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BODY

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] FOR 18 MARCH 1988.

FROM: [REDACTED]

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1. IRAN-IRAQ: SITUATION REPORT

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TEHRAN CLAIMS ITS VAL-FAJR 10 OFFENSIVE CONTINUED YESTERDAY IN NORTHEASTERN IRAQ, WITH IRANIAN TROOPS CAPTURING THE TOWN OF HALABJA AND ADVANCING TOWARD SAYYID SADIQ. IRANIAN PRESS REPORTS CLAIM THAT TEHRAN INFLICTED 11,000 IRAQI CASUALTIES AND OVERRAN A BRIGADE-SIZE UNIT IN HALABJA AND CAPTURED A MAJOR GENERAL. TEHRAN ALSO CLAIMS THAT ITS FORCES IN THE AREA WERE ATTACKED WITH CHEMICAL BOMBS DROPPED FROM IRAQI AIRCRAFT. IRAQI PRESS [REDACTED] INDICATES THAT IRAQI FORCES HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM THE KHURMAL-HALABJA AREA. [REDACTED]

AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI AND ASSEMBLY SPEAKER RAFSANJANI YESTERDAY DEPICTED THE OFFENSIVE AS TEHRAN'S RESPONSE TO IRAQI MISSILE ATTACKS

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[REDACTED]
ON IRANIAN CITIES AND SAID THAT IT DEMONSTRATED THAT THE MISSILE
ATTACKS WOULD NOT DETER TEHRAN FROM VIGOROUS PURSUIT OF THE WAR. [REDACTED]

IRAQ FIRED ONE MISSILE AT TEHRAN YESTERDAY, AND IRAN DID NOT
RETALIATE. IRAQI AIRCRAFT CONTINUE TO CONDUCT DAILY SHIP-ATTACK
MISSIONS OVER THE PERSIAN GULF, AND IRANIAN NAVAL UNITS CONTINUE TO
SHADOW GULF SHIPPING. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE CAPTURE OF IRAQI TERRITORY WILL HURT BAGHDAD
POLITICALLY, AND IRAQ IS LIKELY TO REINFORCE THE NORTHERN FRONT WITH
UNITS FROM ELSEWHERE ALONG THE FRONT, BUT SUCH A MOVE RISKS
WEAKENING OTHER AREAS. TEHRAN IN THE PAST HAS MONITORED TROOP
MOVEMENTS TO SPOT VULNERABILITIES IN IRAQI DEFENSES, AND PRESSURE
AGAINST AS SULAYMANIYAH IS SURE TO INCREASE. [REDACTED]

KHOMEINI'S PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE OFFENSIVE INDICATE TEHRAN IS
CONFIDENT IT CAN HOLD THE NEWLY CAPTURED TERRITORY. THE REMARKS ARE
PROBABLY DESIGNED TO STIFFEN IRANIAN RESOLVE BY REMINDING IRANIAN
PEOPLE THAT HE REMAINS BEHIND THE WAR EFFORT. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
THE IRANIANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO FUEL CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY SOME UN
MEMBERS THAT THE ARMS EMBARGO AT THIS TIME WOULD ONLY REINFORCE
TEHRAN'S DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE THE WAR. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

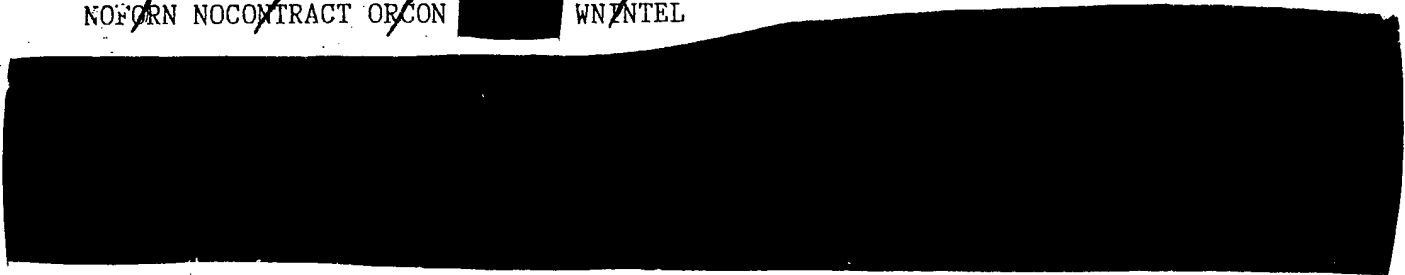
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