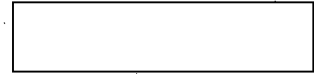


(b) (1)  
(b) (3)



National  
Foreign  
Assessment  
Center

~~Secret~~



APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: OCT 2005

✓ 63-1-7

1.2.0  
166

## Area Briefs

CIA AP MEAB 79-119  
June 20, 1979

~~Secret~~

TABLE OF CONTENTS. 4

2. IRAQ-SYRIA: JOINT COMMANDS. 4

2. IRAQ-SYRIA. 4

AFTER FOUR DAYS OF INTENSE, SECRET NEGOTIATIONS, SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD AND IRAQI PRESIDENT BAKR ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION TUESDAY OF JOINT POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMANDS TO COORDINATE THE FOREIGN, ECONOMIC, AND MILITARY POLICIES OF THE TWO STATES. THE MOVE FALLS FAR SHORT OF IRAQI HOPES FOR A FULL MERGER OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND

[REDACTED]

OF THE RULING BAAATH PARTIES, BUT IT DOES INJECT NEW LIFE INTO THE ALLIANCE. [REDACTED]

THE TWO SIDES ISSUED A POLITICAL DECLARATION THAT THEY HAVE SET UP A UNIFIED POLITICAL COMMAND HEADED BY ASSAD AND BAKR AND ESTABLISHED COMMITTEES TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR A MERGER OF THE RIVAL WINGS OF THE BAAATH AND TO WORK OUT DETAILS OF A CONSTITUTION. THEY ALSO CREATED A UNIFIED MILITARY COMMAND. THE IRAQI INFORMATION MINISTER CHARACTERIZED THE DECLARATION AS SETTING THE STAGE FOR A COMPLETE MERGER. [REDACTED]

COMMENT: AS EXPECTED, THE SYRIANS APPARENTLY CONTINUED TO RESIST SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN THEIR BAAATH PARTY STRUCTURE. ASSAD'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BAAATH PARTY COMMITTEE IS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE KNOWN TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF IRAQ. IN HIS REMARKS TO THE PRESS, BAKR SHOWED IRRITATION WITH ASSAD'S DESIRE FOR A CAUTIOUS, STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO UNITY. [REDACTED]

MANY OF THE NEW MEASURES ARE AMBIGUOUS AND MAY PROVE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TO BE LITTLE MORE THAN PAPER EXERCISES, BUT THEY WILL  
ALLOW THE TWO SIDES TO CONTINUE TO COOPERATE ON SELECTED  
ISSUES. THE NEW POLITICAL COMMAND APPEARS TO DO LITTLE  
MORE THAN REPLACE AN ALREADY EXISTING STRUCTURE. THE  
ISRAELIS ARE CERTAIN TO BE ALARMED, HOWEVER, IF THERE ARE  
ANY SUBSTANTIVE MOVES TO FOLLOW UP THE PROMISED JOINT  
MILITARY COMMAND. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]