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ROGERS
Xr Def 19-8 Saudi - Yemen
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SECRET

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1/18/73 EXT 22647
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11678

1973-1-18, Riyadh Saudi, US

PRIORITY
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JIDDA
AMMAN, KUWAIT PRIORITY, SANAA PRIORITY, TEHRAN

EXDIS

SECDEF FOR ISA

SUBJECT: US-SAG DISCUSSION OF YAR DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS

REF: JIDDA 3568, 4621, 3835, 173
SANAA 1136, 0055
AMMAN 290

J. APPRECIATE EMBASSY JIDDA'S CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF PRESENT STATUS OF SAUDI-YAR RELATIONSHIP AND OF SAUDI AID TO YEMEN (JIDDA'S 173}. WE AGREE THAT DISCUSSION OF MILITARY AID WITH SAUDIS HAS USUALLY RESULTED IN ALPHONSE/GASTON TYPE DIALOGUE WITH SAUDIS SUBSEQUENTLY EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION WITH USG UNWILLINGNESS TAKE GREATER ROLE IN YEMEN SECURITY MATTERS. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT, WITH EXCEPTION KAMAL AH#DHAM, SAUDIS MOST CONCERNED WITH YEMEN AFFAIRS ARE UNLIKELY TO GIVE UP PATRONAGE OF INFLUENTIAL TRIBAL LEADERS AND MILITARY FIGURES, BOTH NORTH E#YEMENI AND DISSIDENT SOUTH YEMENI, THROUGH WHOM SAG ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE DEVELOPMENTS TO ITS SOUTH. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, WE CONSIDER THAT CONTINUED FRANK DIALOGUE BETWEEN US AND SAG ON YEMENI MATTERS IS REQUIRED IF MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARE TO BE AVOIDED AND OUR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HELPING YAR ARE TO BE CLEARLY ESTABLISHED. ACCORDINGLY, WE HOPE THAT PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF YAR DELEGATION YOU CAN AGAIN REVIEW WITH SA#QAF AND WITH PRINCE SULTAN OUR PRESENT THINKING ABOUT CURRENT YEMENI/SOUTH YEMENI SITUATION.

INITIALS
FMD/BOR
JJS
DN
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2. YOU MAY SAY THAT WE APPRECIATED RECEIVING SAQAFI'S ASSESSMENT LAST NOVEMBER OF SITUATION BETWEEN TWO YEMENS. WE UNDERSTAND AND SHARE SAUDI CONCERNS OVER PDRY AND POTENTIAL IT HAS AS BASE FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY ELSEWHERE IN PENINSULA. WE HAVE ALSO NOTED THAT SOVIETS DID STEP UP THEIR AID TO PDRY AT TIME OF RECENT BORDER HOSTILITIES WITH YAR. IN LIGHT OF NOVEMBER 25 MOSCOW COMMUNIQUE AT CONCLUSION PDRY PRESIDENT SALIM RUBAI ALI'S VISIT TO USSR, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THEIR CLIENT STATE FOR ADVANTAGES IT GIVES THEM.

3. AT SAME TIME, OUR ASSESSMENT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS YEMEN MAY BE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN THAT OF SAG. EXPERIENCE DURING RECENT BORDER FIGHTING SHOWED THAT SOUTH YEMENI EXILES OF NATIONAL UNION FRONT (NUF) AND NORTHERN TRIBESMEN WHO MOVED SOUTH TO PDRY BORDERS WERE FRAGMENTED, BADLY DISCIPLINED, AND OPERATED ON THEIR OWN WITH LITTLE OR NO CONTROL BY YARG OR YAR ARMY. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY UNABLE MOUNT EFFECTIVE MILITARY CAMPAIGN. IN FACT, CAMPAIGN GAVE PDRY BASIS FOR WHICH SEEK ADDITIONAL AID FROM SOVIETS AND CLOSING OF RANKS BETWEEN TWO RIVAL GROUPS WITHIN SOUTH YEMEN'S NATIONAL FRONT (I. E. THE PRO-SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL HARDLINERS LED BY ABD AL-FATH ISMAIL AND SO-CALLED "MAOIST" GROUP LED BY SALIM RUBAI ALI). THEREFORE, WE DID NOT FIND OCTOBER 28 CAIRO AGREEMENT TO ACCEPT CEASEFIRE AND WORK FOR UNITY BETWEEN TWO YEMENS TO BE CAPITULATION BY YAR. INSTEAD, CAIRO AGREEMENT AND SUBSEQUENT TRIPOLI SUMMIT OF YEMENI LEADERS HAVE PROVIDED A RUBRIC TO END AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING BORDER WARFARE WHICH HAD BECOME INCONCLUSIVE AND IN WHICH POORLY-ORGANIZED AND UNCOORDINATED FORCES OPERATING FROM YAR WERE BEGINNING GET WORST OF IT. WE BELIEVE THAT PDRY TOO WAS ANXIOUS FOR CEASEFIRE SINCE IT ALSO HAS POLITICAL AND ESPECIALLY ECONOMIC WEAKNESSES. PDRY'S GNP HAS PLUMMETED SINCE SUEZ CANAL CLOSED. ECONOMY FURTHER AGGRAVATED BY IMPACT RECENT HOSTILITIES, SHIFT OF MORE RESOURCES FROM CIVILIAN TO MILITARY SECTOR, AND EXTRA-VAGANT NATIONALIZATION MEASURES.

4. US UNDER NO ILLUSION THAT UNITY BETWEEN TWO YEMENS WILL OCCUR. COMMUNIST REGIME IN ADEN SERIOUSLY DIVIDED OVER ISU#SUE OF UNITY. IT FEARFUL OF OVERWHELMING NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY OF YAR WHICH WOULD ENGULF PDRY IF UNION SHOULD OCCUR. MOREOVER THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT SOVIETS SUSPICIOUS OF UNITY CONCEPT AND MAY BE COUNSELLING ADEN GOVERNMENT AGAINST IT. ACCORDINGLY, PDRY CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO WORK AGAINST IMPLEMENTATION OF REAL UNITY BY SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF TERRORISM (MINING, ASSASSINATIONS) IN YAR AND STIMULAT-