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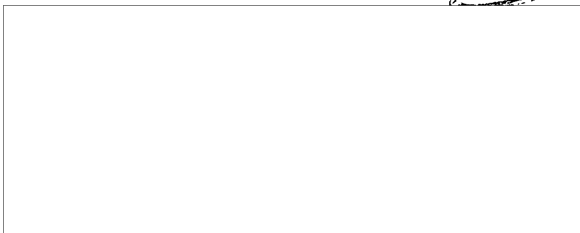
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TITLE:SHIA-EXTREMISM IN>BEIRUT AND THE>BIQA (S) (>AMAL>LEADERSHIP,>HIZBAL  
LAI: IRANIAN/SYRIAN>INFLUENCE)

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EZ1:  
SECRET BEIRUT 12852  
EXDIS  
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PINR, PINS, PREL, LE

*CAT FILE/DLE  
Religion of Shia/Amal*

1. (S - ENTIRE TEST)  
2. SUMMARY: IN BEIRUT'S SOUTHERN SUBURBS, AMAL IS NOT SERIOUSLY CHALLENGED BY THE RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF MILITIAMEN FROM HIZBALLAH AND OTHER EXTREME, PRO-IRANIAN ORGANIZATIONS. AT PRESENT, NABIH BARRI FACES GREATER PROBLEMS FROM SOME OF HIS OWN MILITIA COMMANDERS WHO ARE NOT FULLY UNDER HIS CONTROL AND SUSCEPTIBLE TO BOTH SYRIAN AND IRANIAN INFLUENCE. NON-AMAL RADICALS ARE MOVING TO EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE SUBURBS, MAINLY THROUGH EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN MOSQUES, AND APPEAR TO BE WORKING IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE IRANIANS. IN THE BIQA, OLD GUARD RADICALS SUCH AS SUBHI TUFAYLI AND HUSAYN AL-MUSARRI HAVE BEEN JOINED BY NEW FIGURES, SUGGESTING A FURTHER EXPANSION OF IRANIAN/SHIA EXTREMIST INFLUENCE. FURTHER, THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THE OVERALL AMAL MILITARY COMMANDER, BASED IN THE BIQA, IS NOW CLOSER TO THESE LEADERS (AND THEIR SPONSORS) THAN TO BARRI. IN SUM, EXTREMISM IN THE SHIA COMMUNITY IS INCREASING, A TREND THAT IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE, GIVEN ACTIVE SYRIAN AND IRANIAN BACKING, THE ABSENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARD AN INTERNAL POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, AND ABSENCE OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL IN THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS. END SUMMARY.

3. ON THE BASIS OF CONVERSATIONS WITH SHIA CONTACTS IN AND OUT OF THE AMAL MOVEMENT, THE LAF, NON-SHIA POLITICAL FIGURES AND OTHERS FAMILIAR WITH THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS AND THE BIQA, IT APPEARS THAT AMAL IS IN NO DANGER OF LOSING MILITARY CONTROL IN THE SUBURBS TO NON-AMAL RADICALS. HIZBALLAH AND OTHER EXTREMIST GROUPS (INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS ON THE OTHER END OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM) DO NOT HAVE LARGE NUMBERS OF MILITIAMEN IN BEIRUT AND THOSE WHO ARE HERE APPEAR TO PRESENT NO THREAT TO AMAL SUPERIORITY. A LARGER PROBLEM FOR BARRI MAY BE THE INDEPENDENCE OF SOME OF HIS OWN COMMANDERS, ESPECIALLY THE FOLLOWING:

-- FAKIL HAMIYAH, AMAL MILITIA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR HAY AS-SALLUM. HAMIYAH, ALSO KNOWN AS AL-AZA, RECEIVED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INTERNATIONAL NOTORIETY THROUGH HIS EXPLOITS AS A SKYJACKER: HE MAY HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AS MANY AS SIX SEPARATE HIJACKINGS, ALL FROM BEIRUT AIRPORT, THE LAST OF WHICH WAS IN EARLY 1982. NOW, WITH HIS BROTHERS ALI AND MUHAMMAD, HAMIYAH COMMANDS A FORCE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED FULL-TIME MILITIAMEN AND ALTHOUGH HE IS A MEMBER OF THE AMAL POLITICAL BUREAU, OFTEN OPERATES INDEPENDENTLY OF BARRI. HE IS CONSIDERED CLOSER TO SYRIA THAN IRAN, AND BEFORE THE ISRAELI INVASION WAS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE CLOSE LINKS WITH SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE. (HIS HIJACKING EXPLOITS GENERALLY ENDED WITH HIS "SURRENDER" AT BEIRUT AIRPORT, WHERE HE WAS RECEIVED BY THEN CHIEF OF SYRIAN INTELLIGENCE, MUHAMMAD GHANIM, AND IMMEDIATELY RELEASED.)  
-- VADNAN HALBAWI, MILITIA COMMANDER FOR SFAYR/BIR AL-ABID. HALBAWI IS KNOWN AS A PRO-SYRIAN WHO ALSO

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MUHAMMAD NASRULLAH (ABU JA'FR). NASRULLAH, ALSO AN AMAL MEMBER, OPERATES IN THE GHUBAYRI AREA NORTH OF GALERIE SIMAAN. ALTHOUGH HE IS NOT A SENIOR MILITIA OFFICIAL, A KNOWLEDGEABLE LAF SOURCE CREDITS HIM WITH REGULAR SNIPING ON THE ARMY, APPARENTLY IN DIRECT DEFIANCE OF BARRI'S ORDERS.

4. OUTSIDE OF AMAL, THERE ARE NUMEROUS INDICATIONS THAT SHIA EXTREMISTS ARE EXPANDING THEIR EFFORTS -- AND INFLUENCE -- IN THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS. THUS FAR, HOWEVER, THEY ARE USING THE MOSQUES AND HUSAYNIYAHS TO INCREASE THEIR POWER RATHER THAN MILITIAS. HIZBALLAH/AMAL OF ISLAM HAVE SOME FIGHTERS IN BEIRUT, BUT THEIR FORCES ARE LIMITED. THE BEST-KNOWN AND LONGEST ESTAB-

EXDIS  
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
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SUBJECT: SHIA EXTREMISM IN BEIRUT AND THE BIQA'  
LISHED OF THESE IS MUHAMMAD HUSAYN

FADLALLAH, THE MAIN BEIRUT-BASED RELIGIOUS FIGURE IN HIZBALLAH, BASED IN BIR AL-ABID, FADLALLAH IS ALSO REPORTEDLY THE "SPIRITUAL GUIDE" (MURSHID) FOR THE EXTREMIST UNION OF ISLAMIC STUDENTS. LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES BELIEVED THAT FADLALLAH HAD KNOWLEDGE OF, IF NOT AN ACTIVE ROLE IN, THE DODGE KIDNAPPING. MORE RECENTLY, OTHER EXTREMIST SHAYKHS HAVE ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN MOSQUES IN SOUTH BEIRUT WHERE THE FRIDAY SERMON PROVIDES THEM A FORUM FOR INCREASING POPULAR SUPPORT. NOT ALL ARE ASSOCIATED WITH HIZBALLAH, BUT REPORTEDLY HAVE IN COMMON AN ASSOCIATION WITH THE IRANIAN EMBASSY IN BEIRUT AS A SOURCE OF FUNDING AND DIRECTION. THEY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

-- (RAMAZ KANI) (BURJ AL-BARAJINAH MOSQUE ON THE AIRPORT ROAD)

-- (AYMAN HANJAR) (GHURAYRI) HANJAR WAS BRIEFLY ARRESTED BY THE LAF FOR SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES, BUT WAS RELEASED FOLLOWING PRESSURE FROM OTHER SHIA CLERICS, INCLUDING SHAMS-AD-DIN'S SHIA HIGHER ISLAMIC COUNCIL.

-- (HUSAYN MURDAD) ('UZAI MOSQUE).

-- (HASSAN KALIR) (BURJ AL-BARAJINAH). MAINTAINS CLOSE LINKS WITH BRITAL-BASED HIZBALLAH LEADER SUBHI TUFAYLI IN THE BIQA'.

-- (IMAM QASIM). LIKE FADLALLAH, QASIM WAS ALSO BELIEVED TO HAVE HAD KNOWLEDGE OF THE DODGE KIDNAPPING. HE IS A LEADER OF THE DANA PARTY IN BEIRUT, ACTIVE IN THE UNION OF ISLAMIC STUDENTS, AND RECENTLY PROCLAIMED HIMSELF A SHAYKH.

5. VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SHIA HIGHER ISLAMIC COUNCIL MUHAMMAD MAHDI SHAMS-AD-DIN, ALTHOUGH A MODERATE, AT LEAST BY THE STANDARDS OF THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS, MAINTAINS LINKS WITH MANY OF THE RADICAL SHAYKHS IN A

OF CONTROL OVER THEIR ACTIONS. SHAMS-AD-DIN HIMSELF HAS IRANIAN CONNECTIONS, INCLUDING A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE DANA PARTY AND RESIDENCE IN IRAN. SHAMS-AD-DIN CURRENTLY APPEARS TO BE WALKING A FINE LINE IN TRYING TO FIND A BALANCE BETWEEN PRESSURES FROM THE IRANIANS FOR A MORE RADICAL STANCE AND GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. SHIA MUFTI ABDUL AMIR QADALAN, BY CONTRAST, HAS AVOIDED AN IRANIAN CONNECTION AND THEREFORE HAS GREATER FREEDOM OF MANEUVER. OF ALL SHIA RELIGIOUS LEADERS, HE IS REGARDED BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WITH THE GREATEST FAVOR. (COMMENT: ALLI SHA'IR'S COMMENT TO CHARGE SUDDARTH THAT QADALAN IS "DIRECTLY UNDER IRANIAN CONTROL." (RIYADH 3575) DOES NOT REPEAT NOT TRACK WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING.)

6. MOVING FROM BEIRUT TO THE BIQA', IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT IRANIAN-BACKED RADICAL SHIA INFLUENCE IS EXPANDING. IN ADDITION TO HIZBALLAH LEADERS ON WHOM WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, SUCH AS SUBHI TUFAYLI AND MUHAMMAD YAZBARI, OTHERS ARE ALSO GAINING PROMINENCE, ESPECIALLY IN SA'LABAKK. TWO NAMES WE HAVE HEARD RECENTLY ARE (ABRAHIM ALAMIN) AND HUSAYN QUBAYSI. IN THE BIQA' THE IRANIAN ROLE IS OVERT, AND IN ADDITION TO IRANIAN REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS, IRANIAN RELIGIOUS FIGURES ARE ALSO ACTIVE WITH THEIR LEBANESE BRETHREN.

7. THE RANKING MEMBER OF AMAL IN THE BIQA' IS MILITARY COMMANDER ZAKARIYA HAMZA (ABU YAHYA). ALTHOUGH HE NOMINALLY REPORTS DIRECTLY TO BARRI, HAMZA IS CONSIDERED TO BE FALLING INCREASINGLY UNDER IRANIAN, AND SYRIAN, INFLUENCE. ONE SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT BARRI HAS REFRAINED FROM EXPELLING HIM FROM THE MOVEMENT ONLY BECAUSE OF CONCERN THAT HE WOULD THEN LINK FORCES WITH AMAL OF ISLAM LEADER HUSAYN MUSAWI AND HIZBALLAH, TAKING SOME OF THE AMAL MEMBERSHIP IN THE BIQA' WITH EXDIS

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HIM. BARRI HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO ENSURE, HOWEVER, THAT HAMZA STAYS OUT OF BEIRUT.

8. COMMENT: THE PICTURE WE SEE EMERGING IS ONE OF INCREASING SHIA EXTREMISM, BACKED BY BOTH IRAN AND SYRIA. THIS RADICAL MOVEMENT HAS NOT YET PRODUCED A SIGNIFICANT MILITIA FORCE, PARTICULARLY IN THE BEIRUT AREA, BUT THE FACT THAT PRO-IRANIANS APPEAR TO CONTROL A NUMBER OF KEY MOSQUES MAKES IT LIKELY THAT THEIR INFLUENCE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND. AT THE SAME TIME, THE INABILITY OF THE LAF TO CLOSE THE INFILTRATION ROUTE FROM SHUWAYFAT INTO THE SUBURBS PROVIDES A MEANS FOR INTRODUCING POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVATORS AS WELL AS ARMS AND MILITIAMEN. THE CONTINUING ABSENCE OF ANY GOVERNMENT CONTROL IN THE SUBURBS WILL ALSO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTREMISM, BOTH HOME-GROWN AND SYRIAN- AND IRANIAN-INSTIGATED. BARTHOLOMEW

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FadLallah, Muhammad Husayn

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