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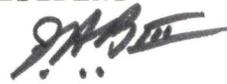
THE SECRETARY

12/7/90

NOTE FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

JABIII



As per our conversation, I've attached a copy of my testimony.

The passages marked on pages 4-7 are the ones which seem to have had the most impact.

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America's Strategy in the Persian Gulf Crisis

Statement

By

The Honorable James A. Baker, III

Before

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Wednesday,

December 5, 1990

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Mr. Chairman:

Today, I come before you for the third time since August 2 to discuss Iraq's continuing occupation of Kuwait.

I have come here to consult with you because a very dangerous dictator -- armed to the teeth -- is threatening a critical region at a defining moment in history. He must be stopped -- peacefully if possible, but by force if necessary.

I would like to focus my prepared remarks on three aspects of the situation:

- One, on explaining the President's strategy;
- Two, on detailing the reasons that preparations for the possible use of force -- and indeed a willingness to use force, if necessary -- remain essential to achieving a peaceful resolution; and
- Three, on presenting the compelling interests we have in seeing Saddam Hussein's brutal aggression undone.

Strategy

From the outset, the international community has rallied behind four objectives:

- First, the immediate, complete, and unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait;
- Second, the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government;
- Third, the release of all hostages; and
- Fourth, a commitment to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf.

The President has stated repeatedly that we want to achieve these objectives peacefully. He has also made clear that we seek to achieve them at least cost to ourselves and the other members of the international coalition.

From the outset, our strategy to achieve these objectives has been to make Saddam Hussein pay such a high price for his aggression that he would quit Kuwait. We have aimed to impose costs on Saddam for his aggression by taking increasingly harsh steps on a continuum of pressure and pain -- politically, economically, and militarily. On this continuum, economic sanctions and military preparations are not alternatives, but reinforcing and escalating steps of the same strategy.

Notwithstanding our desire for peace, from the outset we have proceeded with the full realization that if these objectives cannot be achieved peacefully, we must be prepared to use force, given the vital interests at stake.

Thus, starting on August 2, an international coalition led by the United States began to impose costs on Iraq for its aggression.

The day of the invasion the Security Council passed Resolution 660, calling for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. When this effort and the diplomatic efforts of the Arab League were summarily rejected by Saddam Hussein, on August 6 the Security Council imposed mandatory economic sanctions to increase the pressure on Iraq and make it pay greater costs for its aggression. The hope was that by isolating Iraq politically and economically, Saddam Hussein would withdraw.

While these diplomatic and economic steps were being taken, military forces were deployed in the region to deter further aggression and to support the Security Council Resolutions. As of now, twenty seven nations have joined in this truly unprecedented multinational force.

To date, the international coalition has had considerable success in isolating Iraq and making it pay high costs for its occupation of Kuwait. We regret the pain this causes innocent citizens of Iraq, a people with whom we have no quarrel.

But the question before us now is whether the costs we impose on Saddam Hussein through sanctions alone will be high enough to cause him to withdraw peacefully from Kuwait.

We have to face the fact that, four months into this conflict, none of our efforts have yet produced any sign of change in Saddam Hussein. He shows no signs of complying with any of the Security Council Resolutions.

Instead, he seems to be doubling his bets. He has tried to make Kuwait part of Iraq, systematically looting and dismembering a sovereign Arab state. He has been terrorizing the population, his soldiers committing unspeakable crimes against innocent Kuwaitis. He has called for the overthrow of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and President Mubarak of Egypt. He has threatened to rain terror and mass destruction on his Arab neighbors and on Israel. He has been playing the cruelest of games with hostages and their families and with our diplomats in Kuwait.

Preparing for War to Achieve Peace

After serious and sobering consultations, the United Nations Security Council last Thursday passed by an overwhelming majority a twelfth Resolution -- one that authorizes all necessary means, including the use of force, to eject Saddam from Kuwait after January 15, 1991. In passing

this Resolution, the international community is giving Saddam yet another chance -- indeed, one last chance -- to come to his senses.

In passing Thursday's Resolution, the international community sends Saddam the following clear message: "We continue to seek a diplomatic solution. Peace is your only sensible option. You can choose peace by respecting the will of the international community. But if you fail to do so, you will risk all. The choice is yours."

To ensure that Saddam understands this choice, the President has invited the Foreign Minister of Iraq to Washington and has directed me to go to Baghdad.

Put bluntly, this is the last best chance for a peaceful solution. If we are to have any chance of success, I must go to Baghdad with the fullest support of the Congress and the American people behind the message of the international community.

Let me be clear: This meeting will not be the beginning of a negotiation over the terms of the United Nations Resolutions. Those terms are clear: a complete, immediate, and unconditional Iraqi withdrawal; the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti government; and the release of all foreign nationals.

Nor is this the beginning of a negotiation on subjects unrelated to Iraq's brutal occupation of Kuwait. I will not be negotiating the Palestinian question or the civil war in Lebanon. Saddam did not invade Kuwait to help the Palestinians. He did it for his own self-aggrandizement. As Eduard Shevardnadze has said, you do not enslave one people to free another.

Put simply, my mission to Baghdad will be an attempt to explain to Saddam the choice he faces: comply with the objectives of the Security Council or risk disaster for Iraq.

To give substance to these words, the President has directed the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and me to work with the other members of the international coalition to reinforce the multinational force in the Gulf and coordinate its efforts. Our aim is to ensure that if force must be used, it will be used suddenly, massively, and decisively.

Do the troop reinforcements and the Security Council Resolution mean that war is inevitable? Surely not. There is a peaceful outcome possible -- one that does not reward aggression -- and everyone, including Saddam, knows what it is. He can choose peace by withdrawing unconditionally from Kuwait and releasing all hostages.

He will not make that peaceful choice, however, unless he understands that the alternative to peaceful compliance is to be forced to comply. That is the message we are trying to send him. That is the meaning of the steps the international community has taken over the past month. It is not a new strategy but rather a continuation and reinforcement of the strategy we have pursued since August.

I know that some here and throughout the country are uneasy about the prospects of war. None of us wants war. Not you. Not the President. Not me. None of us have sought this conflict, and we are making every attempt to resolve it peacefully, without appeasing the aggressor.

I know the arguments of those who believe that time and the economic embargo alone will work to resolve this conflict peacefully. But we have to face some hard facts.

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If sanctions are to succeed, they must do more than hurt Iraq economically. They must hurt Saddam so much that he changes his behavior and withdraws from Kuwait. That is the criteria of success by which sanctions must be judged.

In considering the role of sanctions in our strategy, we need to ask ourselves:

- Can economic sanctions alone compel a dictator like Saddam to make the politically difficult choice of withdrawing from Kuwait?
- Absent a credible military threat, will Saddam take the Security Council's actions seriously?
- Is there anything in Saddam Hussein's history that could lead us to believe that sanctions alone will get him out of Kuwait?

Let me try to answer these questions, based on the results so far. After four months of a stringent embargo, no one doubts that sanctions are having some effect on the Iraqi economy. But we have to face the difficult fact that no one can tell you that sanctions alone will ever be able to impose a high enough cost on Saddam to get him to withdraw. So far, all available evidence suggests that they have had little if any effect on his inclination to withdraw.

That's in part because Saddam, to a considerable extent, can decide who in Iraq gets hurt by them. And you can bet the Iraqi people will feel the pain first and most deeply -- not the Iraqi military or Saddam himself. Saddam has a long history of imposing great pain and suffering on the Iraqi people. It is not new for him to impose economic sacrifices on the Iraqi people in pursuit of his ambitions.

We need to remember who we are trying to get out of Kuwait. Saddam is a ruthless dictator. He has an inflated sense of Iraq's leverage and a high pain threshold. Saddam

undoubtedly believes he can endure economic sanctions. However, surely he understands more acutely the consequences of military force.

Waiting not only gives Saddam time to break the sanctions, but it imposes costs on us.

As we wait, Saddam will continue torturing Kuwait, killing it as a nation.

As we wait, he will continue manipulating hostages, attempting to break the coalition.

As we wait he will continue to fortify Kuwait, to build chemical and biological weapons, and to acquire a nuclear weapons capability.

As we wait, he expects other issues to deflect our attention, weaken our resolve, and dissolve the international coalition.

And as we wait, the burden of Saddam's crime weighs heavier on the world.

That is why we must make credible our preparations to use force.

The international community has clearly agreed that force will not be used before January 15 of next year, provided Saddam does not provoke a response. Thus, Mr. Chairman, we need to remind ourselves that for now, no one is making a decision about going to war. Indeed, in asking me to go to Baghdad, the President has made it clear that he will use the next six weeks to exhaust all diplomatic opportunities.

Yet to support these diplomatic efforts, Mr. Chairman, the President has also made it clear that we need continued support for our military preparations to make credible an offensive option to liberate Kuwait. While not prejudging any decision whether force should be used sometime after January 15, I can state unequivocally that failure to continue preparations now has at least three dangerous consequences.

First, it would undercut our diplomatic leverage by removing the other alternative to a peaceful withdrawal: use of force. It would send Iraq exactly the wrong message -- that is, "Continue to play for time. You will have lots of it because the Security Council Resolution is just a bluff. The international coalition is not even preparing the option to use force, let alone take that option." That is a message we must not send.

We must show Saddam that time is not on his side. He needs to know that even if he believes he can withstand the sanctions, and he may be right in this belief, we can and will impose even greater costs on him through the use of force if necessary.

Second, failure to prepare a credible offensive military option would only tend to reaffirm the status quo and legitimize to some the brutal occupation that Saddam is now carrying out against Kuwait and its people.

Third, failure to prepare adequately now would mean that should conflict come, we would be irresponsibly risking greater casualties -- putting the lives of those young Americans already on the front lines in the Persian Gulf at greater risk than they need be. The President will not stand for that. And neither will the American people.

What's at Stake

Mr. Chairman, we do not proceed along this path unaware of the dangers and risks involved. But let there be no doubt, that succeeding in this endeavor -- hopefully in peace, if necessary by force -- is in the vital interest of the American people.

It is often said that there has been no clear answer given to the question of why we are in the Gulf. Much of this results from the search for a single cause for our involvement, a single reason the President could use to explain why the lives of American men and women should be put in harm's way in the sands of Arabia or the seas around it and in the air above it.

Mr. Chairman, let us stop this search. Let us be honest with ourselves and with each other. There are multiple causes, multiple dangers, multiple threats. Standing alone, each is compelling. Put together, the case is overwhelming.

Put bluntly: A very dangerous dictator -- armed to the teeth -- is threatening a critical region at a defining moment in history.

It is the combination of these reasons -- who is threatening our interests, what capabilities he has and is developing, where he is carrying out aggression, and when he has chosen to act -- that make the stakes so high for all of us.

Let me explain.

Strategically, Saddam is a capricious dictator whose lust for power is as unlimited as his brutality in pursuit of it. He has invaded two neighbors, is harboring terrorists, and now is systematically exterminating Kuwait. Saddam uses poisonous gas -- even against his own people; develops deadly toxins; and seeks relentlessly to acquire nuclear bombs. He has built the world's sixth largest army, has the world's fifth largest tank army, and has deployed ballistic missiles.

Geographically, Saddam's aggression has occurred in a political tinderbox that is crossroads to three continents. His success would only guarantee more strife, more conflict,

and eventually a wider war. There would be little hope for any effort at peace-making in the Middle East.

Economically, Saddam's aggression imperils the world's oil lifelines, threatening recession and depression, here and abroad, hitting hardest those fledgling democracies least able to cope with it. His aggression is an attempt to mortgage the economic promise of the post-Cold War world to the whims of a single man.

Morally, we must act so that international laws, not international outlaws, govern the post-Cold War world. We must act so that right, not might, dictates success in the post-Cold War world. We must act so that innocent men and women and diplomats are protected, not held hostage, in the post-Cold War world.

Historically, we must stand with the people of Kuwait so that the annexation of Kuwait does not become the first reality that mars our vision of a new world order. We must stand with the world community so that the United Nations does not go the way of the League of Nations.

Politically, we must stand for American leadership, not because we seek it but because no one else can do the job. And we did not stand united for forty years to bring the Cold War to a peaceful end in order to make the world safe for the likes of Saddam Hussein.

These then are the stakes.

If Saddam is not stopped now, if his aggressive designs are not frustrated, peacefully if possible, or if necessary by force, we will all pay a higher price later.

As the Security Council did last Thursday, this Congress and the American people must tell Saddam Hussein in unmistakable actions and words:

"Get out of Kuwait now or risk all."

Mr. Chairman, now -- more than at any time during this conflict -- we must stand united with the world community in full support of the Security Council Resolutions.

Simply put, it is a choice between right and wrong.

I believe we have the courage and fortitude to choose what's right.

Thank you.

**National Security Council
The White House**

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ACTION: FOR RECORD PURPOSES

DUE DATE: 25 DEC 90

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STAFF OFFICER: NONE

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