

SECRET//X1



DATE: 06-01-2009
CLASSIFIED BY uc/baw 60324
REASON: 1.4 (c)
DECLASSIFY ON: 06-01-2034

U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Baghdad Operations Center
February 27, 2004

Interview Session Number: 10
Interview Conducted by: SSA George L. Piro

SSA [REDACTED]
SSA [REDACTED]

Arabic/English Translation: [REDACTED]

b6
b7c

~~(S)~~ Saddam Hussein (High Value Detainee #1) was interviewed February 27, 2004 at a military detention facility at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), Baghdad, Iraq. Hussein provided the following information:

~~(S)~~ Prior to the start of interview, Hussein was informed this session would be a continuation of the previous discussion regarding Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. In particular, today's conversation would begin with a discussion of United Nations Resolution (UNR) 662 which did not recognize Iraq's annexation of Kuwait.

~~(S)~~ Regarding the Iraqi government's reaction to UNR 662, Hussein stated, "Nothing happened." According to Hussein, when the United States decided to attack Iraq, this action made the annexation of Kuwait the only solution. At that point, there was no political solution. Hussein reiterated comments from a previous interview wherein he stated Iraqi soldiers would not have fought appropriately or "have taken care of Kuwait" were it not annexed and made part of Iraq. He again emphasized that the actions of the United States "forced our hand."

~~(S)~~ When noted to Hussein that UNR 662 was issued in August, 1990, long before any US or coalition forces military action, Hussein stated that military forces opposing Iraq were already in Saudi Arabia at that time. This, coupled with various decisions and announcements made by the United States, indicated a prelude to a US attack against Iraq.

~~(S)~~ Hussein noted that the UN seemed only to "watch" the Iran-Iraq War for eight years, without concern. Only near the end of the conflict, when Iraq had overcome Iranian forces, did the UN propose and Iran accept a cease fire agreement. In

SECRET//X1

SECRET//X1

Baghdad Operations Center

Hussein's opinion, the UN "was not honorable" during the Iran-Iraq War. During the war between the two countries, some of the major countries wanted to see "the power drained" from Iran and Iraq. He added that the UN "interferes with everybody." Hussein believes that Iraq's membership in the UN should have precluded its invasion in 1991 and its present occupation.

~~(S)~~ Hussein questioned whether legitimate efforts were made by the UN or individual countries to prevent the conflict with Kuwait or to set the terms of withdrawal after invasion. He denied there was any "initiative" from other countries. Hussein stated the Soviet Union proposed one plan for withdrawal which Iraq accepted. However, the UN did not accept this proposal. Egypt, in Hussein's opinion, "did nothing."

~~(S)~~ The initiative concerning any plan for withdrawal from Kuwait came from Iraq. On August 12, 1990, Iraq proposed a solution for "everybody in the area." This plan included enforcement of previous UN decisions regarding lands occupied by Israel. Hussein questioned why the UN did not attack Israel for failing to observe resolutions. Hussein stated that the "mistakes" of Israel are not considered by the UN. Regarding Iraqi mistakes, however, the UN is always concerned.

~~(S)~~ During Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, Hussein denied knowledge of the commission of atrocities by the Iraqi military. These atrocities include the punishment, including executions, of Kuwaiti individuals who prayed on their roofs, who failed to hang pictures of Hussein, who displayed pictures of the previous Kuwaiti royal family, or who wrote anti-Iraqi graffiti. Hussein stated, "This is the first time I have ever heard this." He added, of the mentioned punishable offenses, he particularly does not believe two of them were designated as crimes. First, the Iraqi government did not force Iraqis to display pictures of Hussein, therefore, the government would not have forced Kuwaitis to do this. In Iraq, citizens voluntarily chose to display Hussein's picture in their homes. Second, neither Iraqis, nor Kuwaitis are prohibited from praying anywhere, including their roofs. According to Hussein, the other reportedly punishable offenses are on the "conscience of whoever said this" and that person is "a liar."

~~(S)~~ Hussein acknowledged two, possibly three, incidents where Iraqi soldiers were executed in Kuwait. In one incident,

SECRET//X1

SECRET//X1

Baghdad Operations Center

an Iraqi soldier was executed for committing burglary during the occupation of Kuwait. In another incident, an Iraqi Lieutenant Colonel was executed, and his body hung on public display for 48 hours, for assaulting a female in Kuwait. This individual's body was left in public for all Iraqi officers and soldiers to see in order to emphasize the rules. A third incident resulting in an execution may have occurred, but Hussein does not remember the details.

~~(S)~~ Hussein denied knowledge of the number of Kuwaitis killed, military or civilian, during combat operations or during the alleged atrocities previously mentioned. Hussein stated, "It was war time." He added that Iraq is a Third World country which signed the Geneva Convention. The United States is an advanced country which supposedly would not make the same mistakes as a Third World country. Hussein questioned the statistics regarding the numbers of Iraqi civilians killed, abuses committed against Iraqis, or Iraqi prisoners tortured by United States forces.

~~(S)~~ Regarding the igniting of oil wells in Kuwait by withdrawing Iraqi forces and the subsequent environmental disaster deemed one of the worst in history, Hussein asked, "More than Chernobyl?" He requested to know the number of people who died in Kuwait because of the smoke created by the fires. Hussein denied that Iraqi forces ignited the oil wells. He acknowledged that Iraqi forces burned "oil in trenches" as they were retreating. The resulting smoke blocked target acquisition by coalition aircraft and prevented additional troops from dying. Hussein acknowledged that he was told that "a few" oil wells were ignited. He stated that even if he were shown pictures or videos of these events, he would not believe Iraqi forces committed them. He maintained that these forms of media are easy to manipulate and fabricate. Hussein stated his belief that it would not be a crime for the Iraqi military to burn oil in order to prevent planes from attacking them. If such an event took place, this would have been an act of a desperate person who had no weapons remaining with which to defend himself. When questioned if he was offered proof to show that the 150 oil well fires in Kuwait were an act of sabotage by the Iraqi military and not an act of defense, Hussein stated he would provide a response at that time.

~~(S)~~ Regarding the previously discussed execution of Iraqi soldiers in Kuwait, Hussein stated that the information

SECRET//X1

SECRET//X1

Baghdad Operations Center

about these matters may have been provided to him verbally or in writing. In all likelihood, a trial occurred prior to the executions. Hussein opined that without this severe and immediate action, more crimes, possibly hundreds, might have occurred in Kuwait.

~~(S)~~ Hussein stated that Ali Hasan Al-Majid was a member of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) during the occupation of Kuwait. Al-Majid's role during the occupation was to "arrange and organize everything" in Kuwait. The decision granting Al-Majid this authority was made at an official meeting of the RCC. Al-Majid was the senior Iraqi official in Kuwait.

~~(S)~~ Regarding other Iraqi officials assigned duties in Kuwait, Hussein stated there were many of them ranging from traffic policemen to high government officials. Hussein stated he has no additional information regarding others with responsibilities in Kuwait and provided no additional names of such Iraqi officials. Hussein added that the Iraqi government attempted to provide all services, particularly the critical ones, such as electricity, to Kuwaiti citizens.

~~(S)~~ When questioned regarding the ongoing Kuwaiti resistance during the Iraqi occupation and efforts by the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) to stop it, Hussein stated, "I do not have an answer with these details." When again asked, Hussein replied that he had given his answer and "I am not a person who gives away his friends."

~~(S)~~ Hussein was asked, as the ex-President of Iraq, about Iraqi policy regarding treatment of POWs. Hussein replied, "I am not the ex-President of Iraq. I am still the President of Iraq." He added that he still respects the will of the people (their support of him as President). He continued saying that Iraq respects the Geneva Convention and that they had asked other countries to do the same. Hussein commented that in his speeches, he asked each soldier to respect the Geneva Convention and to remember and abide by the soldier's "religious principles."

~~(S)~~ Hussein denied giving orders to mistreat, abuse, or torture US POWs. According to Hussein, such a proclamation would have affected his reputation in front of the people and was, therefore, unacceptable. Others may state that Hussein issued

SECRET//X1

SECRET//X1

Baghdad Operations Center

such orders so that they might absolve themselves of responsibility. If these individuals say such things, Hussein will accept responsibility as commander and admit these accusations as long as such an admission will not dishonor him. He reiterated he would not have given such orders because of what religion teaches. Hussein provided a saying, "There is a well of water in Paradise. If one feeds an orphan or a prisoner, he will drink from the well." Hussein stated the proof of his beliefs is in his speeches. He made this assertion despite previously stating actions, not words, are what matters. Hussein remarked that his speeches as President are important.

~~(S)~~ Regarding the credible information that Iraq removed the Kuwaiti leadership from their country, reportedly with the agreement of the Kuwaiti citizens, only to have the Kuwaiti people welcome them back, Hussein opined that leaders (Kuwaitis) who accept foreign occupation (the United States) of their own country can be forcibly expelled. According to Hussein, the Kuwaiti leaders were not "from the people." On the contrary, they were originally brought in by the British. Hussein stated that he knew how the citizens of Kuwait felt before the invasion and after occupation by Iraqi forces. If Kuwaiti citizens accepted the former leadership after Iraqi occupation, Hussein stated that he respected their decision.

~~(S)~~ Hussein reiterated a belief provided in a previous interview that whoever "conspires against a brother" must be kicked out (Kuwait, in this case). Regarding the tradition or understanding that Arab nations should not take up arms against one another, Hussein stated that he concurred with this belief and that he affirmed so publicly in a speech long before the invasion of Kuwait. Other Arab nations, however, including Kuwait, refused to abide by this principle. Saudi Arabia confiscated land from Yemen. Syria continues to occupy territory in Lebanon. Egypt has confiscated land from Sudan and has acted aggressively towards Libya.

~~(S)~~ Returning to the subject of American POWs, Hussein again denied knowledge of torture or abuse as documented through medical examinations upon their repatriation. Hussein questioned whether such findings were made by Americans or by an independent investigative body. Hussein restated that any bad treatment is not acceptable whether against an Iraqi citizen or against the citizen of another country. He denied that information regarding

SECRET//X1

SECRET//X1

Baghdad Operations Center

abuse and torture of US POWs was presented to the Iraqi leadership.

(S) In the context of the discussion regarding allegations of mistreatment of US POWs by Iraq, the interviewer stated, "Both the US Government, the UN, and the Red Cross had made these allegations known to the Iraqi Government. These probably would not go to the attention of the President, but they were not addressed by anyone within the Iraqi leadership." Hussein replied, "What I was made aware of was that there was an American prisoner, not a prisoner, excuse me, but an American person. I think an officer. It was said his plane was hit above the western desert and he parachuted and the Americans were looking for him. They showed me the paperwork and I told them to facilitate the mission and to tell them they are welcome. Let them keep the information so they will not say that we reviewed it. Let them keep the information with them. As for the people that are searching, let them come here and tell us where is that pilot, I mean they do the searching."

(S) Hussein does not remember the pilot's name, including whether it was Speicher. He told Iraqi officials to allow the Americans to search for this individual. Hussein stated Iraqi officials "helped" in the search for information regarding the missing pilot's whereabouts.

SECRET//X1