

(U) Iraqi Commander Memoirs on Missiles (7)

Identifiers:

(b)(3)

Document Number: FTS19981126000064

Dates:

Date Posted: 07-Nov-1998 19:00:00

Coverage:

CIA Country Code: IRQ

Region: Near East/South Asia, Near East

Publisher:

Agency Acronym: DNI

Office Name: OSC

Phone Numbers:

(b)(3)

Email Addresses:

(b)(3)

Attachments:

(b)(3)

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(U) Chapter IV: The Battle of Hope and Honor [subtitle]

(U) 19 January 1991 [subtitle]

(U) I did not sleep a single hour for three nights running. First Lieutenant Doctor Ma'n 'Abd-al-Rahman advised me to have at least a one-hour sleep or else I would not be able to concentrate. Soon after I put my head between my hands over my papers on the table, I saw myself carrying my school books and hurrying to the first lesson at the sound of the school bell. The teacher of chemistry, who was standing at the door, told me jokingly: "You are walking as if you were in a military parade. Hurry up. Did not you hear the sound of the bell? "

(U) In the class, he explained chemical reactions of acids. The dream then shifted to another picture, and I found myself hurrying to the western region. The men were waiting for me to fire the missiles. When I saw the officer in charge of firing, I ordered him to operate the electric system.

(U) When the job was finished, I shouted once again ordering them to open the initial fuel and operate the tubular cushions. The operator said: "Yes, sir."

(U) I pressed the firing button and said God is great.

(U) The missile moved upward, hissing and filling the earth with a bright light. When I opened my eyes, the doctor was still standing beside me. He asked me astonishingly: "Were you dreaming, sir? " I said rubbing my forehead: "What is the time now? " He said: "It is eight o'clock in the

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morning."

(U) Have not they fired the missile? The missile was fired in the dream. The doctor said smilingly: "You were trying to realize your desire to directly fire the missile yourself." I said: "May be it was a sign that the firing would actually take place."

(U) Movements officer Captain Faris Hazim came in and said: "Sir, the firing will take place at 0815. Do you want to hear this on the telephone?" I exchanged a meaningful look with the doctor. This is the second strike against the Zionist entity, God be praised. The men had fired two missiles from an area west to kilometer 160 and two others from al-Qa'im area against targets in Tel Aviv. Brigade 223 this time participated by firing one missile and informed us that the enemy fired 10 missiles at zone 5, but no one was injured as the missiles' shrapnel scattered in the desert.

(U) In the noon newscast, I listened to communique No. 7 on 19 January 1991 issued by the Armed Forces General Command regarding our second strike against the evil forces in the Zionist entity, which threatened Iraq for months and waited for an opportunity to betray it

(U) I held a meeting of the commanders of my group and those of the brigade. I explained to them the maneuvering and firing plan, as well as the implementation method in detail. To clarify my views, I brought a blackboard and drew on it the plan and the firing positions in different colors. I also spoke in detail to make everybody understand what I had in mind. Moreover, I wrote down my instructions and handed them to the orders group later on. Each commander drew a map for himself showing all details regarding the south, the west, and the middle, and fixed on them the axes, the positions, the distances, the timings, the targets, the numbers of the missiles, and the names of the executing commanders. The commanders were pleased, and each one of them improved his map by stating the times of shifts at each stage.

(U) It is worth noting that I analyzed with some of my officers the targets to be struck, as done by technical personnel in units, so I could choose the firing positions by making use of reconnaissance information and many other matters to help the units and brigades choose their own firing positions. This facilitated the matter much.

(U) Tired of the shelter, I went out. The sky was full of anti-aircraft shells, and I heard the explosion of bombs the enemy aircraft were dropping over Baghdad. Then I heard the thug of something heavy falling on the ground. They might have destroyed a bridge, demolished a building over the heads of its inmates, or shelled a mosque. I remembered my family, my children, and their mother. Most of the residents of the area had left for the outskirts of Baghdad for safety, except my family, which was challenging the fires of the enemies.

(U) At 1800, I crossed Baghdad streets to meet Colonel 'Abd Hamid Mahmud, escort of the commander in chief. The meeting took place half an hour later, and Col. Mahmud handed me a very urgent envelope containing a letter from the president. The letter drew attention to an extremely important issue of protecting our convoys and our missiles from spies and aliens in southern or western Iraq, who may infiltrate in the country, exploiting the preoccupation of our units with defending Iraq. (more) 8 nov

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(U) After I received the instructions, the president came and explained them to me to make sure that I fully understood them. I said to him: "In coordination with the Military Intelligence, we will ask special units to accompany the missile convoys inside and outside cities." My meeting with his excellency under those circumstances deeply impressed me. I was anxious about him minutes ago while I was crossing Baghdad streets under a ceaseless bombing, but my meeting with him gave me a great peace of mind and I felt that what I had seen of destruction was a background of a great war in which I played the role of a field commander meeting the commander in chief in a rare historic moment.

(U) It was a great moment indeed for me to meet the Armed Forces commander in chief for the

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first time since the first strike against the Zionist entity, and amid a political, media, and military battle, in which a new incident takes place every moment. He talked to me about the Missile Corps, as if he had been with us at the headquarters and with the execution groups pressing missile buttons deep in the desert.

(U) Finally, he said to me: "Hazim, I am sure, as usual, that you will do your job in the best way possible, and he who fires the largest number of missiles at the enemies and preserves his equipment will be honored."

(U) I was with the commander in chief, carrying a group of maps pertaining to my work and wearing a khaki woolen uniform. The commander in chief also asked about the men, meaning the fighter soldiers, who bore the burden of war. I said: "They are in good shape, sir." He then smiled and shook hands with me. When I saluted him, he embraced me and said: "Give them my regards." He was neat, optimistic, and strong in spite of his great responsibilities, as if crises had made him more brilliant and work harder.

(U) After returning from my meeting with the commander in chief, I worked for three days, coordinating the required security instructions, which the president had recommended.

(U) 20 January 1991 [subtitle]

(U) On the night of 19 January, the enemy launched intensive air raids on the units of the First Commandos Brigade of the 4th Army Corps, which was used for the protection of the missile launching pads. The air raids concentrated on the First Regiment of the brigade. The first air raid lasted for half an hour after midnight and the second raid started at 0500 on 20 January and lasted for 15 minutes. The third raid started at 0700 in the morning and lasted for 27 minutes. The air raids resulted in the fall of one martyr soldier. Our units said that 1,800 bombs had been dropped but that no damage was caused to our equipment because of effective camouflage and protection.

(U) At 0100, I issued written orders to five headquarters for strikes and maneuvers. The orders were informed to the commanders of Missile Brigade 224, missile Brigade 223, the Technical Control Battalion of Brigade 224, the first missile maintenance unit, and the Second Battalion of Brigade 224.

(U) A sixth unit, scheduled to return early to the western region to carry out an operation on the night of 21 January, was also to be briefed on the situation.

(U) Under the 20 January plan, two battalions of Brigade 224 would use six launchers in al-Rumaylah and Safwan areas to strike against enemy targets in Riyadh from the firing positions. The plan also included striking against hostile targets in Dhahran and al-Dammam from three firing positions by two batteries from Brigade 224 and two battalions from Brigade 223 under the command of the latter brigade. The two battalions were also equipped with four launchers in firing positions in al-Qurnah area in al-Basrah. The second battalion of Brigade 224 without a battery had to take up a position in the city of al-'Amarah in Maysan Governorate to strike against hostile targets in al-Jubayl. (more) 8 nov (b)(3)

(U) Under the plan, we also would send two technical batteries from Brigades 223 and 224 in coordination with the commander of the first missile maintenance unit, as the latter directly received instructions from our headquarters on the use of missile transportation vehicles. Only one technical battery from the technical battalion of Brigade 224 would remain in al-Ramadi, al-Anbar Governorate.

(U) The firing was scheduled for 2100 on 20 January 1991. The targets' coordinates were clearly defined.

(U) My plan for the night of 21 January was the same as that of 20 January with the following

differences: Four launchers from Brigade 223 would be tasked with striking hostile targets in Dhahran and the Buqayq compound from three firing positions.

(U) The second battalion of Brigade 224 with a battery, that is, four launchers, would return quickly after implementation to the al-Qa'im area and the area west to kilometer 106. In other words, the unit would be divided into two parts, as we did in the south on 20 January, but at two interdistant axes this time. The target was Tel Aviv, with a possibility of striking against Tel Aviv with three missiles and Haifa with one missile if the last battery had not enough time.

(U) The commander of the second battalion of Brigade 224 would be at his al-Qa'im axis headquarters and his assistant would be at al-Ratbah axis headquarters.

(U) I stressed the need for effective protection for both plans, with a special focus on the two axes of the western region. I also stressed the importance of concealment and camouflage. I clearly defined the coordinates for the night of 21 January operation and decided to carry out the operation at 0500 on 22 January.

(U) I secured a control wireless network, six branches, and a seventh auxiliary branch, stressing the need not to press any transmission button except in cases of emergency. A ninth station would be added to the second part of the second battalion of Brigade 224 on the night of 21 January and I prohibited the deployment of the stations in the firing positions or in the technical batteries' positions.

(U) I did not forget to issue instructions on three important points; namely, how to deploy and change the plan or the shelter to achieve the maximum degree of concealment. I also instructed everybody not to deploy until the last moment, to carry out the main duties during the night, and to choose the shelter carefully provided that it should be changed on the night of 21 January. I also clarified that deployment on the night of 21 January should differ from that of the previous night of 20 January by more or less than 5 kilometers in the south. And, on the night of 21 January in the western region, deployment should differ from deployment during the first two strikes against Israel by more or less than 10 kilometers. I also issued instructions to coordinate anti-aircraft action by Brigade 224; namely, by the commander of the anti-aircraft battalion, on the condition that he guarantee deployment in the western region on the night of 21 January. I also asked for the provision of two reserve missiles in al-'Amarah and one reserve missile in al-Ramadi.

(U) I secured more vehicles to facilitate movements for Brigade 224 and Brigade 223, distributed the fuel vehicles, and gave my telephone numbers, as well as important telephone numbers in cases of emergency, to my subordinates, in addition to the magnetic lines directly connected to the western region. I gave these numbers to units' commanders in other areas such as al-'Amarah, al-'Azis, al-Qurnah, Safwan, and al-Barjasiyah. I also told them of unsafe telephone numbers (Microwave), relatively safe telephone numbers, and the telephone numbers of the Operational Missile Control headquarters, the fire support coordination headquarters, and the Armed Forces General Command headquarters in the south. I then provided them with a list of the special code words--funny words, which are difficult to unveil such as wild thorn, al-Zawra' park, the zoo, the troublesome bat, the rocky stone, the desert wolf, and the cat's paw. (more) 8 nov (b)(3)

(U) I then told them to start work with God's blessings and to strike the heads of the snake and the scorpions. I had previously decided to issue a field publication for political guidance to raise the morale as such a publication written by the fighters would have a positive effect.

(U) Therefore, I issued it on the night of 20 January in the form of a greeting message to the fighters, commanders, officers, and other lower ranks, mentioning the names of the commanders of the brigades, the battalions, the units, and the batteries. In the message, I conveyed to them the greetings of our dear president and promised them to honor anybody firing in accordance with the plan without mistakes or delay. I raised their morale and instigated them against the Zionist and

imperialist enemy. I also asked them to be accurate and cautious, make calculations for everything, not to be confused, and behave in light of the situation, be flexible, and preserve their equipment to terrorize the enemies of God.

(U) I wanted the liaison officers to convey the message to every one as early as possible during movements to the positions or inside the positions themselves.

(U) Two missiles were fired from their launching pads. They moved upward and then moved toward the hostile targets in Dhahran at 2145 on 20 January. The strike was carried out by the units of Brigade 224. It was the first part of strike against hostile targets on Saudi territories.

(U) 21 January 1991 [subtitle]

(U) Brigade 223 carried out its duty. What a heroic competition it was! At 0040 on 21 January, a missile was fired at hostile targets in al-Dammam.

(U) Then other missiles were fired to complete the first strike against hostile targets in Dhahran and Riyadh. Six missiles were fired one after the other at 0045, 0050, and 0005.

(U) I submitted a detailed report to President Saddam Husayn on the results of the first strike against the hostile targets on Saudi territories. We had planned to fire 14 missiles but we fired only eight missiles as I have said. We deployed in six areas, but communications was our major problem. I included in my report proposals to use new means to make up for the lack of communications and camouflage, as well as a proposal to economize on the use of our available means in order to preserve our equipment. I praised the role of some commanders and explained that we had started maneuver by moving two batteries to the western region instead of four batteries to strike against targets in Tel Aviv this night on 21 January or next night.

(U) We were racing with time to confuse the enemy and to achieve our full aspirations at the blessed hands of leader Saddam Husayn by taking revenge against the Zionist enemies of Iraq and the Arab nation, the criminals, and the traitors. At 1800 on 21 January, the Armed Forces General Command issued a communique on the details of our first strike against hostile targets in Saudi Arabia, and then I received the instructions of the commander in chief on the same subject.

(U) Two enemy helicopter gunships landed in the area of kilometer 106. The Military Movements Directorate informed us of it at 1245. I asked the commander of the first Commandos Regiment charged with protecting our units to send a force to the said area to confront the hostile helicopter gunships.

(U) At 1600 on the same day, four hostile warplanes raided al-Warrar area. One hostile plane was shot down and was seen burning east of the city of al-Ramadi. It was shot down by the antiaircraft weapons of Battalion 1019 of our Missile Brigade 224, which I had previously asked to extend support to the units that would maneuver after carrying out strike from the southern region of the country. The morale of our units improved considerably after the news was heard.

(U) At 2115, Brigade 224 fired a missile toward a hostile target in al-Jubayl successfully. (more) 8 nov

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(U) At 1430, I asked the Military Intelligence Directorate for a map of coordinates clarifying the following matters, which we did not know at that time:

- (U) Teqoa' settlement in the Zionist entity for the purpose of striking against it. We had received information that six trucks loaded with missiles were installed in that settlement.
- (U) Ha Qiryat Alerkun [name as transliterated] north of Tel Aviv.
- (U) The Rehovot quarter in Tel Aviv.

- (U) The Israeli Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv.

(U) I asked for the last three pieces of information to improve strike accuracy in accordance with the information we had received.

(U) On the same day, the directorate provided us with the information, which conflicted with our maps. I asked the directorate to check it and to send us a map on the places where the missiles had landed. We used to do this whenever we struck a military effort in Tehran and other Iranian cities.

(U) On this day, we carried out the second strike against the enemy targets in Saudi Arabia as follows:

(U) At 0042 on 22 January, Missiles Brigade 224 fired three missiles at hostile targets in Riyadh.

(U) At 0707 on 22 January, Missiles Brigade 223 fired one missile at a hostile target in Dhahran and two missiles at the Buqayq oil compound.

(U) The president ordered me to see information on our failure to secure enough camouflage and protection for missiles moved to the south on 20 January and to focus more on movement, camouflage and protection.

(U) I submitted a report to the president on the second strike against Saudi Arabia, clarifying that according to the plan, we had to fire 11 missiles but fired only seven because of technical failures.

(U) I also clarified our plan for 23 January, saying that we would fire four missiles at Tel Aviv, two missiles at hostile targets in Dhahran on 23 January. I also clarified our total missile power and stressed the importance of concealment during movement and in positions according to his excellency's orders.

(U) The next day, the president made the following comment on the report:

(U) "You should maintain the momentum of strikes against hostile targets in Saudi Arabia and Israel without consulting with me unless I ask for it."

(U) 22 January 1991 [subtitle]

(U) At 1345, I issued a plan for 23 January to some units of Brigade 224. The plan included strikes against hostile targets in the Zionist entity, as well as technical preparations, in accordance with the verbal instructions of 21 and 22 January. The units worked on al-Qa'im and al-Ratbah axes in the western region, although their brigade was in the southern region. I asked them to fire three missiles at Tel Aviv and one missile at Haifa, giving details of places and times and also asked them to set up an ambush to hunt the enemy's aircraft.

(U) We made the required technical preparations for four new missiles.

(U) At 1545, I issued another plan for Brigade 223 to strike against hostile targets in Saudi Arabia, in which I conveyed the greetings of our dear president and his praise of their courage. I also drew their attention that the enemy was infuriated by their strikes, stressing the importance of concealment, particularly for missile convoys. I also ordered them to carry out two missile strikes against targets in Riyadh and Dhahran, defining the firing positions and the targets and giving instructions on how to prepare for the movement of four missiles to forward positions.

(U) We received additional information and a map from our Palestinian friends and other sources on the demographic distribution in the occupied territories. We also received similar information on Haifa, Tel Aviv, Akko, Beersheva, Dimona, Safad, Nahariyya, Ashdod, Ramla, Tiberias, Bisan, Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Pelugot, as well as instructions to keep away from Nazareth, 'Afula, Galilee Triangle, and Lod. The information also included details of the atomic accelerators,

reactors, and other matters related to the Zionist entity.

(U) At 2045 on 22 January, we fired two missiles at Tel Aviv from al-Qa'im area, the third strike against hostile targets in the Zionist entity.

(U) In light of the information I received on 21 January regarding the demographic composition of Jerusalem, I revised the information I had previously received, particularly the demographic composition of east Jerusalem and west Jerusalem, as the Zionist enemy outs it. Due to the accuracy of al-Husayn missiles, I made an analytical study on 22 January of the possibility of striking against Zionist targets in the western part of Jerusalem.

(U) Today, 22 January, I also proposed to the president that we strike against hostile targets in the western part of the city of Jerusalem, particularly the Knesset, and guarantee the safety of the 'Umar Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and the eastern part of Jerusalem. If the president agrees to our proposal, we will carry out surprise strikes and other previously scheduled strikes against Tel Aviv and other targets on 22 January.

(U) Today, 22 January, the president instructed us to focus on targets in Tel Aviv and elsewhere. In fact, what made me think of that was the importance of targets in Jerusalem, as well as information on the fall of shrapnel of our missiles and Patriot missiles over west Jerusalem. So, I asked myself why we did not strike against West Jerusalem to inflict heavy losses on the enemy, particularly since we had enough information on the issue.

(U) In light of the rough information we received on 22 January, there were 10 missile bases in northern Israel; two bases in southern Lebanon; three bases in Negev, the Golan, and Bisan; and one base elsewhere. The total was 16 bases.

(U) 23 January 1991 [subtitle]

(U) Today, Wednesday, deserves to be called the day of Brigade 223. The personnel of this heroic brigade fired from all their operating launchers in accordance with the plan.

(U) At 2300, we carried out the third strike against hostile targets in Saudi Arabia by firing two missiles at hostile targets in Dhahran and two at hostile targets in Riyadh.

(U) The Armed Forces General Command issued communique No. 16 on our second strike against hostile targets in Saudi Arabia.

(U) Early today, we also received information on the landing of two helicopter gunships in al-'Amiriyah near al-Fallujah, and we instructed our units in the western region to be more cautious.

(U) I asked the General Military Intelligence Directorate for other information on a target near a hotel called Jerusalem Magdan in Tel Aviv and other targets in Beni Baraq area in Tel Aviv.

(U) We also received information regarding the landing of our missiles in the Zionist entity.

(U) [Description of source: Independent newspaper often critical of government policies. Internet version is also available at <http://www.alarab-alyawm.com.jo>]

(U) Iraqi Commander Memoirs on Missiles (6)
- FTS19981125000203

Collection: FB

Creator:
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Agency Acronym: DNI

Office Name: OSC

Phone Numbers:

Email Addresses:

(b)(3)

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Compilation Title: Al-'Arab Al-Yawm

Description: (U) Chapter IV: The Battle of Hope and Honor [subtitle]19 January 1991 [subtitle]I did not sleep a single hour for three nights running. First Lieutenant Doctor Ma'n 'Abd-al-Rahman advised me to have at least a one-hour sleep or else I would not be able to c

Language: en

Precedence: R

Source:

Publisher Type: open-source

Sourced Text: null

Language: ara

Source ID: 3779686

Source Type: Undetermined

City: Amman

Compilation Title: Al-'Arab Al-Yawm

Originating System: OSC

Subject: MILITARY
