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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECRET (When Filled In) CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS
WARNING NOTICE: SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

COUNTRY IRAQ
SUBJECT STATUS OF BATH PARTY EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE A COUP IN IRAQ
DATE OF INFO [redacted]
PLACE & DATE ACQ. [redacted] (7 JANUARY 1963)
APPRAISAL [redacted]
DATE DISTR. 11 JANUARY 1963
PRECEDENCE ROUTINE
REFERENCES IN 48096

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1. THE ARMY BUREAU OF THE BATH PARTY IN IRAQ (BPI) BEGAN, ON 25 OR 26 DECEMBER, TO ASSESS ITS CAPABILITY FOR EXECUTING A COUP DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS ON FRIDAY, 4 JANUARY 1963, UTILIZING ONLY T-54 TANKS FROM THE FOURTH ARMORED REGIMENT AT ABU GHURAYB AND AIR SUPPORT FROM HABBANIYA TO ATTACK THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. ON 2 JANUARY 1963, THIS PLAN WAS ABANDONED BECAUSE THE ARMY BUREAU FOUND THAT IT COULD BE SURE TO HAVE AVAILABLE ONLY 21 OFFICERS TRAINED ON T-54 TANKS. THIS NUMBER OF OFFICERS COULD NOT MAN MORE THAN TWELVE TANKS AND THE ARMY BUREAU COULD NOT SEE A REASONABLE CHANGE OF SUCCESS WITHOUT CONTROL OF EIGHTEEN ARMED

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TANKS.

2. SEVEN KEY OFFICERS OF THE FOURTH TANK REGIMENT HAVE NOW BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE ARMY BUREAU TO ASSESS AND, WHERE IT APPEARS SECURE, TO APPROACH NON_COMMISSIONED AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL OF THE FOURTH TANK REGIMENT WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED AS DRIVERS AND MACHINE GUN LOADERS ON T_54 TANKS, WITH A VIEW TO RECRUITING SUFFICIENT EXTRA MANPOWER TO MAN AT LEAST EIGHTEEN TANKS. IF THIS CAN BE DONE, A COUP WILL BE ATTEMPTED ON A FRIDAY MORNING, WHEN MOST OF THE ARMORED AND ANTI_TANK UNITS IN TP_ BAGHDAD AREA ARE MANNED ONLY BY SKELETON FORCES AND ARE WITHOUT AMMUNITION.

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THE REGIONAL LEADERS OF THE BPI ARE UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE BATH PARTY IN SYRIA TO ANTICIPATE A PRO NASIR COUP THERE, AND FROM THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ELEMENTS OF THE BPI WHO THREE TIMES SINCE EARLY JULY 1962 HAVE HAD TO STAND DOWN FROM ADVANCED COUP PREPARATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE PRESTIGE OF THE PARTY IS COMMITTED TO THE STUDENT STRIKE, WHICH THE PARTY CAN NOT HOPE TO WIN SHORT OF REVOLUTION. THUS THE PRESSURES PUSHING THE BPI LEADERS TOWARD A COUP ATTEMPT HAVE INCREASED, RATHER THAN DECREASED, IN THE WAKE OF THE ABANDONMENT OF THEIR 19/20 DECEMBER 1962 PLAN. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT YET KNOWN HOW BATH ARMY ASSETS WILL FARE IN THE JANUARY ROUND OF

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RETIREMENTS, PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS, IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL BE CONSIDERABLY REDUCED. THE CIVILIAN LEADERS HAVE NOT GAINED CONFIDENCE IN EITHER THE COURAGE OR THE DISCRETION OF THEIR ARMY OFFICERS AS A RESULT OF THE EXPERIENCES OF JULY 1962 AND DECEMBER 62/JANUARY 63. THE BPL LEADERS DETERMINATION SEEMS TO BE INCREASING HOWEVER, AS THEIR CAPABILITIES DWINDLE.)



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END OF MESSAGE

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