

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

C0072

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JULY 31, 1992

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: MR. PAUL H. SHERRY

SUBJECT: FORWARDS STATEMENT BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO
THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION ON THE POSTWAR
HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OF IRAQ

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
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JIM SCHAEFER		ORG	92/07/31		C9310105
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United Church of Christ

July 29, 1992

President George Bush
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear President Bush:

August 2 is the second anniversary of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. While the fighting has stopped, the consequences of the war continue.

The enclosed statement by my colleagues and myself expresses concern for the children of Iraq and for the people of Iraq who still do not have enough food and medicine.

We know that these last days have been tense for you, for Iraq, and for the whole world as you seek to implement the United Nations provisions denying Iraq weapons of mass destruction. As our statement says, we call on you to act on your commitment to "work to ensure that adequate food and medicine reach the Iraqi people under international supervision while denying Saddam the means to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction."

Our concern is that the humanitarian agenda is being lost as other goals are being pursued in post-Gulf War diplomacy. We believe, as a matter of principle, that humanitarian relief should be unconditional. To quote from our statement, "we call on the United States, through the United Nations, to exercise the flexibility and creativity necessary to find mutually acceptable ways, including special oil sales and the unfreezing of blocked funds, to enable Iraq to address adequately the humanitarian needs of its civilian population."

We appreciate your giving this statement serious attention.

Sincerely yours,

Paul H. Sherry
President

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Comments:

**RELIGIOUS LEADERS' STATEMENT TO
THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION
ON THE POSTWAR HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OF IRAQ**

August 2, 1992

STATEMENT:

1) In light of the continued suffering in the wake of the Gulf war, we wish to express our continued concern for the impact of the war on the population of Iraq and particularly on Iraqi children.

2) We believe that the government of Iraq is to be held accountable for its unconscionable policies toward Iraq's citizenry. We also believe that, while efforts by international bodies to control the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should be supported, the international community and, in particular, the government of the United States, is also to be held responsible for the continuing humanitarian consequences of the air war against Iraq and for their objectionable policies of encouraging the transfer of arms and arms technology to the Middle East.

3) We further affirm that as a matter of principle, humanitarian relief should be unconditional, and we express our deep concern that the United Nations Security Council is violating that principle in the case of Iraq, thereby making the health of many Iraqi children apparently contingent on the fulfillment of political requirements of some Security Council members.

4) We believe that the United States, through the United Nations, has a moral obligation to work diligently to find a solution to the impasse between the Security Council and the government of Iraq, an impasse which is preventing a resolution of the food and health problems affecting Iraq's civilian population.

5) In this regard:

- We call on President Bush to actualize his statement of January 16, 1992, on the anniversary of the beginning of the war, that the "[United States] quarrel is not with the people of Iraq." We urge the President to act on his commitment to "work to ensure that adequate food and medicine reach the Iraqi people under international supervision while denying Saddam the means to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction."
- We call on the United States, through the United Nations, to exercise the flexibility and creativity necessary to find mutually acceptable ways, including special oil sales and the unfreezing of blocked funds, to enable Iraq to address adequately the humanitarian needs of its civilian population. It is our belief that a U.N. monitoring system would be necessary to ensure that relief funds not be misappropriated and that relief supplies be distributed equitably.
- We urge the United States to respect the U.N. Secretary-General's recommendations regarding humanitarian relief for the Iraqi people.

6) Finally, we commend the United States Administration for its work to promote an Arab-Israeli peace agreement. We urge our government to pursue broader goals of peace for the entire Middle East, encouraging the designation of the region as a nuclear, chemical and biological weapons-free zone and the negotiation of issues of self-determination.

The Most Reverend Edmond L. Browning
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church

Dr. William C. Nichols
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom
Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dr. Patricia J. Rumer
General Director
Church Women United

Brother Paul Hennessy, CFC
President
Conference of Major Superiors of Men

The Rev. Dr. William F. Schulz
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

John A. Lapp
Executive Secretary
Mennonite Central Committee

The Rev. Dr. Paul H. Sherry
President
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. Donald E. Miller
General Secretary
Church of the Brethren

Harold V. Smuck
Interim General Secretary
Friends United Meeting

The Rev. Dr. Edwin G. Mulder
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Reformed Church in America

Bishop Melvin G. Talbert
Secretary, Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

Father William Mullan, M.M.
Regional Superior of the United States
Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Dr. Daniel E. Weiss
General Secretary
American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

Kara Newell
Executive Secretary
American Friends Service Committee

BACKGROUND:

Over one year after the Gulf war, the consequences of that war are still being felt throughout the Middle East. Although Iraq's illegal and morally reprehensible occupation of Kuwait has ended, humanitarian concerns remain, concerns that affect the population of Iraq and in particular its children.

Much of Iraq's civilian infrastructure was destroyed during the war, causing severe power shortages and consequent failure of water purification systems and storage systems for food and medical supplies. Although Iraq has made progress in rebuilding its infrastructure and although restrictions on the import of food and medicine by the international community have been relaxed, economic constraints make food and medical supplies insufficient and inaccessible to much of the population. A health crisis has ensued which continues to cause disease and chronic malnutrition, particularly among children.

These problems have been exacerbated in the north and in the south of the country. Much of Iraq's Kurdish population, having faced earlier repression and massacre on the part of the Iraqi regime, rose in rebellion against that regime with the encouragement of the U.S. Administration and, as a consequence, experienced new massacres and displacement. Similar tragedies befell Iraq's Shiite population in the south. Both populations are currently suffering the consequences of economic blockades and intense repression on the part of the Iraqi regime.

The United Nations Secretary-General, recognizing Iraq's humanitarian needs, recommended to the Security Council that Iraq be permitted to sell limited amounts of oil to enable it to undertake its own humanitarian relief under strict U.N. monitoring procedures. However, resolution of the situation has reached a stalemate between the Security Council, which insists on linking humanitarian relief to Iraqi acceptance of political conditions, and the government of Iraq, which finds the revenues offered for humanitarian relief too low and the attached conditions too onerous. (The Security Council is requiring Iraq to make immediate reparation payments to Kuwait and to pay for all U.N. weapons inspection and destruction operations before revenues can be generated for humanitarian relief). Moreover, the Security Council resolutions do not allow for the levels of relief recommended by the U.N. Secretary-General.