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LETTER DATED 15 NOVEMBER 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
KUWAIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Further to our letters concerning the barbaric practices committed by the Iraqi occupation forces, I enclose the text of an article written by Tony Hoswitz which appeared in the Wall Street Journal on 14 November 1990. It includes an eyewitness account by one of the Iraqi occupation troops of the murder, destruction and acts of desecration perpetrated by the forces of the Iraqi régime in the State of Kuwait.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad A. ABULHASAN  
Permanent Representative

Annex

[Original: English]

Iraqi troops in Kuwait lack food, have low morale, deserters say

Wall Street Journal, November 14, 1990

By Tony Hoswitz

VAN, Turkey - As the winter's first snow fell Monday here in the mountains of Kurdistan, a young Iraqi named Iwan reached out his hand to touch the cold, wet powder he has seen only a few times before in his life.

"It makes me feel safe," says the 20-year-old deserter, who a month ago was crouched in a trench in Kuwait. "No sand, No hot sun, No guns." Smiling, he shivers in his thin leather jacket and adds. "I will never go back to all that."

Iwan is one of 150 to 200 Iraqis who have fled into Turkey since the Persian Gulf crisis began - on foot through mountain passes, with Kurdish smugglers, usually at night. Almost all are army deserters, some of whom brought their wives and children along. One couple has named their infant Hakkari, after the Turkish border town where the child was born three weeks ago. Most carried nothing from Iraq but the clothes they had on.

"It's like a butcher's shop," an army captain says of Kuwait. He and other soldiers interviewed - who requested anonymity because of fears for their families in Iraq - describe an army that is underfed, demoralized and, in the early days of the invasion, on a rampage of rape, pillage and murder.

LEAN RATIONS

"We stole money, we stole gold, we stole food," says Iwan, a private in the army. On most days, he says, soldiers' rations consisted of a single roll of barley bread and a half-liter of water. They stole whatever else they could. "What else could we do?" Iwan asks. "You can't eat petrol."

Iwan says the officers in his company raped 20 women Kuwaiti and Filipino - then lined them up against a wall and ordered them shot. One officer who refused to follow orders to loot was hanged. Another soldier says he was part of a group that broke into a bank and loaded army cars with cash, gold and gems. A third says he helped loot a hospital of medicine and equipment, including incubators.

The soldiers say they were loaded on trains in Baghdad several days before the Kuwaiti invasion and told they were headed for "exercises" in the Iraqi desert. Eventually, they found themselves disembarking from trucks in Kuwait, amid burning cars and gunfire.

Fleeing Kuwaitis helped some Iraqi soldiers escape to Saudi Arabia. Others, who tried to flee on foot and didn't make it, were hanged before fellow troops. Estimates of the number of soldiers who reached Saudi Arabia range from several hundred to several thousand, with smaller numbers trickling across to Iran and Syria. Almost all of those now in Turkey are native of northern Iraq who deserted while on leave from the army.

#### SMUGGLED INTO TURKEY

Iwan traveled to the northern Iraqi town of Kirkuk, then hired a smuggler, for 1,500 Iraqi dinars - almost \$4,500 at the official exchange rate and 10 times the average monthly wage in Iraq. Others paid more than double that sum.

"If the Iraqis catch you, they hang you," Iwan says. "But if I stay in Kuwait, I probably die. So what is there to lose?"

All the soldiers interviewed said morale is so low among Iraqi troops that many would try to surrender if fighting broke out. But despite shortages of food and water, supplies of weapons and ammunition are ample, they say. And control is tight. "Our guns were pointed at the desert," says one soldier from a frontline unit. "The guns of the soldiers behind us were pointed at us."

There are only five Moslem Arabs among the 130 Iraqi quartered in a hotel in this remote Turkish town. The rest are Kurds, Iraqis of Turkish origin, or Christians-minorities that make up about 25% of Iraq's population. Discontent among these groups is rampant, the refugees say, and thousands more would flee were it not for the journey's danger and expense.

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