

130



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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# SPOT COMMENTARY

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25 February 1991  
2300 EST

IRAQ-KUWAIT: SITUATION REPORT #607

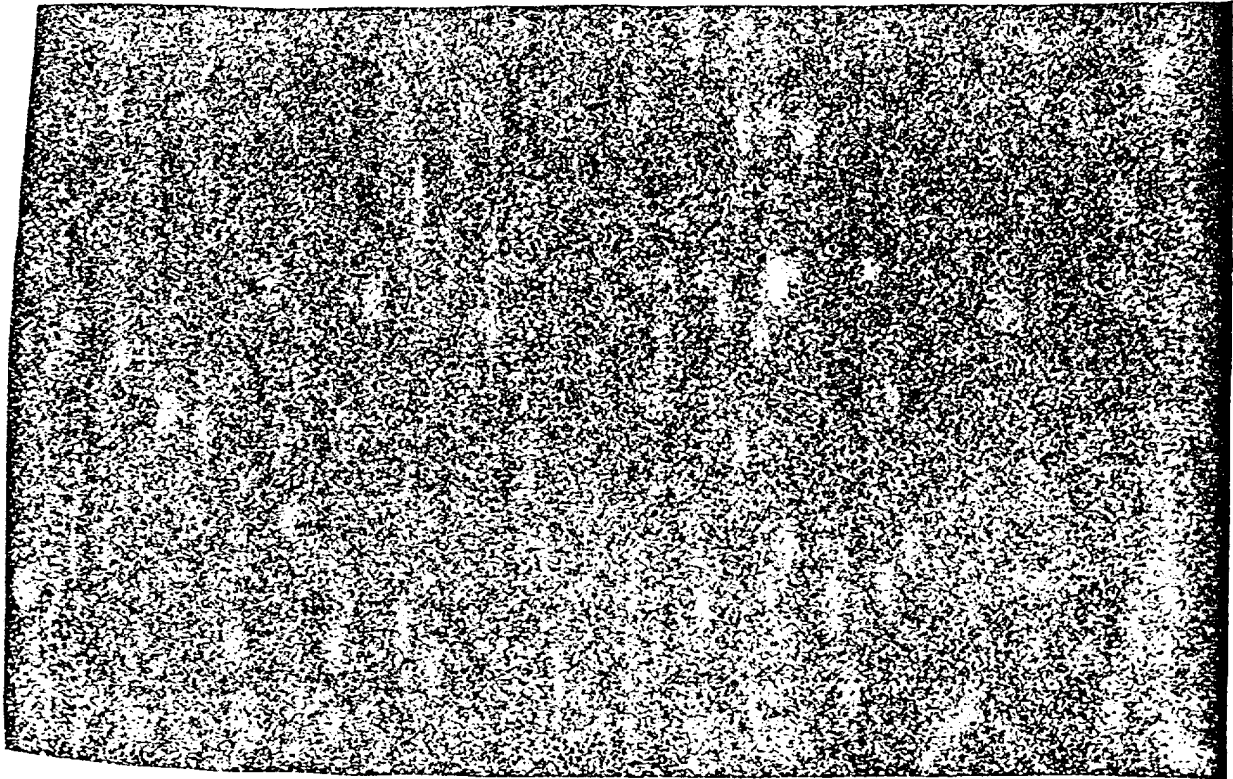
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4





#### Smoke From Kuwait Reaches Iran

Black smoke is obscuring the sun in western Iranian provincial capitals more than 200 miles from Kuwait, according to the Iranian press. Although NOAA indicates the heavy smoke from the fires in Kuwait is travelling straight north over Iran, the official Iranian news agency blames much of the smoke on coalition bombing in Iraq near the Iranian border.

#### Political Developments

##### Kuwaiti Amir's National Day Message

Amir Jabir al-Sabah marked the thirtieth anniversary of Kuwait's independence with a message praising coalition forces for working to liberate Kuwait and hailing the steadfastness of Kuwaitis resisting the Iraqi occupation. The Amir emphasized the need for Kuwaiti self-sacrifice and self-reliance after liberation. Jabir also stressed that the upcoming "new phase" of Kuwait's history would require unity based on the "national covenant" formed at the Jeddah conference last October.

**Soviet General Filatov in Baghdad**

Soviet one-star General Major Viktor Filatov--chief editor of the well-known Military Historical Journal--stated that the coalition forces are exceeding the UN resolutions and told Baghdad press on Friday he is confident that Iraqi forces will be victorious over the allies. Filatov, who probably arrived in Iraq with returning Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz on 18 February, added that Iraqi weapons were better than American ones and demonstrated his conviction through his presence in Baghdad. The Soviet Defense Ministry denied press reports on Friday that a delegation of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces was staying in Iraq.

**Comment:** Filatov, an extreme hardliner, consistently has been in the majority of Soviet observers who believe that allied forces will become bogged down in the Gulf and will lose to Iraq. He is probably in Baghdad to report the Iraqi side of the war from a traditionalist perspective rather than to aid the Iraqi military. Filatov's presence in Baghdad probably explains earlier claims from the PLO press in Tunis that the Soviets had sent a high-level military delegation to the Iraqi capital last week to provide military assistance.

**China Expresses Regret at Start of Land War**

Beijing expressed its "deep regret" Sunday over the start of the ground war and appealed to "all warring parties to exercise restraint." As he departed Tehran Sunday, Vice Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang offered the Chinese Government's six-point peace plan--including a general call for Iraqi withdrawal, a peaceful settlement, and a regional approach to postwar security, without foreign military forces. The plan also noted that an Arab-Israeli settlement was essential to lasting peace in the region, but stressed that it need not be linked to the Gulf crisis. The Chinese media reported Monday that the US and France "claimed" the ground war was going well but that the "international community" continued to call for a halt to the war.

**Comment:** Beijing is trying to bolster its international image as a voice of peace and reason, without being drawn into a mediating role. The six point peace plan appeared only in the Chinese-language media, suggesting the Government recognized the need to tread carefully to avoid appearing to challenge Washington openly.

Pages: 4

Exemptions: (b)(1) (b)(2)