

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

ID# 256512

00083

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JULY 23, 1991

09121782

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: PATRICIA A. KEEFE O.S.F.

SUBJECT: EXPRESSES CONCERN REGARDING THE CONTINUING
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN KUWAIT

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
PUBLIC LIAISON	ORG RUST	91/07/23		
REFERRAL NOTE: ATTN: KATHY	R	91/12/03	TC	91/12/16 TC
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COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 4500 4800

PL 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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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75,OEOb) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

TRANSMITTAL FORM

S/S 09121782
Date December 13, 1991

FOR: Mr. William F. Sittmann
Executive Secretary
National Security Council Staff
The White House

REFERENCE:

To: The President
From: Patricia Keefe
Date: July 18, 1991
Subj: Human Rights Abuse in Kuwait

WH Referral Dated: 12/03/91
NSCS ID# (if any): 256512

 The attached item was sent directly to the
Department of State

ACTION TAKEN:

- A draft reply is attached.
- A draft reply will be forwarded.
- A translation is attached.
- X An information copy of a direct reply is attached.
- We believe no response is necessary for the reason
cited below.
- The Department of State has no objection to the
proposed travel.
- Other

REMARKS:


Director
Secretariat Staff

12 11 19 09 12

15 DEC 91 4:50



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

December 12, 1991

Dear Ms. Keefe:

I am replying to your letter of July 18 to the President, in which you expressed your concerns about the human rights situation in Kuwait. Please excuse the delay in responding, which was caused by an unexplained problem in referring your letter to our office.

We have consistently made clear to the Government of Kuwait our belief that the rights of all residents of Kuwait should be respected, and that individuals should not be allowed to take the law into their own hands, regardless of the suffering they may have experienced. There remains a widespread perception among the Kuwaiti public that many Palestinians and other non-Kuwaitis actively assisted Saddam Hussein's troops during their brutal occupation of Kuwait. Given the horrors inflicted upon Kuwaiti families by Iraqi forces, the potential for individual acts of retribution persists, although it seems perceptibly reduced in recent months.

A review of the Kuwaiti Government's actions since June indicates progress in bringing human rights violations to an end. With the conclusion of martial law on June 26, the government transferred all remaining collaboration cases to the regular judicial system, the majority to the State Security Courts. In an important departure from pre-invasion practice, the Government ruled that trials in the State Security Courts would be held in open sessions, and that all convictions would be subject to appeal to a higher court. We have welcomed both moves, and will continue to make clear to the Kuwaiti Government that future trials must be fair, and defendants afforded due process in accordance with international standards.


Shortly after liberation, the Kuwaiti Government authorized the ICRC to obtain access to all detention sites. The ICRC continues to monitor the procedures and conditions under which detainees are held, and to bring to the government's attention any unacceptable treatment. While a few abuses continue to be reported, they appear to be isolated incidents.

Additionally, the Kuwaiti Government and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) signed an agreement in July to regulate all deportations of foreign nationals. Under the established guidelines, the ICRC is now in a position to supervise any deportations to ensure that no one is expelled involuntarily. Reports from the ICRC indicate that deportations are now proceeding smoothly and humanely.

Finally, we welcome the Kuwaiti government's decision to authorize the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to open an office in Kuwait. The UNHCR is now addressing the situation of vulnerable communities in Kuwait, such as the Bidoon (stateless residents and former residents of Kuwait), Iraqis, and Palestinians with travel documents which do not accord them right of residence elsewhere.

Clearly, the Kuwaiti authorities need to do even more to eliminate human rights abuses. The U.S. will continue to monitor the situation in Kuwait closely, and to make human rights an important part of our dialogue with the Kuwaiti Government. Thank you for writing to share your views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kenneth R. McKune".

Kenneth R. McKune
Acting Director, Office of
Arabian Peninsular Affairs

09121782

T H E W H I T E H O U S E O F F I C E

REFERRAL

DECEMBER 3, 1991

TO: DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ACTION REQUESTED:

DIRECT REPLY, FURNISH INFO COPY

DESCRIPTION OF INCOMING:

ID: 256512

MEDIA: LETTER, DATED JULY 18, 1991

TO: PRESIDENT BUSH

FROM: PATRICIA A. KEEFE O.S.F.
DIRECTOR FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT
CATHOLIC SOCIAL MINISTRIES
ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY
POST OFFICE BOX 1516
OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73101

SUBJECT: EXPRESSES CONCERN REGARDING THE CONTINUING
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN KUWAIT

PROMPT ACTION IS ESSENTIAL -- IF REQUIRED ACTION HAS NOT BEEN
TAKEN WITHIN 9 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE
UNDERSIGNED AT 456-7486.

RETURN CORRESPONDENCE, WORKSHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE
(OR DRAFT) TO:
AGENCY LIAISON, ROOM 91, THE WHITE HOUSE, 20500

SALLY KELLEY
DIRECTOR OF AGENCY LIAISON
PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

256512

CATHOLIC SOCIAL MINISTRIES

ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY

July 18, 1991

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The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Commission for Justice and Human Development for the Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City is gravely concerned about continuing human rights abuses in Kuwait. Since you are in a position to intervene with the Kuwait government, because of the recent war, we request that you do so to urge a halt to abuses by that government.

Reports from Kuwait highlight trials which fall far short of internationally recognized standards of fairness. The use of confessions possibly obtained through torture, the failure to inform the defendant of the charge at the time of arrest, and the denial of the right to appeal sentences to a higher tribunal are violations of international law. Especially when the penalties are as high as the death penalty, the international community must respond.

Additionally the reported practice of the Kuwaiti authorities of summarily expelling individuals to Iraq when these people will be at large risk of arbitrary imprisonment, torture, "disappearance" or execution demands an international response. This practice of sending people to a country in which they would be at risk of abuses of this type contravenes the principle of non-refoulement, which is binding on all states.

The suspension of human right today in Kuwait is not an internal matter. Disregard of human rights anywhere is an issue which the international community has an obligation to remedy. I call on you to participate in this process by urging the Kuwaiti Authorities to review all sentences under the military tribunals, ensure all defendants with a fair trial, impose no death sentences, halt the summary expulsions and implement asylum procedures and allow the

Mr. President

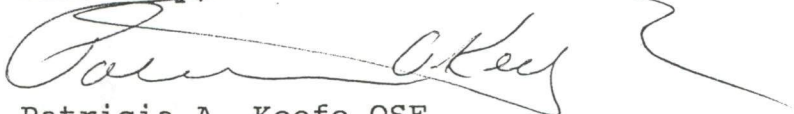
-2-

July 18, 1991

International Committee of the Red Cross to review and inspect these procedures.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patricia A. Keefe", enclosed within a large, irregular, hand-drawn scribble that extends to the right.

Patricia A. Keefe OSF
Director for Justice
and Human Development

PAK/tgh

cc: His Highness Shiekh Jaber a Al-Sabah
Ambassador Shakh Saud Nasir Al-Sabah