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Authority 969000
By *AK* Date 7/1/02

POL IRAN-IRAQ

Department of State

TELEGRAM

TR POL 23-9 IRAQ



POSS DUPE

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ACTION NEA-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-20 AF-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12
AID-28 RSR-01 IO-13 /154 W

126862

P R 241100Z JAN 70
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 154
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
CINESTRIKE/CINCPACAFSA

*Tehran 269
1-24-70*

[REDACTED] TEHRAN 0269

SUBJECT: IRAN-IRAQ RELATIONS

1. I QUERIED DEPUTY FONMIN KHALATBARI THIS MORNING ABOUT IRAQ SITUATION AND IRAQ-IRAN RELATIONS. HE REPLIED SITUATION "CONFUSED" AND IT NOT CLEAR WHETHER THERE IS ONE OR MORE GROUPS IN IRAQ INVOLVED IN REPORTED COUP.

2. HE SAID IRAQIS HAD NOT OBSERVED DIPLOMATIC NORMS IN TREATMENT OF IRANIAN DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL IN BAGHDAD IN THAT THEY FIRST THREW MILITARY CORDON AROUND EMBASSY AND SUBSEQUENTLY HAD LOCKED IRANIAN AMBASSADOR AND OTHER IRANIS IN SMALL ROOM AT BAGHDAD AIRPORT HOLDING THEM THERE FOR SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE DEPARTURE. FURTHERMORE WHEN IRANIAN CHARGE HAD RETURNED TO EMBASSY FOLLOWING HIS AMBASSADOR'S FORCED DEPARTURE HIS CAR HAD BEEN STOPPED AT GUN POINT OUTSIDE EMBASSY AND THOROUGHLY SEARCHED, ETC.

3. KHALATBARI SAID WORK OF THIS TREATMENT STIRRED UP CONSIDERABLE ANGER AMONG DIFFERENT ELEMENTS IN IRAN

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AND TEHRAN AIRPORT OFFICIALS HAD WANTED TO LOCK IRAQI AMBASSADOR IN SMALL ROOM GIVING HIM SIMILAR TREATMENT TO THAT OF IRANIAN AMBASSADOR IN BAGHDAD. THIS FONMIN HAD FIRMLY RESISTED AND HAD INSISTED THAT IRAQ AMBASSADOR AND FOUR MEMBERS OF EMBASSY WHO WERE ASKED TO LEAVE BE GIVEN FACILITIES OF VIP ROOM AND TREATED AS FRIENDLY DIPLOMATS. (EXTENSIVE FILMED COVERAGE OF DEPARTURE EXPELLED IRAQI DIPLOMATS ON IRANIAN TV SHOWED VIP WAITING ROOM ATMOSPHERE AND EXCHANGES BETWEEN DIPLOMATS, OFFICIALS AND GUESTS WAS RELAXED, FRIENDLY AND GOOD HUMORED. CONTRARY TO IRAQI CHARGES OF MISTREATMENT IMPRESSION GIVEN BY COVERAGE WAS ONE OF COURTESY AND WARM FAREWELLS ON BOTH SIDES, INCLUDING EMBRACE BETWEEN IRAQI AMBASSADOR AND PRESIDING IRANIAN FONMIN OFFICIALS.) HE ADDED THAT WHEREAS IRAQIS HAD PNG'D IRAN AMBASSADOR AND FOUR COLLEAGUES, GOI HAD ONLY ASKED EQUIVALENT NUMBER OF IRAQI DIPLOMATS TO LEAVE IRAN WITHOUT PNG.

4. KHALATBARI SAID THAT WHILE GOI WANTED TO REACT IN MODERATE AND BALANCED WAY TO IRAQ, GOI FACED VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO STRIKE PROPER BALANCE FOR TWO REASONS: IF GOI DID NOTHING (A) IRAQIS MIGHT INTERPRET THIS AS WEAKNESS AND PROCEED TO EVEN GREATER PROVOCATION; (B) IRANIAN PUBLIC OPINION WOULD BE VERY CRITICAL OF GOI FOR NOT RETALIATING IN KIND. NONETHELESS IRAN WOULD TRY TO STRIKE PROPER BALANCE AND FONMIN FAVORED MODERATION. SPEAKING PERSONALLY I SAID MODERATION WOULD SEEM TO SERVE IRAN'S INTEREST BECAUSE WHEN CONTRASTED WITH IRAQ EXTREMES IT WOULD BENEFIT IRAN'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. KHALATBARI AGREED BUT SAID IT WAS ALL VERY DIFFICULT.

5. I ALSO ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE ANY IRAQI MILITARY MOVEMENTS WHICH GAVE GOI CONCERN. HE REPLIED THAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD THERE HAD BEEN SOME DEPLOYMENTS, THERE HAD BEEN NONE OF WHICH HE HAD HEARD THAT WERE CAUSE FOR CONCERN AND THIS WAS UNDERSTANDABLE SINCE WITH KURDS AND POTENTIALLY DISSIDENT ELEMENTS WITHIN IRAQ, IRAQI GOVT PROBABLY HAD ITS HANDS FULL.

6. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING PRESENT BAGHDAD REIGN OF TERROR AND BLOODBATH PROBABLY DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE EXISTING OPPOSITION LEADERS AND TO INTIMIDATE ANYONE WHO OPPOSED

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EXISTING REGIME. WHETHER IN FACT IT WOULD INTIMIDATE
MAJORITY OF IRAQIS WHO HE SAID OPPOSED PRESENT REGIME OR
WHETHER THEY WOULD FEAR THAT THEY MIGHT BE NEXT ON LIST
AND WOULD REACT AGAINST PRESENT REGIME, ONLY TIME COULD TELL.
GP-3.
MACARTHUR

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