

“Saddam and His Inner Circle Discussing the United Nations, the Soviet Union, and the United States”



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Key: UM = Unidentified Male Speaker

Translator comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets

[Time Stamp: 00:00:07]

Tariq Aziz: He [*unspecified*] said, "I went and talked to the Iranians. They are accepting Resolution number 598 and they want peace. They do not have any problems with the cease-fire or with withdrawal. The Iraqis have created a problem over the borders and the cancellation of the agreement of 1975." Regarding the Investigation Committee, they [*the Investigation Committee*] came across a few things that we do not consider important. Anyway, what is important is that they [*the Iranians*] are accusing Iraq of being the aggressor and they are going to send a report to the Secretary General in which they will claim compensation from Iraq for all their losses from the war. The Secretary General answered them that Iraq also had its losses, so who is going to compensate Iraq? Iraq must be compensated as well. Then the Iranians did not comment and he [*unspecified*] started talking about the Gulf. At that time, after his visit, the Iranians issued a positive statement regarding the Soviet suggestion. I mean it deals with the Soviet suggestion positively -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, regarding the flag of the United Nations.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. So, I sent Saad a telegraph telling him, "When you meet with Borisov [*unknown*], tell him the following: While you were here in Baghdad, conversing with Mr. President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, you described the power [*of Iraq*] to the United Nations as a moral and political deterrent against Iran. Therefore, how could this be while Iran is welcoming the United Nations?" Just ask this question. I also sent him the latest speech of [*inaudible*] and told him to go there [*inaudible*]. Then Borisov answered him, saying, "You know the Iranians are looking at this subject from two perspectives. On the one hand, they know that this is going to restrain their movement. However, because America is out of the Gulf Region, they do not want to now come into conflict with America, but rather save face. And America does not want conflict with them either." Consequently, this is a way to save face for both parties. From this perspective, the Iranians [*Inaudible, Saddam clearing his throat*] and this is with Rafsanjani, it is not important, you know Rafsanjani [*Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Chairman of the Iranian Parliament*]. But the Iranian diplomatic position, he believes that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is helping in this regard. Even the Minister of Foreign Affairs was not there and he did not accept the responsibility of [*inaudible, other attendees whispering*]. The diplomatic position of Iran is to accept the resolution. I started, a little bit, to -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: You started having doubts inside you.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, as I told you over the phone, I started suspecting this man of lying [*referring to Borisov*]. I mean, he came on the pretext of covering -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: So, we -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: I mean, what he told me after we got out of Your Excellency's office, "We support you with regard to the first paragraph -- *[Interrupted]*

UM1: Yes, we have the minutes.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, he said you have the *[inaudible, voices overlap]*.

Tariq Aziz: This is not true, Sir. Their delegation to the United Nation didn't adopt this position. They said they will support us and the withdrawal will be in 10 days. There is an English expression "*too good to be true*," which means it is too good to the point that one finds it hard to believe. I would believe Borisov if he told me, "Comrade Tariq, I don't believe that the retreat will take only 10 days. Let's make it 20 *[days]* and if they *[the Iranians]* make it 20, then it is true... I would see some credibility in his words. So, I tell him 10 *[days]* and he says, "10." I say paragraph one and he says, "Go to paragraph one," etcetera. I say let us strike, bring the United Nations Forces from the Gulf and we strike *[Iran]*, and he says, "Strike." What kind of talk is this? Has he become a member of the Regional Command or an *[Iraqi]* official to talk like this *[people laugh]*? It is true that our position is right and just, but other countries will not adopt it one hundred percent. It has to be a very friendly country, such as Jordan or Egypt, which has no international responsibilities to adopt our position. But for the Soviet Union to adopt our position this way -- *[Interrupted]*

Taha Yassin: The biggest problem now is that -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: So, I believe that the goal of the Soviets from this conversation is meant to anesthetize us without changing their basic position. They are with us, but just want to anesthetize us and the Gulf people in order to implement the issue of the United Nation's flag on ships. This is their main goal. Other than that, they support the idea of ending the war and I do not think there is any change. He went to the Kuwaitis, as I told Your Excellency, and told them that Iraq accepted, and then he went to the Iranians and told them that the Kuwaitis accepted. By doing so, he entangled one with another and gives the impression that Iraq, the Gulf countries, and Iran accepted the idea of the United Nation's flag. He then went to Washington with the same idea and the Americans have also become that way now, I mean they have become like this, indecisive right now. We see this strike -- *[Interrupted]*

[Time Stamp: 00:05:14]

Saddam Hussein: What is this about the Minister of Defense *[U.S. Secretary of Defense]*?

Tariq Aziz: I do not have any idea, and they did not even say anything about it, either to the press or to the American media.

Taha Yassin: And the devotion to *[inaudible]*.

Tariq Aziz: Yesterday, the Iranians attacked an American ship without an American flag, but nevertheless a ship. If Your Excellency remembers, a week or more ago, they [*the United Nations*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: They announced that from now on, they are responsible for any American ship even without a flag.

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible, voices overlap*] Yes, this is not only Weinberger [*Casper Weinberger, U.S. Secretary of Defense*], but Weinberger and Shultz [*George Schultz, U.S. Secretary of State*], which means [*inaudible*] in politics. They committed to this issue. So if they [*the Iranians*] strike today or tomorrow, the Americans, this means the operation [*inaudible*].

Taha Yassin: Did anything happen from this strike [*inaudible*]?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, some missiles like al-Fidaa were launched. But if they remained silent and did not show any reaction, this means the American side has wavered.

Saddam Hussein: I also believe there is wavering.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

UM2: This explains the pressure on them.

Saddam Hussein: Of course!

UM2: Every day [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: He [*Weinberger*] always had a point of view different from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' [*The U.S. State Department*].

UM2: He [*Weinberger*] is firm.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, Weinberger is firm in terms of striking Iran. It is obvious and he does not hide it. But, Sir, Carlucci [*Frank Carlucci, Deputy Secretary of Defense*] who replaced him [*Weinberger*], was his friend. I mean Carlucci was the Deputy Minister of Defense during [*President Ronald*] Reagan's first term, the Deputy to Weinberger, and they were close friends. Even when they came to dinner with Bandar [*Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia*] [*inaudible*]. They are not distant from one another. I mean, they come from the same political team.

UM1: Not at the same level of -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: Yes, not at the same level. His position -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: But it is hard for America to get in a serious conflict with Iran.

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*] this conflict that -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: A strike for a strike.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: A strike for a strike and this is the way it goes.

UM1: [*Inaudible*] America does not want to [*inaudible*] Iran, this way.

Saddam Hussein: Because America also wants Iran... America wants to strike Iran and at the same time to seduce Iran. They have already stated this because the Americans will not hide anything; they have said everything. This is the stick and carrot policy idea. This is what is going on between America and Iran, and the Iranians speak to the Americans through all of their [*public*] statements. I mean, the speeches are not directed at the Iranian people as much as directed at the Americans, including these circles or the political power centers in America. They talk to the Americans in their own language.

UM2: And the Jews work for their own interests inside America -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The Jews work for Iran's interests.

UM2: This operation that took place -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Even Reagan, if he insisted on conflict with Iran, it is possible that the Jews would not agree with him.

UM2: After a year, he will complete his term.

Saddam Hussein: He will not even last one year because the Jews do not want this war.

UM2: This financial problem they have created; America will go bankrupt if it does not end its policy, and all this is because of the [*Persian*] Gulf War and the American position. This is something terrible!

Saddam Hussein: And who created this problem?

UM2: The Jews, the Jews because of the mistake the Americans made, Reagan and even the American Administration.

Saddam Hussein: This is not the right time for this war.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, it is -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: There are still some political and military battles [to come]. However, the positions that we have taken will not let conspiracies [*against Iraq*] succeed, at least.

Tariq Aziz: Yes. Besides, we are acting with credibility, Sir, when we say "we are ready" then we are ready.

Saddam Hussein: We have no reason to act without credibility.

UM2: Sir, the Jews seem to be very upset with this Resolution number 598 that for the first time has gained a unanimous vote and for that they are afraid something might be done about the Palestinian cause. Therefore, they wanted to impede the resolution, and they succeeded with the help of the Iranians. They wanted to hinder it and issue another resolution with less importance because they know that this is an Iraqi resolution. [*Time Stamp: 00:10:09*]

Really, the principles listed in Resolution 598 are exactly the same principles as the ones you spoke of, if not more. That is why they want to impede this resolution at any cost through Japan, Germany, and Italy and all of this is the work of the Jews, Israel. Therefore, and as you said, Sir, this is backtracking on the part of the American position. I mean backtracking, not to this...but it is not this way yet. The reports I have seen -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Time Stamp: 00:10:45*]

Saddam Hussein: This means now that the possibilities of the acceptance of the flag of the United Nations are increasing.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: I mean this is not a simple idea. It can grow.

Tariq Aziz: It has its own supporters in America, Sir. As I told Your Excellency, Vance [*unidentified*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The risk of this is that it can interrupt our military action against Iran.

Taha Yassin: Even the cease-fire in the Gulf will give them more power that we will have to face.

Tariq Aziz: It is going to be four to five months from now.

Saddam Hussein: This means that we will not attack before five months have elapsed. Something must materialize regarding this idea in the next five months.

Tariq Aziz: Implementing these issues, Sir, [*inaudible*].

Taha Yassin: How long did it [*inaudible*]?

Tariq Aziz: The Soviets played a role in this issue. They are after their own interests.

Saddam Hussein: But we should not blame the Soviets, and as a major power they must deal with another major power. We must always differentiate between what bothers us and what harms us, but is not designed to harm us.

Taha Yassin: As a result -- [*Interrupted*].

Tariq Aziz: This is an accidental result, and even if we [*inaudible*] it will be accidental.

Saddam Hussein: As an accidental result that will harm us, but it will not if it is designed...at least it has a motive. I mean, the Americans will be acting in isolation from the Soviets.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, from the technical side, the process will take a long time because until now the United Nations has not established any naval power.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Tariq, I did not mean that the Americans will retreat and the United Nations will take their place in a period less than five months, rather the concept can be adopted in less than five months.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, yes.

Saddam Hussein: So if the concept is adopted, the Americans will step aside [*voices overlap*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: Right, Sir, the Soviet Union [*inaudible*] it is the Soviet idea [*voices overlap*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: They will step aside a little bit, the Americans, until the matter has been resolved. It is hard for the Americans to stay [*in the Gulf*] for a long time unless they have specific purposes and they are waiting to achieve them. Otherwise, five months is not a short period for the American soldier because he is not an Iraqi soldier. An Iraqi soldier would say that five months is a short period, less than a year, and he can hold up for two years.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, the Soviet suggestion says that the same ships that are currently in the Gulf, like the Soviet, American, and British -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: All of the ships, the same ships, they will remove their flags and put the United Nation's flag instead.

Tariq Aziz: But from the technical side what does this require?

Taha Yassin: A joint command.

Tariq Aziz: First of all, it requires reviving [*the idea of*] the Chiefs of Staff Committee in the Security Council that was never formed after the [*adoption of the*] of the United Nations Charter. The Charter states that the chiefs of battle staffs of the permanent member countries must form a committee that will be a military committee under the command of the Security Council. For 45 years, this committee has never been formed in the United Nations. They must form it. They must have an operations room for it, etcetera, in addition to other necessary procedures. After that, they need to agree on the relationship between this committee and the ships in the Gulf. The task of the ships in the Gulf is not the same as the emergency forces that monitor only the cease-fire -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Without interference.

Tariq Aziz: Without interference. The United Nations forces do not fire unless it is in self-defense of an individual or the group and this rarely happens. It happens in Lebanon while there are no problems on the Syrian-Egyptian front [*borders with Israel*]. These forces are still present, and so is the possibility of firing. So, who decides on the firing, whether it is defensive or preventative [*preemptive*] shooting, whether their task is to defend or prevent? At this time, it is easy for the Americans to decide because they are the only side and they will shoot. So what should the American commander on the frigate that has the flag of the United Nations do when he sees a boat like that Indian boat they saw that day? Where will he get the order? Will they assign him to be a commander like what they do in the Middle East?

Saddam Hussein: Was it Indian?

[*Time Stamp: 00:15:30*]

Tariq Aziz: The boat?

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, it was Indian and the Americans fired at it and killed one Indian person.

Saddam Hussein: What type of boat was it?

UM2: A fishing boat.

Tariq Aziz: It was a fishing boat and an American battleship with three more boats [*possibly a battle group*] intercepted this fishing boat. It seems that the Americans tried to contact the boat, but it seems that it had no communication tools so the Americans shot it and then they announced that they shot an Iranian boat, but the Iranians said they did not fire at any boat. In the end, it was confirmed as an Indian boat owned by someone from Dubai. [*Attendees laugh*]. The

owner was from Dubai, but [inaudible] and killed, an Indian, and the Americans apologized. So this needs many weeks if not months of negotiations between the five countries to establish a new mechanism. Therefore, the political resolution that Your Excellency talked about is right, which means it could be taken into consideration, but its mechanism is not ready yet contrary to the Emergency Forces. In the case of Emergency Forces, if a cease-fire resolution is adopted by tomorrow, the Secretary General can deploy forces in 24 hours to the front because he has, for example, Emergency Forces in Cyprus, Lebanon, and at the Syrian front. I mean he already has forces that he can deploy [inaudible] to the front to work there. As far as how they will settle, their salaries, their allocations, and where they will receive orders from, there are conventional procedures in this regard. But as far as a naval force for this mission, the United Nations has not formed any in the past.

UM1: Well, if the Soviet Union interferes, can they specify a time period to carry out this mission?

Tariq Aziz: Yes, they can agree on a time period, but for the five [countries] to sit, talk, and agree on it, it will not take them two or three days, or even a week or ten days. I mean the technical side of course takes longer than that because it is not always [inaudible].

UM2: But what is the benefit? I mean Iran will benefit from the operations, but we do not.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, the formation of these forces will not stop us legally unless a resolution is issued by the Security Council to stop us from striking. It will impose on us, however, restraining conditions. As you know, the United Nations is in the Gulf and the Iranians' aircraft are hovering, but now we have to coordinate with the Americans to avoid accidents because [inaudible]. Furthermore, it will restrain our movement there and create a negative atmosphere for us that is not based on a legal procedure, but on political persuasion. Didn't we depend on laws when we breached [possibly referring to the cease-fire] and continued our attack? There were still people who contested that.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Latif, what about the Iranians?

Latif: Well, Sir, in the latest period there was an annoyance [inaudible, sound of files and paper being shuffled] the spying den of the American Embassy. They are all talking about the war, starting from Rafsanjani, Khamenei [inaudible, two additional names] are leaning towards the war. Today, Khamenei said the same words that Your Excellency already said, that if the International Community does not [inaudible] did not punish Iraq.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, there is an expected action from their side.

Latif: I do not think that they have anything to do this week.

Saddam Hussein: There is something that they might do on the sideline of the summit so that they can have something [inaudible].

Latif: They mobilized the tribes, [*inaudible*]. Among the rare cases where they mobilized the tribes, it was [*inaudible*] on a large scale. [Inaudible] So my analysis is that it is not far [from happening], but in the next period.

Saddam Hussein: The intelligence reports indicate the same thing.

Tariq Aziz: What is the size of the force, Sir?

[*Time Stamp: 00:20:34*]

Saddam Hussein: It is a big battle.

Tariq Aziz: Big?

Saddam Hussein: Yes.

Latif: Sir, [*inaudible*] for six months, [*inaudible*] and the intelligence reports?

Saddam Hussein: [*Inaudible*]

[*Inaudible, voices overlap*]

Latif: The one who said that, of course, like Your Excellency said was Rafsanjani who considers the next action to be the key to solve the issue with Iraq on a political basis. But as far as military action -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Yes, they take the benefits and then put -- [*Interrupted*]

Latif: They take the benefits so that they can pave the way for the political solution. One can link one phenomenon to another and get to the conclusion that action is not at the level of -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: No, as far as tactics and purposes, we did not do it wrong. All that we have diagnosed based on Iran's behavior was right, including the presentation of paragraph six and its synchronization, which involved a lot of work and not only Iran. There are other parties besides Iran playing this role, including the Zionists.

UM2: Israel [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: The Zionists. I do not think Israel.

Latif: Sir, if you let me explain something so that you would be convinced about the issue. Regarding Resolution 598, the Iranian reply to this resolution will not work and we have to look after our people's interests and condemn the Iranian reply, because Sir -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Yes, this is one of the points that comes to mind, because we did not make a statement neither on our reply nor on the Iranian's *[reply]* at all. On the other hand, the Iranians always talk.

Latif: They have announced; they announced their reply and the entire world knew about it even before the battle and not after it started. I mean after they brought in the international media and press agencies. Therefore, we have to work on mobilization for the next stage of the battle.

Saddam Hussein: We will work on mobilization, but we must not be dragged to the point of comparison, because once the distance between us and them takes the form of a technical approach, they will win. This means the issue has become very simple to the extent that the differences between us are too small. Rather, we must show to the world that Iran is rejecting the resolution and all its actions as an attempt to conspire against Iraq. In an attempt to put Iraq into the same impasse that some Arabs reached before when they delved into the corridors of the United Nations, forgetting that there is a big difference because now Iraq is standing on its feet and fighting, and not ready to reach the same impasse. This is the general line that we must stick to and our answer must be clear and public without getting into minute comparisons.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, should our reply be published internally?

Saddam Hussein: Why shouldn't we publish it internally?

Tariq Aziz: Because the Iraqi and Iranian replies were published in the Gulf press and became known. I mean, people started circulating the texts.

Saddam Hussein: Were the terms of the United Nations used to scare people?

Tariq Aziz: Sir, the Secretary General was angry. He went and lied to the Kuwaiti Ambassador here -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: What is this accident the report refers to?

Tariq Aziz: Bagadan?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, what is it?

Tariq Aziz: I sent you a report about it.

Saddam Hussein: I do not remember it.

Tariq Aziz: There is this Pakistani man who works as the office manager for Cordovez [*Diego Cordovez; the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs*], the Secretary General's Personal Assistant for Political Affairs. There is also an American satellite company that consulted with the United Nations a while ago saying, "We heard you have a resolution and so forth. Maybe you need satellite services to monitor the cease-fire." So this Pakistani man working at Cordovez's office arranged for the Iranians, the Iranian delegate to the United Nations, to enter a room in the United Nations building to see a video projection that this company had taken [*using the satellite*] of the battle front.

[*Time Stamp: 00:26:28*]

Saddam Hussein: Why didn't he give them copies of the photos? They can photocopy them!

Tariq Aziz: No, he gave them copies, but they brought, I mean, he provided the Iranians services, in the United Nations building, from this company, although they [*the company*] came to the United Nations and not to Iraq or Iran.

Saddam Hussein: Well, why did we not stir up some uproar about this in the Arab and Iraqi newspapers?

Tariq Aziz: We did officially protest!

Saddam Hussein: We protested, but who knew about it? Nobody knew, not even me, because I did not read the report written about it, I did not!

Tariq Aziz: Why didn't you, Sir?

Saddam Hussein: I know, if you mention it, I say I know about it. For example, I am the one who is supposed to know, but because I did not read the report I did not know about it. [*Voices overlap where Tariq Aziz interjects and Saddam talks at the same time*] Comrade Tariq, -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: What we did I do not really know. We recommended the procedures that we took -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Let me talk. I mean, if we act cautiously before a group of people with regard to this incident, wouldn't it be appropriate for our people to learn about the truth of our cautiousness toward this group?

Taha Yassin: Yes.

UM2: The reasons for it.

Saddam Hussein: So that their immunity and interaction increase. Moreover, when we act cautiously they say, “You have every right to do so because one must remain cautious to the last minute when dealing with people like that.”

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: Aren't we supposed to be active and do something about this? It is one of the simplest things to move the Arab media and the entire world, so that Arab people realize that our method of acting is also cautious, and know that there are some entities in the United Nations that conspire against us.

Tariq Aziz: We didn't concentrate on the media side, Sir, but rather on tangible actions of our work. What we did is that we protested to the Secretary General and he suspended the Pakistani employee until the investigation is over. We put a condition that he should not come back to his job because their investigation stipulated that he should not come back to his job, since this was related to the Iraqi-Iranian dispute file from the time of Palmer [*unknown*] until now.

Taha Yassin: This is not [*inaudible, voices overlap*] -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: You will remember him once you see him. He used to come with Palmer, the Pakistani if you remember him. It was Palmer with that guy from Latin America, Cordovez, and the Pakistani. After that, we went to each one of the Security Council members. Everyone wondered how we managed to go to the Secretary General and request such a thing. We were defending our interests, I mean, we were active with regard to anything related to the political, diplomatic [*inaudible*] at the Security Council, or anyone related to that [*inaudible*] immediately. However, at the media level, it never occurred to us to stir up any uproar. Some newspapers like *The Herald Tribune* and *al-Sharq al-Awsat* wrote about it but not our local press.

UM2: It appears they are -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: Sometimes I feel that you downplay the ways of conspiracies that Iran follows. This means you are not paying enough attention and you have no concern in fortifying our people against the new Iranian tactics. If you imagine that this is something simple, I do not imagine so. Besides, Iran is not the one working on this, but [*it is*] Zionists, Syria, and some international countries. Therefore, we have to act at this level, whether it is political, media, or choosing or deleting words; because this is the game now. That is known. What is known is that when peace occurs, at a time when the Iranians have not fallen to their knees, then the conspiring forces will begin to take on this type of action. That is a reality. I mean, you should not downplay this [*the Iranian enemy*] and judge them as people just wearing turbans [*devout*]. No, they are not just people wearing turbans, the Iranians are devilish people wearing turbans, and they know how to conspire and know how to plan sedition, and they know how to communicate with the world because they are not the ones who are actually communicating. Look, can we communicate with the world? Let us try to buy weapons now from the black market. Can we achieve that in the same manner the Iranians can? Because of Zionism, Zionism is the thing

guiding them [*the Iranians*]. Zionism is taking the Iranians by the hand and introducing them to each party, one by one, channel by channel. I mean, Zionism – come on comrades – do I have to repeat that every time? I mean, is this the right time to end the Iraqi war, and in this manner? [*Voices in the background endorsing Saddam's statements*] How come? If we are not politicians and we do not analyze, the mere fact of this issue, should make us say that this is not the time to stop the war, not now.

[*Blank audio from 00:31:46-00:34:08*]

Saddam Hussein [Resumes]: The morale, the new economy, and such it becomes comfortable. In a new precedent, the Members of the Security Council meet and the resolution is passed and so on [*said in jest*]. I mean [*inaudible, people talking in the background*].

UM2: Your Excellency, Mr. President, with regard to the latest statements of Yitzhak Rabin [*Israeli Prime Minister*], [he] frankly wants the war to continue -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: Yitzhak Rabin is not important. The important thing is that we are convinced that there is a conspiracy that is being prepared and even the Secretary General is an accomplice in it.

Tariq Aziz: Oh yes, definitely an accomplice!

Saddam Hussein: You see him trying to present himself like a lamb, but in fact, he is a shrewd Satan, and he coordinates [*this conspiracy*]. And from an early time, I have told you that there is such coordination. I mean, America has two faces, one face which is the one that displays in front of us, but there is another face which aims at taming the Iranians though they do not want the Iranians to be defeated.

Tariq Aziz: Generally, the Secretary General of the United Nations in the end he is an American. I mean, this is the position of Secretary General of the United Nations no matter what he tries or how hard he tries to reduce his compliance with American policies, this depends on the person.

Taha Yassin: The Americans can influence the weak ones.

Tariq Aziz: No, in reality, Abu-Nadiah [*nickname for Taha Yassin*], in the last twenty years, the United Nations was bought [*off*] a lot. But basically, since the Second World War, the United Nations has become an American institution. The United Nations is located in New York, America -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: And a quarter of its budget [*comes*] from America -- [Interrupted]

Tariq Aziz: And a quarter of its budget is from the United States of America. Consequently, the American influence over the United Nation's authority is very strong. The Secretary General

lives in New York. He lives there with his wife and children, I mean. De Cuellar [*Javier Pérez de Cuéllar; Secretary General of the United Nations*], the Deputy Secretary General [*Tariq Aziz accidentally calls de Cuellar "Deputy Secretary General"*], is an international employee. Previously, he was Peru's representative to the United Nations, in other words, Peru's Ambassador. I mean he has been living in New York for the last 15-20 years maybe. So in the end, in the end, he is American, an American who lives in New York, which is a Jewish city.

Saddam Hussein: All these details are known, and despite that I reached my conclusions--
[*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: No, Sir, we do not trust him!

Saddam Hussein: Because I do not base my conclusions on small details. The small details are important, but the most important thing is that one should weigh [*base*] his conclusions on generalities, the Western generalities as well as the international ones. Our enemies cannot accept that we would come out victorious from this war, at the state that we are right now.

UM2: Impossible!

Saddam Hussein: Also, our opponent has not fallen yet. They have not fallen yet, they are still capable of carrying weapons, they are still capable of mobilizing forces, they are capable of assembling people, capable of generating funds, so we have to act based on these facts.

Tariq Aziz: Your Excellency, regarding the Secretary General, frankly, we at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have started to distrust him. Regardless of his personal characteristics, we started to become suspicious of his approach in dealing with our case in 1985. I mean, according to our last assessment, our suspicions started from the time he presented this document -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: The Eight Point Document [*in March of 1985 the United Nations Secretary General presented an eight-point plan to settle the conflict between Iran and Iraq*].

Tariq Aziz: Yes. I mean, you recall, we fought with him with regard to the plan that he proposed. This is what makes it seem – at least from this angle – as though the Iranians are saying that they trust the Secretary General. They keep reiterating that they trust the Secretary General. This is because in 1985 he wanted to solve their problem in the Gulf and supported them. So from 1985 until today it is true that we dealt with him as a Secretary General and we have to deal with him. I mean, we should not clash with him out in the open. However, our diplomatic tactics in the corridors of the United Nations do not support his policies. I mean, we do not trust him, that is to say, on a personal level. I mean, I do not trust the Secretary General and 'Ismet [*Ismet Kittani, Iraq's Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs*] does not trust him either.

Saddam Hussein: You did not tell me that before.

Tariq Aziz: No, there was no opportunity, Your Excellency.

Saddam Hussein: No, look, Comrade Tariq, what do you mean there was no opportunity? I mean, this is a big political issue, and when you reach such conclusions, you and 'Ismet together, and both of you do not trust the Secretary General, I am a President of a country, I need to know that. You have to tell me that. Do not leave me in the dark so that I come up with my own conclusions that are separate from yours while you are the one who works with these details on a daily basis.

Tariq Aziz: What is the big deal about not trusting the Secretary General? I still have to deal with the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Saddam Hussein: I mean [*Saddam utters a sound expressing dissatisfaction 'tsk'*], we understand that, we deal with all countries with the exception of Israel.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: We deal with all countries and know them. We deal with the Americans even though they conspired against us yesterday [*previously*]!

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: There is a difference between dealing with him and suspecting his intentions. So, we have to alert ourselves. All of us should talk about it and say, hey, be careful we have sufficient grounds that require us to be suspicious of such and such country, so that we can all be alert.

Tariq Aziz: But we are dealing with him, Your Excellency.

Saddam Hussein: Didn't I, didn't I choose those words without even knowing this conviction of yours? I keep telling you that I distrust the Secretary General, so if you told me early on that you distrusted him, I will tell you that I have reached the same conviction. In other words, if this conviction of yours is old, you should have told me. If your conviction is new, you still have to tell me about it.

Tariq Aziz: But we have dealt with the Secretary General with caution since 1985, Your Excellency.

Saddam Hussein: This caution was not obvious. I mean, if I bring in all your dealings with him, there is nothing there that tells me there was caution in dealing with the Secretary General. This includes 'Ismet's dealings, since you say that he also distrusts the Secretary General. This caution does not exist. I do not know about it, and I do not know about it whether in the form of a correspondence or deducing such a conclusion of yours between the lines, I mean.

[*Time Stamp: 00:40:01*]

Tariq Aziz: The Secretary General, Your Excellency, what he carried out was legal and strategic. However, what he is saying and there is a possibility of -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: I will tell all of you, comrades, a story. Listen to me carefully. None of us should be afflicted with arrogance when he thinks he knows everything. When one becomes arrogant, this arrogance will knock him out. I am talking politics here. I mean, everyone should be attentive to this. When the brilliant soldier is afflicted with arrogance, *[thinking]* that his words are right, his conclusions are correct, and no one can come up with such conclusions like him, you know that one day another soldier who is less competent than him will knock him out. And this happens in politics, so be careful Comrade Tariq. I mean you and your staff you should pay attention to this point. Otherwise, they will cause you to deviate. Meaning they will cause you to deviate with words, actions, and issues. It is my duty to inform you of that; I did not want to tell you this in the presence of the comrades, but it is my duty to inform you of this.

Tariq Aziz: Sir, you are our leader, you are our teacher, but let me tell you this, look -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: I mean, always put things into perspective. Listen, I mean, we should listen and not be bothered by criticism, especially at Command meetings, at other meetings at a different level, because every word counts. Look at all the coyotes that *[surround us]*.

Tariq Aziz: But there is one point that I want you to grant us the right *[acknowledge what we are doing right]*, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Of course, I will give you all the right to express your convictions as you wish.

Tariq Aziz: I want to express myself. First, you are Saddam Hussein to all of us. I mean, you are our leader, our brother, our father and everything, and we say everything. At least, I mean, you have supervised foreign policy from the beginning of the Revolution *[1979]* until now. At least, I want to inform you that the foreign policy that we instituted is like a video display *[meaning everything is documented and clear to everyone]*. All of you have seen it. Isn't that true? This has never happened before. Our foreign policy is like a video. I mean, there is nothing hidden about our policy. I personally present detailed reports. My reports and foreign policy are like a video recording that I display to you and to the Command. Truly, we are not *[strangers]*. You know me, you know me personally very well. I do not need to introduce myself to you, but I am not arrogant. Perhaps I am proud of the capabilities that I have, but I am not arrogant.

Saddam Hussein: No, look Comrade Tariq -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: Yes *[laughing]*.

Saddam Hussein: Sometimes -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: But the power that we face -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: Let me talk -- *[Interrupted]*

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: Give me a chance.

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: We are with you. It is not necessarily that arrogance is limited to big matters. I mean, weighing matters is required, but I noticed that you are not careful in dealing with these matters. I mean, there are a series of matters. I mean, when you tell them: "I am concerned about the first point." If I was them, I would understand that the other matters could occur simultaneously. Therefore, if we accept simultaneous occurrence, it would have been better to accept the occurrence of the first point simultaneously. This is a key *[point]*, every key, every key -- *[Interrupted]*

[Voices overlap]

Tariq Aziz: *[Inaudible]* we have to weigh every circumstance, Your Excellency.

Saddam Hussein: Every key...every key, every key *[trying to speak over Tariq Aziz]* once you abandon it, it becomes something that is in common with the opponent. And some other issues that we sometimes comprehend here, you are supposed to comprehend them. During discussions, we always say this word means this, this one means that, the Prisoners of War issue is among the issues under negotiation. That is fine, let us understand them, let us accept them but let us understand them first. I mean there is a difference between accepting something that we understand and accepting something that we do not understand, just to discover later on that we have agreed to it without understanding it. I mean, such caution is lacking on your part.

Tariq Aziz: I mean, I can't say words, I mean our work -- *[Interrupted]*

Saddam Hussein: And if you are not cautious, if you do not instill caution in our representative at the United Nations, what is his name, *[all the way down]* to your Secretary, they will not warn you. And you will not be able to see *[get the entire picture]*. Any person, if I were in your place, I mean if I were in your place, I might do the same thing. I would not see everything and *[if]* you replaced me you *[would]* discover things. That is the nature of communal work. I do not know about this matter. You are telling me, "didn't you see it?" What do you think? Do you think I am a computer? But I want you to instill the spirit of caution and suspicion among your staff. This way they can assist you.

[Time Stamp: 00:45:09]

Tariq Aziz: Oh yes, this is true, they are not. That is why I told you regarding the Secretary General; we have been dealing with him since 1985. The paper he sends us, or what he says we do not believe. For example, Chedli Klibi is the Secretary General now [*of the Arab League*], but I trust him as a person, but as for de Cuellar, I did not know him from 1983 to 1985. I mean at the personal level, we visited him; we dealt with him as a Secretary General of the United Nations. But in 1985, when he presented the Eight Point Document, we started to deal with him on the usual day to day business, Your Excellency, we do not deal with suggestions of the Secretary General as if they are [*coughing distorts the sound*] necessarily with good intentions. We talk with diplomats in a cordial manner because it is not in our interest to clash with the Secretary General of the United Nations, it is not.

Saddam Hussein: This is normal!?

Tariq Aziz: But in terms of work, frankly, I may not have had the opportunity to tell you this truth or discuss it, but in my assessment of the daily work at Foreign Affairs, I, as well as the Permanent Representative, the New York mission, the Director of Organizations, and the Specialized Deputy, all of us talk [*Tariq Aziz is laughing awkwardly*].

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Tariq -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Voices overlap*]

Tariq Aziz: The Iranians want to -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: From the tactical point of view, sometimes it is necessary to make the Secretary General feel – in one way or another – that our trust in him is not complete. This way he will be obliged to deal in a manner that will comfort us because it is important for him as a Secretary General to succeed. And success will not be possible if they do not trust the two parties, so had we known about it, I would have told you to take action. Act in a manner that would make the Secretary General feel that we do not trust him on some issues.

Tariq Aziz: By God, ‘Ismet is doing that Your Excellency. ‘Ismet is doing it, because ‘Ismet -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: I mean -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: You know ‘Ismet has worked with the United Nations for a long time. I mean, ‘Ismet knows a great deal about the inner workings, the daily work. Many times, I have exchanged views with ‘Ismet over the phone, then ‘Ismet would phone Cordovez and tell him, “Aren’t you ashamed? What is the Secretary General doing?” I mean, he has some leeway. He acts between Iraq’s representative and the fact that he was a former employee of the United Nations, and he [*‘Ismet*] talks about him behind his back. Secondly, since I am the country’s

representative, I always try not to give the impression that we are clashing with the Secretary General because this is not in our interest.

Saddam Hussein: There is no interest in that.

Tariq Aziz: I know this, so I have to explain our case, starting with the Representative of Ecuador to the Representative of Australia. The position of the Secretary General of the United Nations is viewed throughout the world as an unbiased leadership position. No country has ever clashed with the Secretary General. If it did – as far as I know it has never happened – this country would lose. I mean it would not benefit. However, if we talk about detailed knowledge, by God, ‘Ismet is a very knowledgeable person about the United Nations, especially because he knows Cordovez. You know, Cordovez is the Deputy, and he relays matters to the [*Secretary General*]. But one day, ‘Ismet told them that this President from Latin America who had won the Nobel Prize had carried out a peace project to Central America [*Saddam whispers here “The President of Costa Rica”*]. He phoned – and they are from Latin America, I mean de Cuellar and his assistance. He told them this President of a tiny country was able to challenge [*President*] Reagan and tell him, “No”. And look what he achieved, he won the Nobel Prize. This coward friend of yours, huh, he was given a wild opportunity during the Iran-Iraq war to win the Nobel Prize for Resolution 598. You know what he did? Every day he would go to the Security Council, and he would accept this paragraph from Resolution 598. What is this, why didn’t he say “No” to the Iranians from the beginning?

Saddam Hussein: He cannot. His role will not allow him to do that.

Tariq Aziz: I mean there are some people that talk this way to the Secretary General and his circle.

UM2: Your Excellency, there is a possibility that they have been bought off because, I mean, those from the countries of Latin America, when it comes to dealing with Jewish and Israeli matters, their presidents -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Voices overlap*]

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*]

[*Time Stamp: 00:49:57*]

Saddam Hussein: I mean this issue I, I do not want to get into details in this matter. However, Palmer was bought by the Iranians and Zionists. [*People whisper in the back, “Yes, it is possible. By God, it is possible.”*] I am convinced of that and if you go back to the news that I received about Palmer, I immediately commented to the Secretary and told him that Palmer was bought by the Jews. This is because Palmer is serious and he was not the type to be bought and he was serious with regard to the peace issue. But the Jews do not want peace. They do not. They will not accept that Iraq, the same Iraq unchanged, will achieve peace at the end. They know that in

any fighting after five years of peace, we will make three-fourths of them [*Jews*] pack their bags [*leave*] without the need to launch missiles, while the other quarter will be forced to accept a new arrangement in Arab relations other than the existing one. At such time, the Jews will be governed by Arab law, not governing Arab law. The Jews know this fact. So it is impossible that Zionism will accept an end to the war in light of the current variables. It seems that we are optimistic, but I myself do not want to discourage you from this optimism, but I am convinced that now is not the time to make peace. There will be another military and political round [*possibly referring to military confrontations and political discussions*]. I mean there will be peace after the political and military round.

Tariq Aziz: Or military and political rounds, Sir. Why [*inaudible*]?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, I mean that, political and military round. This man's [*the Secretary General of the United Nation*] steps [*actions*] are not too far from [*in step with*] the Americans' steps, the Americans' steps -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: The Secretary General cannot deviate from American steps.

Saddam Hussein: Look at the activities of the United Nations from 1985, which is the American-Iranian conspiracy against us. Look at his [*the Secretary General's*] activities until the conspiracy was unraveled and you realize -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: Their actions correspond. Now, America wants peace in a certain way, in a way that it will determine the fate of this war in Iran's favor. After that, and after that, America wants to implement the Iranian conspiracy because they sat down and planned this and America has agreed to play this role. I mean America has agreed to an Iranian occupation of Basra so that they can get rid of Saddam Hussein.

UM2: Yes, yes.

Saddam Hussein: This is the conspiracy that was uncovered [*comments in the background are inaudible*], and when it was revealed, they tried to rectify matters, and part of their rectification is their arrival in the Gulf. I mean, these matters change a little, go a little, and come a little, but the main line is the same. The situation that made Reagan agree to this are surely the same situation that still exists in America, I mean Zionism. It is Zionism that has elevated matters to this height so that Reagan would agree and all three of them would sit down and conspire against Iraq. This would make us, I mean, the conclusion that we derive from this is: does this mean we should take precautions to the extent that we do not take any action? No, I am not saying that. We will take action with the highest level of confidence. It is natural that we will make mistakes, but any concerns that develop within any of us, must be confided with the others. The Minister of Defense's role and specialty is to be the Minister of Defense. Therefore, if he has any concerns, he must tell them to me. The Minister of Foreign Affairs' role within the Command is

to act as a Minister of Foreign Affairs and when he has or develops concerns he must tell them to me. I mean, it is not appropriate for him [*the Minister of Foreign Affairs*] to develop concerns and then come to me and say, "I also had the same concerns six month ago."

[*Time Stamp: 00:54:37*]

Tariq Aziz: This may apply only to de Cuellar as this is the only matter that I have not talked about. But I have talked about other matters. I believe we have stated those concerns to Your Excellency.

Saddam Hussein: But this de Cuellar concern is important. It is important. Why, is he weak? Is this a sign of weakness? Every day he talks about 'Ismet and 'Ismet is just like Na'im Hadad [*senior Ba'ath Party official*]. Na'im Hadad was kind of awkward. He provoked people, but that is beside the point. It is not about provocation. I mean a word is said and people would pay attention to it and weigh it. What is his name? 'Ismet is [*not*] their colleague and they will not listen to him in the same manner they would listen to their colleague. [*People in the background express agreement*]

The story that we would have liked to express, we should have expressed it through the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He would find his way and contact someone else, but not 'Ismet, I mean, perhaps another one he can talk to... He would tell them, "Hey brothers, do not blame us, we are not Communists and we are concerned that there will be bargaining done at our expense under the guise of achieving peace through finding ways that would make the Iranians more flexible. I mean, any accommodation afforded to Iran, we will consider an exercise in futility. And do not say that we do not want peace. We just do not want peace at any price. We want peace, but we want to maintain our honor, our sovereignty and our security, etcetera." So the conspiracy resumes, but we have to be careful in how we express ourselves in that regard, etcetera. I mean when Abu-Naji [*unknown*] talks like that, and that you are like that, and you were on your way to being successful but now you, I do not want to [*inaudible*] Abu-Naji knows about them and what did we say in our response? We said that the Security Council resolution states start with the first point. We did not say anything [*protest that*]. They know what we say is right, but they wanted to produce results at our expense. And when they produce those results at our expense, in other words, they empower the Iranian conspiracy to control us in return for an Iranian promise that the war will end leading to gains that contradict the core of United Nations law. I mean this is the Western strike, with the exception of France. The Italians have a role, the West Germans have a role, and the Americans have a hidden role through all these groups. It is unbelievable that Italy, which is an American farm, in terms of its economy, and the economy now, is beyond the control of American will. This is -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: This is not fair.

Saddam Hussein: America does not deviate from the core issues, but it will deviate from Italy's interests. There are no Italian interests that would require a contradiction with the American

position to the extent that it would lead the Americans to be in a military clash with the Iranians and the Italians are playing a different role. These are agreed upon and distributed roles.

Tariq Aziz: [*There was an article*] in the *al-Sharq al-Awsat* [*newspaper*] that Andreotti's [*Giulio Andreotti, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs*] position is different from that of America, I mean [*inaudible*].

Saddam Hussein: It is different, but not to that extent.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, the headline says, "Yasser Arafat has met with him; the Palestinian Liberation Organization has an active office in Rome. The Pope has met with Yasser Arafat, with regard to the case of the Achille Lauro [*reference to the PLO kidnapping and assassination of an American tourist on a cruise ship in 1985*]. They challenged the Americans and did not hand him to Abbas. What is his name?"

Saddam Hussein: He has those two.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, I mean, the Europeans Your Excellency, are Americans in the end. In the end, they are all Americans, but no matter how much [*the European*] tries to take actions on policies in his favor, you know, Your Excellency, he does, but in the end, in the end he is American.

Saddam Hussein: I mean, we should take action, but we have to be cautious. This includes -- [*Interrupted*]

Tariq Aziz: Your Excellency, we are now going through unprecedented political and diplomatic operations, just as I have explained to Your Excellency. I mean all of us, the State of Iraq, our country. I mean we have not seen anything like it in the last seventeen years.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, this is the most complex situation.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, but thank God, I mean -- [*Interrupted*]

Saddam Hussein: We have said from the beginning that complexities have begun.

Tariq Aziz: You are leading the entire operation and all comrades are participating in it, everyone according to his location. Even now, despite the complexities and entanglement of this operation, the errors that were committed are still limited. You saw, yourself, the Egyptians, and the Syrians when they entered this political game and how -- [*Interrupted*]

[*Time Stamp: 00:59:41*]

Saddam Hussein: Perhaps we will be like them.

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*]

Saddam Hussein: We might be like them. We are trained and we were brought up in a Ba'ath Party cell from the time we were kids until now. Every one of us has been indoctrinated in Ba'athist principles [*Saddam utilized a slang meaning that our faces and the back of our necks have been filed by Ba'ath teachings*], so we should not be like the Egyptians or Syrians and make the same mistakes.

Tariq Aziz: Yes, it is true. We should not be like them. It is true that we are better than them in terms of doctrinal and behavioral formation, moreover, professionally, they are not up to par.

Saddam Hussein: By God, if they were up to par in terms of professionalism, things would have gone fine and the Egyptian Prime Minister, what is his name, the one who has a doctorate in economics?

Tariq Aziz: 'Atif Sidqi.

Saddam Hussein: He would have been better than us.

Tariq Aziz: Hmm.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, Comrade Hassan?

Hassan: Your Excellency, with regard to the hoisting of United Nations flag over the fleets that exist in the Gulf, it is true that based on the core issues that we discussed, this subject matter should be put aside and left for the Gulf [*States*] to deal with. But don't you think, Your Excellency, that it is more suitable to discuss this matter so that we can assess the extent of harm to Iraq? This way one would be able to work with the Gulf States to find a solution for this issue one way or another?

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Hassan, we were not the ones who brought the American fleet. However, if either the Americans or the Soviets clash with the Iranians, this will be in our interest.

Hassan: Yes.

Saddam Hussein: I mean, we can tell the Soviets if we do not want to appease them, we can tell them, "Oh brothers, oh comrades, do not blame us, we have an interest that the Americans are in the Gulf and clash with the Iranians." I mean, but when we deal with a friendly country like the Soviet Union, we tell them that Americans have decided that they [*the Soviets*] also view their responsibility within an international context. Why do we clash with them [*the Soviets*] when we know that others will clash with them? We told them, "By God, you know we did not invite the Americans. The Kuwaitis have asked you for protection and they have asked [*for*] protection from the Americans. And when the Americans came in, they came in and we spoke with them. Perhaps you have seen our comments in that regard?" I told them [*the Soviets*], "Fine, if the

Americans withdraw, who will protect the Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis? The Kuwaitis will not ask the Americans to leave"-- [Interrupted]

[Inaudible, discussions take place in the background]

Tariq Aziz: But he is going to cause [inaudible] -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: I mean, until they reach a solution. So if they reach a solution, it is possible that the Americans will say, "No need for United Nations flags. No ifs, no buts, the issue has been settled according to such arrangements and everyone should take his seat." We do not have the logic with which to say that the Americans must stay and we have to hoist the United Nations' flag. We have to maneuver; we have to maneuver to achieve results. It is in our interest, at the current stage, that a clash between the Americans and Iranians would take place in the Gulf region. And it is in our interest that Iran should not take advantage of Kuwait and pressure it to a level that will improve Iran's political position. So if America is not present, the Iranians will pressure the Kuwaitis and force them to change their political posture.

UM2: Your Excellency -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: Yes?

UM2: Don't you envision that the presence of the American fleet now and with such massiveness in the Gulf will make them anticipate important events with regard to the war? I mean, if the Americans were previously implicated with Iran. What I am saying is that there might be a serious understanding between the Americans and Iranians because I heard that there is an article in *The Herald Tribune* - I did not read it - that talks about the subject of future war and has predicted that Iraq will lose the war. I mean this coming round. The presence of the American fleet there is because part of Iran's plan - as they said - is the occupation of Boubyan Island or another [piece of land] or harassing Kuwait in one way or another. Don't you think the Americans are present because something is being planned? That is why they are present, because they know that something is going to happen -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: I have no doubt in that direction.

UM2: At the same time, the Syrians have doubts -- [Interrupted]

Saddam Hussein: I mean, I do not have suspicions that would [lead me to] conclude that the whole operation is a game, but they are a group of gangs who disagreed among themselves and the operation was uncovered. And the Kuwaitis have asked for real protection, -- [Interrupted]

UM2: Yes, they asked.

Saddam Hussein: The Soviets responded and left the Americans with choices to either allow the Soviets to come to the Gulf region this way-- [Interrupted]

Tariq Aziz: [*Inaudible*] the Americans when the Soviets came!

Saddam Hussein: Or to come... The Americans wanted the Iranians to tame the Kuwaitis, to force the Kuwaitis to change their position to be similar to that of Oman and Bahrain with regard to the issues of war and the American presence in the Gulf. This has been the case for a long time, even the occupation of Fao was part of this conspiracy and part of it is scaring the Gulf citizens in a manner that would make them accept American protection in the region.

UM2: The Syrians are playing the role of... [*End of Recording: 01:05:52*]