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Middle East Situation Report #27
(as of 1100 EST, 01 February 1984)

LEBANON/SYRIA



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Lebanese Army preparations for an offensive are widely known.



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NESA M#84-10054CX



Copy 10 of 25





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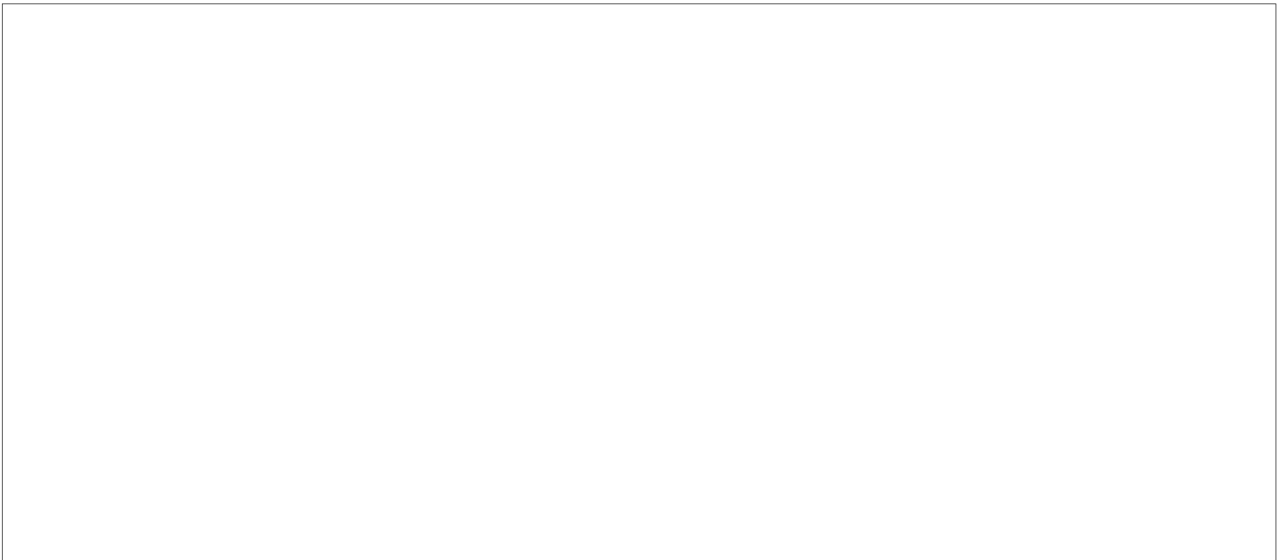
An Amal representative warned US Embassy officials yesterday of a full-scale Shia uprising in Beirut should the Lebanese Army attempt to cut off the southern suburbs by attacking the Alayh ridgeline. The Shia spokesman asked that the United States to dissuade President Gemayel from undertaking the military offensive.

-- Amal leaders apparently interpret the expected military action as a clear indication of Gemayel's determination to ignore Shia demands for reform and split the Shia from the Druze.

-- Amal chief Nabih Barri, as in the fighting last September, wants to avoid a major confrontation, but initiation of the planned government attack would make it more difficult for him to restrain his militiamen.



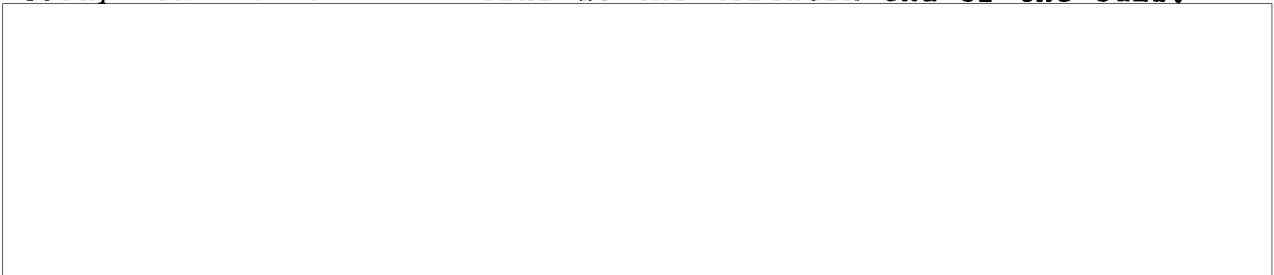
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IRAN-IRAQ WAR

Baghdad claims to have sunk eight merchant ships and downed one Iranian fighter aircraft during airstrikes yesterday and today near Bandar-e Khomeini at the northern end of the Gulf.



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[Redacted]

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The US Interests Section in Baghdad reports that the Iraqis are bracing for an Iranian offensive expected this month in the central or southern sectors of the front. The Interests Section also reports that the Iraqis are disappointed that Japan won't help repair their offshore oil export terminals and mediate guarantees by Iran not to interfere. Baghdad, however, is very pleased by US actions to discourage further arms sales by Western allies to Iran.

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] we do believe Iran is preparing a major attack. We also believe Iraq will make a major effort to hit Iranian oil exports when the Iranian attack takes place. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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SUBJECT: Middle East Situation Report #27
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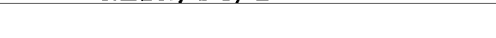
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