed by H.E. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq, to the Honorable Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, in reply to the letter of the President dated November 16th, 1986.

The Embassy of Iraq has the honor to request the Office of Protocol to forward the aforementioned letter in Arabic with its unofficial translation to the Bureau of the President.

The Embassy of Iraq avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of States the assurances of its highest considerations.

The Department of State
Office of Protocol
Washington, D.C.
November 20th, 1986

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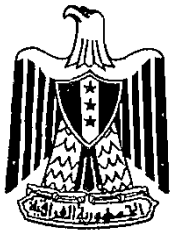

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Baghdad, November 18th, 1986

His Excellency,
Mr. Ronald Reagan
President of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Excellency,

I have read your letter which I have received through your Embassy in Baghdad on the 16th of November, 1986. Allow me to give you my impressions about the its contents and the issue dealt with therein with the candour that has characterized the friendly relations between our two countries during the past years.

Iraq, Mr. President, understands in principle your endeavour to establish normal relations with Iran, now or in the future, regardless of whether we agree with your justifications and goals or not. What concerns Iraq, in this matter, is that such relations do not involve a threat to its security, sovereignty and legitimate interests. I believe that you share with me the view that this criterion is essential and legitimate in relations between peace-loving States which have established relations based on mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs.

What has shocked us and caused our great surprise - and, frankly, even aroused our suspicions - is that the process of your rapprochement with Iran , has involved supplying that country with quantities of U.S. military equipment, and that the contacts have been undertaken in the manner uncovered recently. This, Mr. President, is the essential element in the situation as we see it.

With regard to the question in its entirety, I would like to point out the following:-

1- We were in agreement, through the official contacts between our two Foreign Ministers over many years, that among the most effective means of making Iran abandon its intransigent position, reflected in its insistence on continuing the war, and accept peace in accordance with the Security Council resolutions, in the adoption of which your Government had actively participated, is the prevention of the export of arms to Iran.

You informed us through official channels that you were continuing with an extensive world-wide campaign in this direction. our diplomatic representatives often exchanged information in this regard and cooperated towards the achievement of that goal. Other peace-loving States joined us in this effort, notably the Arab States in the region which realize the dangers of the continuation of the war. On our part, we welcomed the position you had taken and the initiatives of which you informed us. We considered this to be an important effort in the world-wide campaign for the achievement of peace, and an important indication of the seriousness of your resolve in this direction.

The supply by the United States Government of quantities of military equipment to Iran runs counter to this declared policy which was agreed upon for a number of years. It ruins the efforts exerted with numerous States to prevent the export of arms to Iran, and encourages States which may have been hesitant or embarrassed in the past over the export of arms to Iran due the aforementioned efforts, to free such exports from any restriction, and thereby bolster the Iranian war machine, prolong the war and threaten the security and safety of Iraq and all the countries of the region.

Our Government, Mr. President, cannot be convinced that those with whom you have been having a dialogue in Iran will agree to end the war as long as the first thing they requested from you was arms!! Nor can we understand the fact that the earnest of your good-will towards them, within the framework of endeavouring to end the the war, is arms, which are used in their war effort against Iraq.

I would like to state with all candour, Mr. President, that your justifications have not convinced us. We are entitled, without calling your personal intentions into question, to wonder and not to overlook the fact that what has taken place arouses profound suspicions.

2- In your address delivered on November 13th, 1986 you described the supplies given by you to Iran as "defensive." In view of the importance of this question. I would like to comment on it, although it is not mentioned in your letter. We, as two Heads of State, fully understand that the military efforts of a state is based on an integrated system. It is difficult to say with certainty that a weapon is of a defensive or offensive nature particularly in the case of armed engagements. When a military plane goes to bombard a target, and is, itself or the base from which it operates, supplied with good defensive equipment protecting it from a reaction, the performance of that defensive equipment does not differ in nature from the performance of the attacking plane. You are fully aware, Mr. President, of the fact that the war waged by Iran is not a defensive war. Iraq is exposed to successive very large-scale attacks aimed at penetrating its borders, occupying its territory and changing its political system. Hence, any military equipment given to Iran contributes directly to the aggressive action against Iraq. This, as you will appreciate, threatens the security and safety of our country and the lives of our people.

3- You mentioned in your letter that the equipment you have given to Iran does not change the balance of power between us and Iran. This hypothesis is not precise in practice. Iran has a population of more than three times the population of Iraq, and it utilizes this superiority by savage methods, which your Government has condemned in the past. Among our basic means of facing this human superiority is to develop our combat capabilities and achieve a clear superiority in certain categories to balance the superiority of the other side. When the Iranian side receives equipment contributing to the nullification of the elements of our superiority, the end result is in favour of Iranian superiority. This leads to changing the balance of power in favour of the party which insists on continuing the war and is at the expense of Iraq which is genuinely desirous of peace and which established honorable and friendly relations with your country. Furthermore, the volume of the equipment supplied, which is known to us, and even if limited till not, will still not change the potential outcome. The mere supply of arms by the United States Government, which was foremost among those calling for the prohibition of the export of arms to Iran, will encourage the Iranian regime to continue the war, and confirms to that regime the policy of intransigence and the continuation of the war is ultimately a rewarding policy. I believe that the statements you have heard of the Iranian officials regarding their interpretation of what has taken place confirms this conclusion.

4- There is another point in your address on November 13th, 1986 on which I would like to comment. It is your attempts to draw a comparison or analogy between your endeavors to bring about a rapprochement with Iran and gain an influence in that country and your relations with Iraq. you are aware, Mr. President, that even at the time when we did not have full diplomatic relations between us, we maintained diplomatic missions at the level of interests sections, the Foreign

Ministers of Iraq and the United States and the diplomatic representatives of our two countries used to have normal meetings. We received your envoy, Mr. Rumsfeld, on December 22nd, 1983 before the restoration of full diplomatic relations between our two countries. Furthermore, Dr. Sadoon Hammadi, our former Foreign Minister, visited your capital and met your Secretary of State in February, 1983. The Foreign Ministers of Iraq and the United States also met publicly in Paris in May 1983. When we decided to restore diplomatic relations between our two countries I sent our Foreign Ministers, Mr. Tariq Aziz, to your capital in order to meet Your Excellency and to convey our desire to establish normal and cordial relations. All those contacts, Mr. President, were undertaken publicly. They involved exchanges of views within the framework of international legitimacy and the rules of state practice. During those contacts, we did not request you to conclude deals or to pay a price for the restoration of normal relations between us or for our primary role in the maintenance of stability in the region, since we were undertaking that role out of our patriotism and our sense of responsibility. I believe that when you recall those facts as they are, you will appreciate the difference in nature between our contacts and those which have taken place with Iran. Yet, it is worth noting that in your statement you said that your new policy towards Iran you seek to establish a rapprochement or influence in our country. Since our relations with you are normal, we cannot but wonder what kind of influence are you seeking. At any rate, you are aware the any influence beyond the framework of normal relations and the relations of friendship is absolutely impermissible in our country.

5- There is another question which I would like to comment on. This concerns the descriptions contained in your letter of the importance of Iran as well as your more elaborate references to such descriptions in your address on November 13th.

We do not dispute your right to assess states and define their weight in relations to your interests. However, the use of such epithets to describe a State which is committing aggression and expansion at the expense of our country gives it a privilege which is not utilized, for the the present at least, in the cause of peace and stability in the region. On the contrary, it increases its arrogance - and I think that interpretations by Iranian officials of your statements confirm this conclusion - and encourages it to continue aggression and blackmail. It also gives justifications to the opportunists who want to deal with the Iranian regime regardless of concern and responsibility for the requirements of security and stability in the region, and for the legitimate rules of international practice. It may be interpreted by those who have no knowledge of the glorious history of Iraq and its outstanding contribution to human civilization, being its first cradle, and who lack information about the moral weight of its people and its real capabilities and wealth, as a tendentious increase in terms of importance, in favour of one of the parties to the conflict at the expense of the other party, Iraq, which gave expression to its civilized qualities, its high potential and its strategic position, in a civilized, responsible and constructive manner when it took a courageous stand in defense of its sovereignty against a barbaric aggression by a country many times larger than itself in both size and population, and maintained, notwithstanding the delicate circumstances and the size of challenges, civilized relations with the nations of the world, including the United States, and played the foremost role, over recent years at least, in preserving security and stability in the region, sparing it the chaos and devastation that could have been exported by Iran.

6- The other important issue relating to the question, of which no mention was made either in your address on November 13th, 1986 or your letter dated November 16th, 1986, is the

Israeli role in encouraging and arranging contacts between you and Iran. Without interfering in your own decision, what concerns us in this respect is that Israel has unequivocally declared objectives in regard to the Iraq-Iran war which are at variance with those declared by you. The Israeli officials have stressed that the continuation of the war between Iran and Iraq serves their interests in the region. This has naturally deepened our suspicions about the entire issue and the outcome it may lead to in reality.

For these practical reasons, which have produced a concrete outcome, I cannot, Mr. President, agree with you on your justifications and the conclusions drawn by you. I and my colleagues in the Iraqi Governement have rightly found that what has taken place involves a direct and grave threat to the security and safety of our country and a direct contribution to the prolongation of the war. It also indicates a clear contradiction between the statement been hearing from you over the past period, and what has been taking place at the level of reality.

We have welcomed in the past your declared positions towards the ending the war on the basis of the principles of international law and the resolutions of the the Security Council, particularly resolution 582 adopted On February 24th, 1986 and on the basis of the principles of the five points declared by me in the letter I addressed to the rulers of Iran on August 2nd, 1986, which were welcomed by your Governement. Under no circumstances can our people and Government accept other principles as the basis for the settlement of the conflict with Iran. We will continue to welcome any endeavors towards this end in the future. We cannot, however, consider the pursuit and the continuation of what has been taking place within the framework of the new relations between you and Iran serving the cause of

the settlement of the conflict. We are therefore called upon to request you to reconsider this grave and harmful approach and endeavour to contain its damaging effects on the efforts previously announced to prohibit the export of weapons to Iran and to intensify the sincere and serious international efforts towards achieving a just and honorable peace between Iraq and Iran in accordance with the bases I have mentioned, which have received the approval of the international community and the competent international organizations.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sadddam Hussein
President
of the Republic of Iraq