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Authority NND 969049

By CM NARA Date 6-12-03

POL 31-1 S YEMEN SAUD

of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET 672

South

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01220 271339Z

1973-5-26, Iyani, Saudi, ~~Saudi~~

Jidda 1223
3-26-73

44
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 RM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 MC-02

ACDA-19 OMB-01 GAC-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01 IO-12 /138 W
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R 261325Z MAR 73
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3556

INFO USCINCEUR
SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SANAA

CHUSMTM DHAHRAN

CSAF

S E C R E T JIDDA 1223

C O R R E C T E I D C O R Y (USCINCEUR ADDED AS INFO ADDRES)

*POL 31-1 Yemen - Saudi
vs POL SAUD - S Yemen*

SECDEF FOR ISA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MASS, SA

SUBJ: SAUDI VIEW ON THREAT FROM SOUTH YEMEN AND IRAQ

REF: A. JIDDA 1187; B. JIDDA 1216 (NOTAL)

*Def 10-5 Saudi
vs POL 31-1 S Yemen
Saudi*

BEGIN SUMMARY: ACTING DEFMIN PRINCE TURKI REITERATED TO AMBASSADOR SAUDI ASSERTIONS REGARDING DANGERS EMANATING FROM PDRY, ASKED FOR US INFO ON "ENEMY." TURKI ATTRIBUTED ATTACK OF PDRY MIGS AGAINST WUDIA TO POLITICAL MOTIVATIONS, RELATING IT TO IRAQI ATTACK ON KUWAIT, AND PDRY DESIRE SHOW DISAPPROVAL CLOSER DAUDI-OMAN AND SAG-YAR TIES. AMB ASKED IF

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DISSIDENT TRIBAL MOVEMENTS MAY NOT HAVE BROUGHT ON ATTACK. BUT TURKI DECLARED SAG HAS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN ANY TRIBAL FORAYS OVER PAST YEAR. MEANWHILE, SAG CONCERNED WITH SIGNS OF IRAQI BELLIGERENCE ALONG SAUDI FRONTIER. SAUDIS CONTINUE ACTIVITIES AIMED STRENGTHENING FORCES IN SOUTH, WHICH SEEM REASONABLE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES. TURKI'S FIRM ASSERTIONS SAUDIS WOULD STRIKE ONLY IN THEIR OWN DEFENSE. LEAVE US NOT FULLY INFORMED ON THEIR INTENTIONS, BUT THESE COULD WELL BE ENTIRELY DEFENSIVE. SHOULD PDRY ESSAY ANOTHER STRIKE. SAUDI RESPONSE COULD BE QUITE VIGOROUS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF ACTING DEFENSE MINISTER PRINCE TURKI'S REQUEST THAT I CALL ON HIM IN RIYADH MARCH 25 WAS TO CONVEY SAUDI DESIRE FOR URGENT USG ACTION ASSIST IN EXPEDITING DELIVERY OF BOMBS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT TO FULLY ARM F-5-B'S, REFTEL B (NOTAL). DISCUSSION THIS REQUEST WAS INTERLUDED WITH COMMENT AND SOME INFORMATION ON RECENT BORDER DEVELOPMENTS.
2. TURKI REITERATED USUAL SAUDI ASSERTIONS REGARDING DANGEROUS CHARACTER COMMUNIST-DOMINATED PDRY, LARGE QUANTITIES PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL IT RECEIVING FROM COMMUNIST BLOC COUNTRIES AND CONSEQUENT NEED SAUDI ARABIA STRENGTHEN ITS DEFENSES AS SIGNIFICANT ETERRENT TO ADEN GOVT. YET SAG FEELS ITSELF BASICALLY UNINFORMED. WOULD APPRECIATE WHATEVER HELP USG CAN SUPPLY RE GENERAL STRENGTH OF ENEMY, WHAT KIND OF SAMS THEY MAY POSSESS AT AIRPORTS, ANY INFO ON MILITARY DISPOSITIONS, ETC. I POINTED OUT WE WITHOUT VERY GOOD SOURCES IN ADEN BUT WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER.
3. ASKED TURKI WHAT HE THOUGH HAD CAUSED PDRY MIGS MAKE PASS AT WUDIA (REFTELIA). IN HIS VIEW THERE WERE THREE REASONS. ALL POLITICAL: FOLLOWING IRAQI AGGRESSION AGAINST KUWAIT, WHICH HAD NATURALLY CAUSED SAUDIS CONCERN, PDRY-IRAQI AXIS WISHED GIVE SAUDIS IMPRESSION OF "PINCER MOVEMENT." PDRY WISHED ALSO PERHAPS MAKE THREATENING GESTURE IN RESPONSE SIGNS STRENGTHENING SAUDI-OMAN RELATIONS REFLECTED DEFMIN PRINCE SULTAN'S VISIT HTERE, AND PDRY PROBABLY WISHED SHOW DISAPPROVAL OF GROWING STRENGTH YAR-SAG TIES STEMMING FROM RECENT VISIT PRIMIN AL-JAJRI TO SAUDI ARABIA.
4. TOLD TURKI WE AWARE FROM TIME TO TIME DISSIDENT TRIBES

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ASSISTED BY SAUDI ARABIA, MOVED BACK AND FORTH ACROSS UNCERTAIN PDY-SAG BORDERS. WONDERED IF SOME SUCH TRIBAL MOVEMENT MIGHT HAVE STIMULATED ATTACK ON WUDIA. TURKI REJOINED THAT OVER PAST YEAR SAG HAS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN ANY TRIBAL FORAYS FROM ITS TERRITORY AND HE REJECTED POSSIBILITY OF A TRIBAL MOVE-MENTS COULD HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE. (FROM ANOTHER SOURCE WE HEAR THERE POSSIBILITY PDY AIRCRAFT COULD HAVE MISTAKEN SAUDI POST AT WUDIA FOR ONE BELONGING TO JAYSH AL-INGADH OR "ARMY OF LIBERATION.")

5. BASIC DIFFICULTY, TURKI CLAIMED, IS TROUBLESOME IN STINCTS OF RADICAL ARABS WHO ANXIOUS CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR SAUDI ARABIA. RECENT IRAQI MOVES ALONG SAUDI BORDER ARE ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS. IN NORTHERN REGION IRAQIS HAVE BUILT 14 PILLBOXES IN DISPUTED BORDER REGION AND HAVE BROUGHT UP SOME TROOPS TO SUPPORT THEM. GENERAL AL-SHEIKH, CHIEF OF FRONTIER FORCE, SENT TO AREA AS EMISSARY TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH IRAQIS ON GROUND. SAUDIS HAVE SUPPRESSED IMPULSE TO BUILD PULLBOXES ON THEIR SIDE AND INSTEAD HOPE THEY HAVE PERSUADED IRAQIS REMOVE THEIRS. SHOULD IRAQIS ATTACK, SAG WOULD CERTAINLY LOOK TO USG FOR ASSISTANCE. TOLD TURKI I HAD HEARD IRAQIS HAVE WITHDRAWN SOME OF THEIR FORCES. HE ADMITTED THIS TRUE BUT EMPHASIZED IRAQIS NOT TO BE TRUSTED.

6. TURKI CONCLUDED WITH PROFUSE REASSERTIONS OF SAG-US FRIENDSHIP AND INTERDEPENDENCE AND STATEMENTS THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD NEVER TAKE MILITARY ACTION EXCEPT IN ITS OWN DEFENSE.

7. COMMENT: JIDDA PRESS MARCH 25 CONTINUED GIVE SPACE TO WUDIA INCIDENT WITH INTERPRETATIONS FROM BEIRUT PRESS OF SAUDI INTENT DEFEND ITSELF, ETC. MARCH 26 PRESS HAS DROPPED SUBJECT. MEAN- WHILE, C-130'S HAVE BEEN UNDERSTAND, BEEN FLYING MORE NIGHT FLIGHTS, APPARENTLY AIMED STRENGTHENING SAUDI EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL LOCATED AT NEURAN, SHARURAH AND WUDIA. NORMAL SAUDI AIRLINE FLIGHTS TO YEMEN AND SOUTHERN SAUDI CITIES WILL, WE UNDERSTAND, BE RECOMMENCED IN COUPLE OF DAYS.

8. PRINCE TURKI'S FIRM ASSERTIONS THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD STRIKE ONLY IN ITS OWN DEFENSE LEAVE US NOT TOO WELL INFORMED ON SAUDI INTENTIONS, WHICH, IN FACT, MAY NOT BE TOO CLEAR IN THEIR OWN MINDS. EMPLACEMENT OF ADDITIONAL GUNS, SUPPLIES AND PLANES IN SOUTHERN REGION SEEM REASONABLE MEASURES INTENDED

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WARN POTENTIAL AGGRESSOR, SO THAT AT MOMENT WE INCLINED BELIEVE
 HURRIED STRENGTHENING OF SOURTHER MILITARY POSTURE REFLECTS
 TRUE DEFENSIVE INTENT AND NOT MORE RISKY PURPOSES. YET SAUDI
 RESPONSE MIGHT BE VIGOROUS SHOULD PDRY ESSAY ANOTHER STRIKE.
 I EXPECT BE SEEING SULTAN IN ABOUT ANOTHER WEEK AND WILL PROBE
 SUBJECT GENTLY AGAIN WITH HIM IN PURELY PERSONAL VEIN. HOPE
 WE MAY GO AHEAD WITH EXPEDITING DELIVERIES OF F-5 MUNITIONS
 AND CONSIDERATION OTHER REQUEST REFTELIB.
 THACHER

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