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IMMEDIATE

FRP:
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[REDACTED]

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PAGE 001
TOT: 120530Z AUG 85

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MESSAGE

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BRIEF 120530Z

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TO: [REDACTED] ROUTINE MEA BRIEF.

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 12 AUGUST 1985.

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FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

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- 1. SYRIA-LEBANON: MOVEMENT WITHOUT PROGRESS
- 2. [REDACTED]
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b1, b3

1. SYRIA-LEBANON: MOVEMENT WITHOUT PROGRESS

//SYRIA'S TWO-TRACK POLITICAL INITIATIVE IN LEBANON--AIMED AT

OUTGOING MESSAGE

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Approved for Release
Date JUN 1999

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[REDACTED]

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PROMOTING THE NEW NATIONAL UNION FRONT AND SETTING THE STAGE FOR A RENEWED CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM DIALOGUE--APPEARS TO BE ACTION FOR ACTION'S SAKE AND IS LIKELY TO LANGUISH WHILE LEADERS IN DAMASCUS PLAN THEIR NEXT MOVES AGAINST YASIR ARAFAT'S PALESTINIAN SUPPORTERS IN LEBANON.//

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// [REDACTED] DESPITE STRONG SYRIAN SUPPORT, THE NATIONAL UNION FRONT FACES AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE, LARGELY BECAUSE TOP-RANKING CHRISTIAN AND SUNNI POLITICIANS REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE. THE FRONT'S PROGRAM, ANNOUNCED ON WEDNESDAY, PARALLELS PREVIOUS PROPOSALS FOR REFORMING THE LEBANESE POLITICAL SYSTEM ON A NONSECTARIAN BASIS--A POSITION CONSISTENTLY REJECTED BY CHRISTIANS. THE TENSIONS BETWEEN SUNNI NONPARTICIPANTS AND DRUZE AND SHIA SUPPORTERS OF THE FRONT WERE DEMONSTRATED BY A ROCKET-PROPELLED GRENADE ATTACK ON THE HOME OF SUNNI ELDER STATESMAN SAIB SALAM FOLLOWING HIS SON'S DENUNCIATION OF THE FRONT'S PROGRAM.//

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// SYRIA'S EFFORTS TO COAX LEBANESE FACTIONS TOWARD POLITICAL REFORM CONTINUE TO BE BLOCKED BY THE REFUSAL OF THE POWERFUL LEBANESE FORCES MILITIA TO ENTERTAIN SERIOUS REFORM AND BY THE LACK OF MEANINGFUL CHRISTIAN SUPPORT TO ISOLATE THE MILITIA. FORMER PRESIDENT FRANJIYAH, SYRIA'S ERSTWHILE CHRISTIAN ALLY, HAS REBUFFED REQUESTS FROM DAMASCUS THAT HE CAST HIS LOT WITH THE FRONT. PRESIDENT GEMAYEL, WHO WAS IN DAMASCUS THURSDAY FOR A VISIT TO DISPEL RUMORS THAT SYRIA PLANS TO DUMP HIM, ENJOYS ONLY MINIMAL SUPPORT AMONG CHRISTIANS.//

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// LEBANON'S FACTIONAL LEADERS APPEAR CONFUSED BY THE SEEMING INCONSISTENCY OF THE LATEST DIPLOMATIC MOVES. THEY NOTE THAT EFFORTS TO UNIFY OPPOSITION RANKS WORK AT CROSS PURPOSES WITH SYRIA'S DESIRE TO GET CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS TO TALK TO EACH OTHER. SYRIA'S INABILITY TO FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM PROBABLY REFLECTS PREOCCUPATION IN DAMASCUS WITH COUNTERING PRO-ARAFAT PLO ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON. FROM SYRIA'S PERSPECTIVE, BRINGING ARAFAT'S SUPPORTERS TO HEEL IS AN ESSENTIAL STEP IN PROTECTING SYRIAN EQUITIES IN LEBANON AND IN OBSTRUCTING PROGRESS TOWARD A PLO-JORDAN PEACE INITIATIVE.//

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2. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

3. IN BRIEFS

MIDDLE EAST

--//IRANIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SHEIKHOESLAM FLEW TO KHARTOUM YESTERDAY . . . FIRST IRANIAN OFFICIAL TO GO TO SUDAN SINCE OVERTHROW OF NIMEIRI . . . VISIT LIKELY TO RESULT IN RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.// [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

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