THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 4, 1991

Dear Congressman Lagomarsino:

I am writing in response to your letter of September 27 concerning the President’s meeting with the Amir of Kuwait on October 1. Let me assure you that the President fully supports the process of political reform in Kuwait, and so stated to the Amir. Moreover, in his public statement at the conclusion of the meeting with the Amir, the President said, "I fully endorse Kuwait’s endeavors to expand political participation and look forward to watching this process develop in the freest possible atmosphere."

Let me also assure you that the U.S. government is working in close consultation with the Kuwaiti authorities to address the issues of political pluralism that you raised in your letter. As your letter noted, I believe cooperation between the U.S. government and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs on this issue has been excellent. We intend that this cooperation continue.

Sincerely,

Brent Scowcroft

The Honorable Robert J. Lagomarsino
Chairman
National Republican Institute for International Affairs
1212 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20005
October 2, 1991

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR BRENT SCOWCROFT

THROUGH: RICHARD N. HAASS

FROM: BRUCE RIEDE

SUBJECT: Response to Congressional Inquiry on Kuwaiti Amir's Visit

Congressman Robert J. Lagomarsino, as Chairman of the National Republican Institute for International Affairs, wrote the President urging him to raise a number of issues related to political liberalization during the President's meeting with the Amir of Kuwait on October 1, 1991. Senator Richard Lugar and Congressman David Dreier co-signed the letter. In your reply, you underscore the President's determination to support the Amir's intent to hold parliamentary elections in October 1992 in the freest possible atmosphere and note that the President raised this with the Amir during his visit.

Concurrences by: Ginny Sampley

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to the National Republican Institute for International Affairs at Tab I.

Attachments

Tab I Letter to the National Republican Institute for International Affairs

Tab II Letter from the National Republican Institute for International Affairs
Ken Hill
Bill Sittmann
Bob Gates
Brent Scowcroft
Bill Sittmann
Situation Room
West Wing Desk
NSC Secretariat

SEQUENCE TO
HAS SEEN
DISPOSITION

A = Action
I = Information
D = Dispatch
R = Retain
N = No further Action

cc: VP Sununu Other

Should be seen by: (Date/Time)

COMMENTS

APNSA Has Seen

DISPATCH INSTRUCTIONS:
27 September, 1991

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, the National Republican Institute for International Affairs has been working with the democratic forces in Kuwait throughout the past year. We have been to Kuwait, held a conference in Washington in which Ambassador Al Sabah participated, and are beginning a series of seminars in Kuwait on party building and legislator training. We have kept in close contact with the Department of State, the National Security Council, the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait and from NRIIA's point of view, the cooperation we have received from all three has been absolutely superb.

It is in regard to the latest conversation between Bruce Riedel of the NSC and Meg Thompson of NRIIA that we are writing to you to reinforce certain concerns regarding the current political situation in Kuwait which we believe you share:

- There is still censorship of the press in Kuwait. No election can be declared "free and fair" without a free press in operation throughout the time before an election. The Emir has called for elections next October, and if he wishes for the international community to recognize these elections, there must be a free press in existence as soon as possible.

- We know that the Emir has stated publicly that he will consider allowing women to vote. We would like to strongly encourage this step be taken before next year’s elections.

- The issue of "second class citizens" being allowed to vote is understandably a great deal more complicated, but we certainly encourage the Emir to begin studying and discussing this issue with all sectors of the Kuwaiti society as soon as possible.
Since we are known as strong supporters of Operation Desert Storm and of Kuwait, we felt our views might be of assistance to you as you discuss these issues with the Emir in your next meeting. The NRIIA also will continue to hold discussions with the State Department, NSC, and Ambassador Gnehm so that our program is fully coordinated with our overall goals for greater political pluralism and stability in the region.

Thank you for your time, and, as you know, you continue to receive our full support and the Institute's cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Iagomarsino
Member of Congress

Richard G. Lugar
U.S. Senate

David Dreier
Member of Congress

cc: Mr. Brent Scowcroft
Assistant to the President
National Security Affairs

Mr. James A. Baker, III
Secretary of State
TO: PRESIDENT

FROM: LAGOMARSINO, ROBERT
       DREIER, DAVID
       LUGAR, RICHARD G

KEYWORDS: KUWAIT
          MP

PERSONS: SABAHI, JABER
          GNEHN, EDWARD W

SUBJECT: LTR TO PRES FM REP LAGOMARSINO / SEN LUGAR & REP DRIER OF NATL
         REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE FOR INTL AFFAIRS RE KUWAITI ELECTIONS

ACTION: APPROPRIATE ACTION
DUE DATE: 03 OCT 91
STATUS: S

STAFF OFFICER: HAASS
LOGREF:
FILES: WH
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UNCLASSIFIED
TO: LAGOMARSINO, ROBERT

FROM: SCOWCROFT

KEYWORDS: KUWAIT
MP

PERSONS: SABAHI, JABER
GNEHN, EDWARD W

SUBJECT: SCOWCROFT REPLY TO REP LAGOMARSINO RE KUWAIT AMIR VISIT

ACTION: SCOWCROFT SGD LTR
STAFF OFFICER: HAASS
FILES: WH

DUE DATE: 03 OCT 91
STATUS: C
LOGREF: 9107376

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