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ROUTINE JIDDA

ROUTINE AMMAN, BEIRUT, KUWAIT, SANAA, TEL AVIV, LONDON, MOSCOW, TEHRAN, ABU DHABI, DOHA, MANAMA, MUSCAT, USINT CAIRO, AMCON DHAHRAN, BAGHDAD

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SUBJECT: THREAT FROM SOUTH YEMEN AND IRAQ
REF: JIDDA 940 [NOTAL] 952 [NOTAL] 1223 [NOTAL]

1. IN RESPONSE TO MINSTATE FORNAFF SAQQAF'S REQUEST, DEPARTMENT HAS PREPARED BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF SITUATIONS IN IRAQ AND SOUTH YEMEN AND POSSIBILITY OF ANY LINKAGE BETWEEN CONTENTIOUS ACTIVITIES ALONG IRAQ'S BORDERS WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT AND ALONG SOUTH YEMENI BORDERS WITH SAUDI ARABIA. ASSESSMENT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, INCLUDING IRAQI ATTACK AND SEIZURE OF KUWAITI BORDER POST OF AL-SAMITAH AND MARCH 22 SOUTH YEMEN AIR ATTACK ON SAUDI FRONTIER FORCE POST AT WUDAYAH. ASSESSMENT MAY BE PASSED TO SAQQAF AND TO PRINCE TURKI, IF AMBASSADOR DEEMS THIS ADVISABLE, WITH REQUEST THAT IT BE HELD CLOSELY WITHIN SAG. TEXT OF OUR ASSESSMENT FOLLOWS.

2. BEGIN TEXT: ASSESSMENT OF THREAT FROM SOUTH YEMEN AND IRAQ.

A. SOUTH YM‡EMEN'S INTERNAL SITUATION AND INTENTIONS.SOUTH YEMEN'S NATIONAL FRONT GOVERNMENT, SUPPORTED BY THE SOVIET UNION, CHINA, EAST GERMANY, NORTH KOREA, CUBA, AND SOME OTHER COMMUNIST STATES, IS CONTINUING TO IMPLEMENT A POLICY OF "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM" DESIGNED TO TRANSOR‡‡FORM THAT

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IMPOVERISHED COUNTRY INTO AN "AGRO-INDUSTRIAL COOPERATIVE ECONOMY" ON COMMUNIST MODEL. DESPITE SOME PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE, FISHING, AND LIGHT INDUSTRY, THE ADEN REGIME'S POLICIES HAVE NOT BEEN A SUCCESS. CONTINUED EXPROPRIATIONS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY, INCLUDING ALL RENTAL PROPERTY, AND DRASTIC WAGE CUTS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR HAVE ONLY ADDED TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES. A POLITICAL REORGANIZATION CARRIED OUT IN 1972 MAY HAVE INCREASED THE PERSONAL POWER OF SOUTH YEMENI PRESIDENT SALIM ALI AL-RUBAYA, WIDELY REGARDED AS "PRO-CHINESE", AT THE EXPENSE OF NATIONAL FRONT SECRETARY GENERAL ABDUL FATTAH ISMA'IL, OFTEN REGARDED AS A SOVIET PROTEGE. HOWEVER, AN OPEN SPLIT BETWEEN THE TWO HAS BEEN AVOIDED.

SOUTH YEMENI FOREIGN POLICY IS AIMED AT DEVELOPING CLOSE TIES WITH THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AND WITH ARAB "PROGRESSIVE" STATES. THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION TO NEIGHBORING STATES WITH TRADITIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE LIQUIDATION OF US AND OTHER WESTERN INTERESTS IN THE ARAB WORLD REMAINS AN OBJECTIVE OF THE NATIONAL FRONT. SOUTH YEMEN CONTINUES TO SUPPORT EFFORTS BY THE PEOPLES FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE OCCUPIED ARAB GULF (PFLOAG) AND THE REBELLION AGAINST THE SULTAN OF OMAN IN DOFAR. IT HAS ALSO GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT TO LEFTIST FORCES IN YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC AND ALLEGEDLY SENT SABOTAGE AND TERRORIST SQUADS INTO THAT COUNTRY.

NATIONAL FRONT CHAMPIONSHIP OF REVOLUTION BEYOND ITS BORDERS HAS NATURALLY WON IT THE DISTRUST AND HOSTILITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS. THIS ANIMOSITY IS INCREASED BY SOUTH YEMENI ACTIONS THAT ITS NEIGHBORS REGARD AS AGGRESSIVE. IN NOVEMBER 1969 SOUTH YEMENI FORCES ATTACKED AND BRIEFLY OCCUPIED THE SAUDI ARABIAN FRONTIER FORCE POST AT WUDAYAH. ON MARCH 22, 1973 TWO SOUTH YEMENI AIRCRAFT BOMBED WUDAYAH. IN MAY 1972 SOUTH YEMENI FORCES ASSAULTED THE OMANI FORT AT HABARUT, INVITING REPRISAL BY THE SULTAN OF OMAN'S AIR FORCE AGAINST THE SOUTH YEMENI BORDER TOWN OF HAWF. IN SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1972 SOUTH YEMENI TROOPS ENTERED YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC TERRITORY CLASHING WITH SOUTH YEMENI EXILES AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, WITH YEMENI REGULAR AND [illegible] AND TRIBAL FORCES ALONG THE BORDER. THIS FIGHTING WAS HALTED WHEN THE ARAB LEAGUE ARRANGED A CEASE FIRE AND DISENGAGEMENT OF SOUTH YEMEN AND YAR FORCES. ALTHOUGH THE CEASE FIRE CONTINUES IN EFFECT AND UNITY TALKS ARE UNDERWAY BETWEEN THE TWO YEMENI GOVERNMENTS, TENSION BETWEEN THEM REMAINS HIGH. IN LATE MARCH YAR HAD REPORTS OF SOUTH YEMENI TROOPS BEING MASSED PREPARATORY TO AN ALLEGED INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF YEMEN TERRITORY. OUR OWN INTELLIGENCE DOES NOT INDICATE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN

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PDRY TROOP CONCENTRATIONS OVER THE PAST THREE WEEKS .

SOUTH YEMEN HAS SOUGHT, AND OBTAINED, FROM THE SOVIET UNION ADDITIONAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT. RECENT DELIVERIES INCLUDE TANKS, OTHER VEHICLES, FIELD AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY, NAVAL PATROL CRAFT, AND JET AIRCRAFT. SOVIET MILITARY ADVISERS ARE ASSIGNED TO MOST UNITS OF THE ARMED FORCES DOWN TO BATTALION LEVEL. EAST GERMAN ADVISERS ASSIST THE SECURITY FORCES AND POLICE. IT‡N LATE 1972 FOLLOWING A VISIT TO CUBA BY ABDUL FATTAH ISMA'IL CUBANS BEGAN TO ARRIVE AS MEDICAL AND AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS AND TO ASSIST IN TRAINING THE NATIONAL FRONT'S "WORKERS MILITIA."

WHILE SOUTH YEMEN'S ULTIMATE AIMS ARE CLEAR, ITS IMMEDIATE STRATEGY AND INTENTIONS ARE LESS SO. GIVEN ITS IDEOLOGICAL DRIVE TO REVOLUTIONIZE ITS NEIGHBORS AND ITS ISOLATION IN MOST OF THE ARAB WORLD, THE NATIONAL FRONT HAS FIXATION ABOUT ITS OWN INTERNAL SECURITY AND ABOUT WHAT IT PERCEIVES AS COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY THREAT FROM BEYOND ITS BORDERS BY THOSE IT SEEKS TO SUBVERT. NATIONAL FRONT INTERNAL POLICIES HAVE ALIENATED MANY SOUTH YEMENI POLITICAL AND TRIBAL GROUPS. A NUMBER OF THESE, INCLUDING DEFECTORS FROM SOUTH YEMENI ARMED FORCES.‡, HAVE TAKEN UP ARMS IN OPPOSITION TO THE NATIONAL FRONT REGIME AND HAVE SOUGHT REFUGE AND SUPPORT IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. THE CONTINUING BUILD-UP AND COHESION OF ANTI-NATIONAL FRONT FORCES ALONG ITS BORDERS WITH YEMEN AND WITH SAUDI ARABIA HAS UNDOUBTEDLY ALARMED SOUTH YEMENI LEADERS, AS HAS THE CONTINUED CONCENTRATION OF SAUDI ARABIAN FORCES AT SHARAWRAH AND WUDAYAH. SAUDI ARABIAN DEFENSE MINISTER PRINCE SULTAN'S MARCH 1973 VSI‡‡‡ VISIT TO OMAN AND THE SUPPLY BY SAUDI ARABIA, AS WELL AS BY IRAN AND JORDAN, OF MILITARY MATERIAL AND ADVISERS TO OMAN HAVE PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED TO ADEN'S PERCEPTION OF A THREAT OF A CONCERTED ATTACK ALL ALONG ITS NORTHERN AND EASTERN FRONTIERS. POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE MARCH 22 AIR ATTACK ON WUDAYAH INCLUDE (A) RETALIATION FOR RECENT INSURGENT ACTIVITIES INSIDE SOUTH YEMEN, (B) A WARNING AGAINST SAUDI/OMANI MILITARY COOPERATION, (C) AN ATTEMPT TO FORESTALL A SUSPECTED YEMENI/SAUDI/OMANI/DISSIDENT INVASION OF SOUTH YEMEN, OR (D) AN ERROR BY SOUTH YEMENI PILOTS SEARCHING FOR INSURGENT POSITIONS ALONG THE BORDERS. THERE IS INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE AT HAND TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHAT MOTIVATED THE ATTACK.

B. IRAQ'S INTERNAL SITUATION AND INTENTIONS

AFTER NEARLY FIVE YEARS IN POWER, THE IRAQI BAATH REGIME

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HAS MADE LITTLE OR NO PROGRESS TOWARD ALLEVIATING DOMESTIC POLITICAL STAGNATION OR IRAQ'S DEEP ISOLATION IN THE ARAB WORLD. THE RULING BAATH HAS DEVOTED MUCH ENERGY TO CONSOLIDATING ITS CONTROL OVER THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF IRAQ, BUT IT CONTINUES TO BE PLAGUED BY INSTABILITY WHICH IS PROMOTED BY CONSTANT STRIFE AMONG THE BAATH LEADERSHIP. APART FROM A BASIC POWER STRUGGLE, THERE ARE OTHER SERIOUS DIFFERENCES THAT SEPARATE THE VARIOUS RIVAL BAATHI FACTIONS. AMONG THE MAJOR ISSUES ARE THE KURDISH PROBLEM, UNCERTAINTY IN THE AFTERMATH OF IRAQ'S NATIONALIZATION OF IPC, RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, AND EFFORTS TO CREATE A "NATIONAL FRONT" WHICH THE SOVIETS BACK SPECIFICALLY TO GAIN COMMUNIST AND KURDISH REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT.

THE IDEOLOGICAL PREDILECTIONS OF THE RULING BAATH PARTY IN IRAQ HAVE LED THE IRAQI REGIME TO ADVENTURISM IN THE GULF AND PENINSULA. IRAQI SUBVERSION IN THE GULF IS ALSO MOTIVATED BY AN UNWILLINGNESS TO PERMIT TO OTHERS EITHER DOMINANCE OVER THE STRATEGIC STRAIT OF HORMUZ {THROUGH WHICH SOME IRAQ OIL EXPORTS AND MUCH OF ITS IMPORTS MUST MOVE} OR A PARAMOUNT POSITION IN THE STATES OF THE LOWER GULF. ACCORDINGLY, IRAQ HAS ESTABLISHED A DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL PRESENCE IN THE LOWER GULF STATES. AT THE SAME TIME IRAQ AND THE NATIONAL FRONT REGIME IN SOUTH YEMEN ARE TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE TRADITIONAL REGIMES IN THE GULF STATES AND IN OMAN. COORDINATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND SOUTH YEMEN IN SUPPORT OF PFLOAG'S SUBVERSIVE EFFORTS IS NOT CONFIRMED BY THE EVIDENCE AT HAND BUT MAY EXIST. HOWEVER, THE IRAQI REGIME IS INHIBITED FROM GOING TOO FAR BECAUSE OF ITS NARROW POLITICAL BASE AT HOME, THE NEED TO DEAL WITH A LARGE KURDISH MINORITY WHICH IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO EXTERNAL INFLUENCES, AND ITS CONCERN OVER SAUDI ARABIAN OR IRANIAN REACTION TO IRAQI-INSPIRED SUBVERSION AND SABOTAGE.

IRAQI OPPOSITION TO THE SAUDI MONARCHY AND THE UNRESOLVED BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE WELL KNOWN. HOWEVER, IRAQ IS NOT EXPECTED TO LAUNCH ANY WIDESCALE OFFENSIVE AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA AND WILL PROBABLY RELEGATE ITS ACTIVITIES TO LOW-LEVEL SABOTAGE AND SUBVERSIVE OPERATIONS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE RECENT BORDER CLASH WITH KUWAIT REVOLVES AROUND THE PORT OF UMM QASR WHICH IS GRADUALLY REPLACING BASRA AS IRAQ'S GATEWAY TO ~~SAUDI-IRAQI BORDER DOES NOT HAVE THE SAME~~ STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR IRAQ.

~~C. SOVIET INTENTIONS.~~

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THE GULF AND ITS PRINCIPAL NAVAL BASE. THE LONG ST‡AUDI-IRAQI BORDER DOES NOT HAVE THE SAME STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR IRAQ.

C. SOVIET INTENTIONS

WHILE SOVIETS UNDOBUTEDLY HAVE AS LONG RANGE GOAL THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR STRATEGIC POSITION IN ARABIAN PENINSULA/GULF AREA, IT IS IMPROBABLE THAT THEY ARE MASTERMINDING IRAQI AND SOUTH YEMENI SUBVERSIVE ACI‡TIVITIES IN THE PENINSULA AND IN THE GULF. THE INCREASED COOPERATION RECENTLY BETWEEN THE USSR AND IRAQ APPEARS TO BE MOTIVATED MOSTLY BY ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS CONNECTED WITH IRAQ'S DECISION IN 1972 TO NATIONALIZE THE IPC HOLDINGS. IRAQ NEEDED STRONG EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR THIS MOVE AND THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. ASIDE FROM SOVIET TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, THE IRAQIS RECEIVED SOVIET HELP IN THE COMPLEX AREA OF MARKETING ITS OIL PRODUCTION BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE HOW FAR MOSCOW IS WILLING TO GO IN THIS REGARD. HOWEVER, IRAQ-SOVIET DIFFERENCES OVER A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, THE KURDISH PROBLEM, THE FORMATION OF A "NATIONAL FRONT" IN IRAQ TO INCLUDE THE COMMUNISTS AND KURDS, AND SOVIET RELATIONS WITH IRAN, ARE ALL FACTORS WHICH WOULD TEND TO CHECK UNLIMITED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR IRAQ AS ITS CHOSEN INSTRUMENT IN THE REGION.

SOVIET SUPPORT FOR SOUTH YEMEN ALSO APPEARS TO BE MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY LOCAL SOVIET A‡OBJECTIVES. THESE ARE ACCESS TO ADEN'S PORT AND AIR FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE IN POWR‡ER OF A SOUTH YEMENI REGIME SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET ~~INFLICN~~
INFLUENCE AND CAPABLE TO‡‡OF MAINTAINING ORDER IN ADEN AND ITS HINTERLAND. SOVIET MILITARY AID TO SOUTH YEMEN, WHILE RECENTLY STEPPED UP, HAS NOT BEEN SO LAVISH AS TO GIVE SOUTH YEMEN THE CAPABILITY SUCCESSFULLY TO ATTACK AND DEFEAT NEIGHBORING STATES, ESPECIALLY SAUDI ARABIA.

CONCLUSION: CERTAINLY AGGRESSIVE POSTURES OF PDRY AND IRAQ CANNOT BE IGNORED, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF RECENT INCIDENTS DIRECTED BY IRAQ AGAINST KUWAIT AT AL-SAMITAH, BY PDRY AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA AT WUDAYAH, AND PDRY MASSING TROOPS ALONG YAR BORDER.‡,NOR CAN FACT THAT BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE RECENTLY ACQUIRED ADDITIONAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM SOVIET UNION AND TRAINING ADVISERS FROM COMMUNIST STATES. HOWEVER, EVIDENCE THAT THESE INCIDENTS WERE OR ARE BEING COORDINATED BETWEEN ADEN AND BAGHDAD, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH SOVIETS, IS TOTALLY LACKING. PRINCIPAL, THOUGH NOT EXCLUSIVE, THREATS FROM PDRY AND IRAQ TO THEIR

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PENINSULA NEIGHBORS REMAIN PRIMARILY IN POLITICAL AND SUBVERSIVE SPHERES. THEREFORE, WHILE CONTINUING PRS#ESENT EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES TO DETER THREAT OF IRAQ OR PDRY MILITARY AGGRESSION, MODERATE PENINSULAR STATES W#SHOULD FOCUS THEIR EFFORTS ON STRENGTHENING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FABRICS OF THEIR SOCIETIES AND ON COORDINATION WITH EACH OTHER IN ORDER TO PRESERVE STABILITY WITHIN REGION. END TEXT.

3. FOR INFO ADDRESSEES {EXCEPT BAGHDAD AND MOSCOW}: YOU ARE WELCOME DRAW UPON ABOVE ASSESSMENT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BUT NO REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO FACT THAT IT WAS PREPARED BY USG IN RESPONSE TO SAUDI REQUEST. YY