

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

ID# 235124

COO72

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: MAY 02, 1991

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE EDWARD I. KOCH

SUBJECT: URGES THE ADMINISTRATION TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS THAT THE STORIES ABOUT IRAQI SOLDIERS TAKING BABIES FROM INCUBATORS WERE PURE PROPAGANDA

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
JOHN SUNUNU	ORG	91/05/02	<i>NAN</i>	<i>C 91/05/06</i> TC
REFERRAL NOTE: _____	---	___/___/___	---	___/___/___
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COMMENTS: shared with POTUS

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: _____

CS MAIL USER CODES: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

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*ACTION CODES:          *DISPOSITION          *OUTGOING          *
*                       *                       *CORRESPONDENCE:  *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION  *A-ANSWERED          *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM       *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL *           OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE      *C-COMPLETED        *           CODE = A   *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET  *S-SUSPENDED        *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
*I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC*                       *           OUTGOING *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY *                       *                       *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE       *                       *                       *
*X-INTERIM REPLY       *                       *                       *
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235124

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WRITER'S DIRECT NUMBER:

April 30, 1991

return to
Gov. S
AK

The Hon. John H. Sununu
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear John:

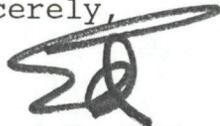
Enclosed is correspondence that I have had with
Lars-Erik Nelson.

I think it is important that the facts be ascertained. If
he is wrong and continues to make these statements unrefuted by
the administration, I think he causes you great damage. On the
other hand, maybe he's right and we were all taken in with a
propaganda ploy. I hope that's not true.

Do please put someone on this matter to respond formally to
the allegation.

All the best.

Sincerely,



Edward I. Koch

EIK/mgl

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GB HANDWRITING

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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ID# 235124

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Comments:

April 22, 1991

Edward M. Koch
Robinson, Silverman
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

Dear Mayor Koch,

Thank you for your letter of March 13, which reached me today. I can understand your concern for the infants of Kuwait. There is no doubt that Kuwait has been through _ and some of its inhabitants are stilling living through _ a nightmare.

However, the incubator story is false. Its most complete and seemingly best-documented version appeared in the Amnesty International report, based on interviews with refugee doctors, which appeared last December. This report was repeatedly cited by Congressmen in their vote to authorize a war. President Bush's earlier version was based on a story told to him by the Emir of Kuwait, and even Bush had some doubts about it.

Last month, Amnesty sent a team into Kuwait, and was forced to withdraw its earlier charge about the incubators. Amnesty found ``no reliable evidence'' for the story, and concluded, after visiting the hospitals and doctors in question, ``the story did not stand up.'' I am enclosing a news release on the Amnesty findings.

With warmest personal regards,





**Amnesty
International
USA**

News Release

Embargoed for 7:01 p.m. Eastern
Thursday, April 18, 1991

Contact: Christine Haenn 202/775-5161

KUWAIT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS ON EMIR TO INTERVENE OVER CONTINUING TORTURE AND KILLINGS

Amnesty International today publicly appealed to the Emir of Kuwait to intervene personally to end the wave of arbitrary arrests, torture and killings in the country since the withdrawal of Iraqi forces.

Reporting back after a two-week visit to Kuwait, an Amnesty International fact-finding team said scores of victims had been killed and hundreds more had been arbitrarily arrested, many brutally tortured by Kuwaiti armed forces and members of "resistance" groups since February 26.

"These violations are continuing and appear to be largely unchecked," Amnesty International said.

"Their scale and persistence threaten to leave an indelible stain on Kuwait's human rights record. This is all the more lamentable in light of hopes that the kind of violations that occurred under the Iraqi occupation would be a thing of the past."

The Amnesty International team, the first mission from the organization to visit Kuwait since the invasion by Iraq, was sent to investigate allegations of human rights violations after Iraqi forces withdrew from the Emirate. The team also updated information contained in Amnesty International's December 1990 report on violations by Iraqi forces in Kuwait.

Amnesty International said today that although it was still not possible to come to definite conclusions about the precise number of people killed by Iraqi forces during the occupation, now that it had visited Kuwait it was able to confirm that its report had given an accurate overall picture of the range and intensity of the violations inflicted on the population during the occupation.

However, on the highly publicized issue in the December report of the deaths of babies, Amnesty International said that although its team was shown alleged mass graves of babies, it was not established how they had died and the team found no reliable evidence that Iraqi forces had caused the deaths of babies by removing them or ordering their removal from incubators.

Amnesty International USA, 1118 22nd Street NW, Washington D.C. 20037 202-775-5161 Fax 202-775-5992
Winston Nagan Chair Board of Directors, John G. Healey Executive Director, Ellen Cull Director Mid-Atlantic Region

Kuwait/Page 2 of 6

In a preliminary report on the team's findings on the current situation in Kuwait, Amnesty International said the vast majority of the victims of abuse since February 26 were Palestinians, among them Jordanian passport holders. They also included Iraqi and Sudanese nationals and members of the "Bidun" community (stateless persons living in Kuwait who have no right of permanent residence and who are denied basic civil and political rights).

"Victims have been gunned down in public or taken away, tortured and killed in secret. Hundreds of victims were plucked from their homes, taken from streets or arrested at check-points, many to be tortured in police stations, schools and other make-shift detention centers," Amnesty International said.

Many have apparently "disappeared" and some are believed to be held in secret detention.

Amnesty International is also concerned about the plight of some 600 detainees acknowledged by the authorities. They had been held in the Military Prison outside Kuwait City, some for over a month, reportedly in deplorable conditions. Torture is said to have been rife, including beatings, electric shocks and prolonged deprivation of food and water, and medical care virtually non-existent. Detainees told Amnesty International that at least seven inmates had died in custody after torture and the organization has the names of two of them.

The Amnesty International team managed to visit these prisoners after they had been transferred to the Juveniles' Prison in Kuwait City, where their conditions of detention appear to have improved.

"The people we saw had clearly been through an extremely harrowing time and the few detainees we were able to examine medically still bore the scars of torture. Others were ill and appeared to be suffering from infectious diseases, including tuberculosis and dysentery," according to the fact-finding team, which included a British forensic pathologist.

While the team was visiting the prison, food was brought to the prisoners from a hotel, but inmates stated that they had previously suffered malnutrition and their state of health appeared to confirm this.

Kuwait/Page 3 of 6

The authorities have said that they would be tried under the 1967 Martial Law Regulations on a range of alleged offenses related to the occupation, including collaboration with the Iraqi forces. A number of offenses carry the death penalty, which Amnesty International opposes in all circumstances.

Amnesty International said that in the immediate aftermath of the Iraqi withdrawal most of the abuses were said to have been carried out by "resistance" squads, but that armed forces personnel were increasingly cited in later cases. Victims were still being killed and tortured during the Amnesty International team's visit from March 28 to April 9.

The team has individual details on ten extrajudicial executions, but says the total number of such killings has been at least scores.

Amnesty International said it had been impossible to arrive at precise figures of those arrested, tortured and killed.

The authorities had not granted full access to detainees by independent bodies, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, and relatives were not being informed of detainees' whereabouts.

As a result, the fate of many victims was still unknown. Some were reported to have died in custody and others were believed held in various places used as unacknowledged detention centers.

Torture victims taken to hospital were rarely recorded as bearing marks of torture, although the Amnesty International team saw one death certificate of a young Jordanian man which gave torture as the cause of death.

A number of hospitalized torture victims are reported to have suffered kidney failure from "crush syndrome" which resulted from severe beatings.

"Some doctors told us Kuwaiti army and security personnel supervised treatment and even turned down doctors' recommendations for further treatment," Amnesty International said.

"It was also alleged that some doctors cooperated willingly with these personnel and themselves treated victims harshly. This was said to have happened particularly at al-'Addan Hospital, just outside Kuwait City. We were repeatedly told that torture victims sent for initial treatment to other hospitals pleaded not to be sent on to al-'Addan Hospital."

Kuwait/Page 4 of 6

Amnesty International said that while a range of doctors agreed that a number of people treated in a hospital had shown signs of torture, a few others denied that torture was a problem. One senior Kuwaiti doctor at Mubarak Hospital acknowledged merely that "a few Palestinians were punched and kicked about" in the period after February 26.

Amnesty International said its team had detailed testimonies of more than 40 people, aged from 16 years to 60, who said they had been tortured by armed civilian militias or the armed forces.

"In a number of cases the torture marks were still clearly visible. In other cases, the accounts given were credible and consistent with the treatment alleged."

One Palestinian victim, aged 24, was brought into the team's hotel the day after his arrest. He said uniformed personnel identifying themselves as members of Kuwait's Military Intelligence had beaten him for hours, stamped on his body, thrown acid over him and subjected him to electric shock torture. Severe injuries covered most of his back and shoulders. Parts of his thighs were raw, with skin peeling off "consistent with the application of sulphuric acid, though some could also have been caused by electric current," according to Amnesty International. "He was in a pitiable state."

Another victim, a Sudanese aged 35, still bore the scars of savage assaults inflicted in early March. "There was little uninjured skin area remaining on the chest and upper arms," Amnesty International's forensic pathologist reports. "The appearances are of unusually heavy, multiple beating of a severity not seen in my previous experience."

Another Sudanese tortured with this victim remains unaccounted for.

A 60-year-old Palestinian told the team he and three younger men had been arrested by soldiers at a check-point on March 9 and tortured in a succession of police stations.

"At times we were held in groups of about 30. Most were young men of 18 and over. But there was a man of 70 and one of 80. They were beaten too."

He said he had been beaten daily for 14 days before being freed. "But what they did to me did not compare to the barbaric treatment of my young companions who are still missing."

Kuwait/Page 5 of 6

Amnesty International says savage beatings with sticks, hose pipes and rifle butts and whippings with electric cables appeared to be the norm for many detainees, but its team cataloged over a dozen forms of torture used. They included the use of electric shocks, burning with cigarettes, candles and acid, cutting with knives, biting and threats of execution and sexual assault. Teams of torturers often appeared to work in relays, maintaining the torture for hours. Daily torture of captives appeared to have been common.

"Although revenge for alleged collaboration appears to have been the motive in some cases, many people seem to have been targeted simply because of their nationality."

Amnesty International said that the judicial authorities had assured the organization that they were trying to get the judicial system functioning again. They acknowledged that violations had been committed by non-official groups immediately after the Iraqi withdrawal, but gave assurances that those responsible would be brought to justice.

In some cases, the authorities did appear to be investigating the cases of detainees, and officials said they would try to sort who was to be charged and who released.

"During our visit some officials from the Public Prosecutor's office had begun to process the 600 detainees moved to the Juveniles' Prison, and trials are expected to open at the end of this month."

Amnesty International requested permission for its observers to attend the trials, and an agreement in principle was obtained from the Public Prosecutor.

Summing up, the organization said that in spite of some positive steps, overall safeguards against human rights violations appear to have been accorded "an extremely low priority" by the country's rulers.

"This bodes ill for the future and is the cause of fear and resentment among the communities which have been targeted."

To update its December 1990 report, Iraq/Occupied Kuwait: Human Rights Violations Since August 2, the Amnesty International team also interviewed and medically examined further victims of violations during the Iraqi occupation, visited hospitals and checked cemetery records.

The December report detailed the torture and extrajudicial execution of hundreds of victims and the imprisonment of several thousand prisoners. The report cataloged over 30 kinds of torture inflicted by Iraqi forces.

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PRINCIPAL ATTORNEY
STEVEN MONTEFORTE

WRITER'S DIRECT NUMBER:

March 13, 1991

Lars-Erik Nelson
1515 L Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Lars-Erik Nelson:

I read your column of March 1 in which you assailed those who referred to Iraqi atrocities. Apparently, you believe the reports were propoganda and lies to boot. Let me quote you..."for the world to unite against Saddam. Why lie about him? And should we ever believe the liars again?"

You singled out the alleged atrocities perpetrated against babies, quoting President Bush, who was overwhelmed by those particular acts, as saying, "It's just unbelievable. Babies in incubators heaved out of the incubators. They all died." And you went on to say, "Bush's anguish over this monstrous behavior led him suddenly to decide, in early November, that the U.S. and its allies would have to liberate Kuwait by force."

I was struck by your attitude and commented on it in one of my columns which I am enclosing. I want to bring to your attention a report from the March 5 Mac Neil/Lehrer show which specifically refers to the atrocities against babies killed "when the Iraqis tore the respirators from their incubators." I am enclosing a transcript of the full report.

Based on this information, wouldn't it be worth your
while to look into this matter further?

All the best.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Koch', written in a cursive style.

Edward I. Koch

enclosures

MAC NEIL/LEHRER NEWSHOUR

Tuesday, March 5, 1991

WNET, New York, New York

SHOW #3982

ANCHORS:

ROBERT MAC NEIL

JAMES LEHRER

FOCUS - OPPOSING SADDAM:

(Backgrounder and
Discussion on Civil
Uprisings in Iraq)

HOSHYAR ZEBARI, Iraqi
Opposition Leader

LEITH KUBBA, Iraqi
Opposition Leader

AHMED CHALABI, Iraqi Activist

CORRESPONDENTS:

JOHN ALCOTT, FOCUS - MISSING

CHARLES KRAUSE, FOCUS - MISSING
(Report on Kuwaiti Males Taken
Hostage by Iraqi Soldiers)

CONVERSATION:

JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR, UN
Secretary General

Roberta

TRANSCRIPT BY:

"STRICTLY BUSINESS"
P.O. BOX 12303
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS 66212
913-649-6381

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you all three.

MR. LEHRER: Still to come on the NewsHour tonight two reports on the legacy of death the Iraqis left behind in Kuwait and a Charlayne Hunter-Gault interview with U.N. Secretary General Perez DeCuellar.

FOCUS - MISSING

MR. LEHRER: Now two reports about the death and despair the Iraqis left behind in Kuwait. The first about the burial of Iraq's victims in Kuwait. It is by John Alcott of Independent Television News.

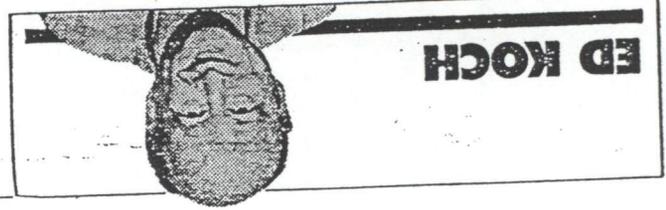
MR. ALCOTT: It was dark when we came across them, 35 long mounds of earth in a cemetery outside Kuwait City. The Kuwaitis who dug them say they are packed with the victims of Saddam Hussein's soldiers. They say most were tortured then shot. During August and September last year, bodies were arriving at the rate of 40 a day. They had no time to dig individual graves. There is no peace in this cemetery. The rumbling of burning oil wells echoes around the tombs, their light the nearest thing to a sunrise. Daylight brings only the digging of yet more graves as bodies continue to be found all over the country. According to the cemetery records, 2,797 Kuwaitis have been buried here since the Iraqi invasion. Many were never identified. Some torture victims were simply unrecognizable. The cemetery staff took secret photos of the dead, smuggled into the West to provide evidence of the atrocities. Today bereaved relatives scanned the prints looking for their loved ones. Akmed Alholi is an oil engineer who volunteered to help organize the grave digging. He says the horrifying scale of the killings meant his staff just couldn't give each victim his or her own grave. According to Mr. Akmed and the other staff here, this separate large grave contains the bodies of 56 babies killed in hospital when the Iraqis tore the respirators from their incubators. As this makeshift ambulance containing the bodies of 11 Iraqi soldiers was arriving in one part of the cemetery, a Kuwaiti torture victim was being buried nearby. He at least had been identified by his family and they were there to make sure he had his own grave.

MR. LEHRER: Some 5,000 Kuwaiti men reportedly were taken away by retreating Iraqi soldiers in the last few days of the war, presumably to be used as hostages. Nobody yet knows what happened to them. Charles Krause reports on that.

MR. KRAUSE: Kuwait City is divided into more than 25 distinct residential neighborhoods. Adalia, best known for the Kadma Sports Club, is just one of them. Before the occupation, Kadma Soccer Stadium and Swimming Pools comprised one of Kuwait's largest recreational facilities. But after August 2nd, the Iraqis turned the sports complex into something else. It became a notorious detention center. Even now, a week after the liberation, there's still evidence of the electric wires the Iraqis used to torture prisoners. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of Kuwaitis, were held here during the seven months Iraq occupied Kuwait. Neighbors, those who live near the sports complex, heard the screams. But it wasn't until the very end that the Adalia neighborhood, itself, felt the full brunt of the Iraqis' terror. On Thursday, February 21st, just two days before the ground war began, Iraqi soldiers swept through Adalia's peaceful streets, grabbing men from their homes and from their cars. By the time it was over, the Iraqis had taken 300 teen-age boys and adult males as hostages from this one neighborhood alone. Murshed Al Rashden says he barely escaped.

MURSHED AL RASHDEN: Military people came to our house and they were knocking at the door with guns and they say, open, open, we know you're inside, so we gone in the basement, they started shooting with machine guns in the house, so my uncle told us he has a little room over the bathroom, because usually we have our water supply, and because there's no water, it was empty, so he stuck five of us inside, young guys, so thank God nothing happened to us, but it was very terrifying because, you know, taking civilians and not knowing what's going to happen with you.

MR. KRAUSE: By all accounts there was no sanctuary, no respect, and no pity. A favorite target during those last days houses of worship; squads of Iraqi soldiers reported surrounded the mosque



ED KOCH

AM now a member of the press. But my lack of reverence for it remains undiminished. Sometimes it seems that the media think that those who don't embrace their views without reservation are violating the First Amendment.

In many New York columnists there is an isolationism and hatred of America, manifest in their attitudes toward the Persian Gulf War, that is virtually unbelievable.

Even now, isolationist columnists rap U.S.

Instead, you have Jimmy Breslin, who wrote in his Newsday column: "In the end the fourth-largest army came around without an airplane, and that is not very good for war in 1991. And the most evil man since Hitler came out as a nonentity, a dunce we built into a monster."

Saddam Hussein a nonentity? He who gassed 6,000 of his own citizens and tens of thousands of Iranian soldiers? He who brutalized Kuwaitis and launched SCUDs at Israeli civilians even though Israel was not involved in the war?

Then there is Dennis Duggan of Newsday, who attacked Congressman Stephen Solarz for having met with Saddam Hussein in 1982. Duggan said that Solarz and Saddam sounded like old pals.

Solarz was there in his capacity as a senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Why did Duggan denigrate Solarz? Because Solarz was one of the few Democrats who supported President Bush's resolution to move militarily against Saddam Hussein. Then there's Jim Dwyer's column in Newsday. He criticized our continuing to fire on the Iraqis in the

Isolationist columnists still rapping U.S. role in Gulf

KOCH from Page 4
wasting hours of the war. Conveniently forgetting the Iraqis had not laid down their arms, Dwyer wrote that "the word 'pity' would make a nice addition to the vocabulary."

What is he talking about? Is there any question in his mind that Saddam Hussein started the war? Saddam could have saved the lives of his troops and ours at any time — by agreeing unconditionally to leave Kuwait and by ordering his troops to lay down their

arms. He refused to do so and, tragically, more lives were lost unnecessarily, because of Saddam Hussein's intransigence. Then there is Lars-Erik Nelson of the Daily News, who holds the United States responsible for the deaths of 100,000 Iraqis and questions the allegations of Iraqi torture. There is no question that widespread atrocities were inflicted on the Kuwaitis by Saddam's occupying forces. Doctors and nurses in Kuwait's largest hospital attest to seeing dozens

of victims, including young men who had been chopped up with axes or shot in the head with their hands tied behind their backs. In one case a woman was brought in with the top of her skull sawed off.

Finally, there is Jonathan Schell, who wrote in his Newsday column: "Is the tale of how a team of strapping, healthy people finished off a blind, half-dead enemy strapped to a table one to make the heart swell? Can the United States find no better way to heal its hurt pride?" Schell may love descriptive overkill, but clearly he is not too concerned about getting rid of tyrants or the Iraqi war machine that not too long ago eliminated over half a million Iranians.

The Democratic Party now has as its leading spokesmen people with isolationist views similar to the columnists. They include such senators as Ted Kennedy, Sam Nunn and Pat Moynihan. The only Democratic senator north of the Mason-Dixon line who supported the war waged against Saddam Hussein was Joe Lieberman of Connecticut. Recall how close the "use force" resolution vote was in the Senate, 52-47. Had it gone the other way, would the world be better off?

And guess who was applauding the isolationists from the so-called box? That's right — Bella Abzug and Ramsey Clark. The Democratic Party has become the party of appeasement. Let now weep for our party.