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IMMEDIATE

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STAFF

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MESSAGE

[REDACTED]

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TOT: 280248Z SEP 87

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BRIEF 280248Z [REDACTED]
TO: IMMEDIATE [REDACTED] ROUTINE MEA BRIEF.
WNMTEL [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 28 SEPTEMBER 1987.
FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

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1. PERSIAN GULF: SITUATION REPORT

THE TANKER WAR HEATS UP

[REDACTED]

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IRAQIS CLAIM THEY STRUCK TWO [REDACTED] TANKERS NEAR THE IRANIAN
COAST IN ADDITION TO HITTING THE NATURAL GAS FACILITY NEAR BESH

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Approved for Release
Date JUN 1999

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BOLAGH AND THE EMAM HASAN PUMPING STATION YESTERDAY. [REDACTED] b3

TEHRAN CLAIMED IT SHOT DOWN TWO IRAQI AIRCRAFT OVER THE GULF YESTERDAY; SHELLED SEVERAL AREAS ALONG THE IRAN-IRAQ BORDER ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY; AND ATTACKED AN IRAQI RADAR STATION AT RAWANOUZ IN NORTHERN IRAQ ON SATURDAY. [REDACTED] b3

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] BAGHDAD CONTINUES TO PRESSURE TEHRAN BY ATTACKING ITS TANKERS AND PETROLEUM TARGETS. IRAN IS LIKELY TO RETALIATE FOR THESE ATTACKS AND THE ATTACK ON THE IRAN AJR ONCE TEHRAN DECIDES ON THE BEST TACTICAL RESPONSE. [REDACTED]

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THREATS OF RETALIATION AGAINST THE US CONTINUE

IRANIAN LEADERS ARE INCREASING DOMESTIC EXPECTATIONS OF A RETALIATORY STRIKE AGAINST THE US WITH MENACING STATEMENTS OF AVENGING THE AJR ATTACK. FOLLOWING CABINET SESSION YESTERDAY, IRAN'S PRIME MINISTER MUSAVI-KHAMENEI WAS QUOTED IN TEHRAN'S OFFICIAL PRESS AS SAYING, "WHAT CONCERNS US IS THAT WE SHALL RESPOND TO THE US MISCHIEF." IN A SPEECH THE DAY BEFORE, MUSAVI HAD STATED, "THE GREAT SATAN WILL RECEIVE SUCH A DECISIVE BLOW FOR ITS MISCHIEVOUS ACTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF THAT ALL ITS REGIONAL LACKEYS WILL REGRET THAT THEY DEPENDED ON WASHINGTON'S PROTECTION." SPEAKING IN REFERENCE TO THE RETURN OF THE IRANIANS KILLED DURING THE AJR ATTACK, IRANIAN PRESIDENT KHAMENEI HAD CLAIMED DURING FRIDAY'S SABBATH SERMON IN TEHRAN THAT IN THE DAYS TO COME, WHEN "AMERICAN YOUTHS" ARE RETURNED, THE "AMERICAN NATION" WILL KNOW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSING THE TROUBLES. KHAMENEI ALSO QUOTED AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI AS SAYING IRAN WILL "MAKE NO COMPROMISE IN ITS WAR AGAINST IRAQ AND VOWS TO RESPOND TO RECENT US MILITARY ACTIONS IN THE PERSIAN GULF." [REDACTED] b3

b3 [REDACTED] TEHRAN'S CONTINUED THREATS MAINTAIN THE LIKELIHOOD OF A* IRANIAN RETALIATION FOR THE AJR ATTACK. IRANIAN LEADERS PROBABLY ARE RELUCTANT TO RISK THEIR CREDIBILITY BY FAILING TO FOLLOW WORDS WITH ACTIONS. [REDACTED] b3

2. TUNISIA: FUNDAMENTALIST TRIAL ENDS

THE DECISION OF A TUNISIAN COURT YESTERDAY TO SENTENCE FUNDAMENTALIST LEADER RASHID GHANNOUCHI TO HARD LABOR FOR LIFE RATHER THAN TO DEATH MAY LESSEN THE PROSPECT OF A MAJOR OUTBREAK OF ANTIREGIME FUNDAMENTALIST VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT TERM, BUT FUNDAMENTALIST AGITATION IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO GROW OVER THE LONGER TERM. [REDACTED] b3

GHANNOUCHI IS THE LEADER OF THE PRINCIPAL ISLAMIC GROUP, THE ISLAMIC TENDENCY MOVEMENT (MTI), AND HIS LIFE SENTENCE FOR SUBVERSION FOLLOWED WARNINGS FROM WESTERN DIPLOMATS THAT A DEATH SENTENCE COULD MAKE HIM A MARTYR AND FUEL FUNDAMENTALIST OPPOSITION TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S GOVERNMENT. THE COURT, HOWEVER, DID SENTENCE SEVEN OTHER FUNDAMENTALISTS TO DEATH-INCLUDING FIVE IN ABSENTIA-WHO WERE IMPLICATED IN THE HOTEL BOMBINGS LAST MONTH, AND

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IT DECREED LESSER SENTENCES FOR 68 OTHER DEFENDANTS, WHILE ACQUITTING 14 OTHERS. THE PRO-IRANIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD ANNOUNCED IN BEIRUT THAT IT WOULD ASSASSINATE TUNISIAN OFFICIALS IF DEATH SENTENCES WERE CARRIED OUT.

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COMMENT: THE TUNISIAN COURTS ARE NOT FULLY INDEPENDENT, AND THE GOVERNMENT ALMOST CERTAINLY INFLUENCED THE JUDGES' DECISIONS. TUNISIAN LEADERS PROBABLY HOPE THE SEVEN DEATH SENTENCES WILL COW FUNDAMENTALIST EXTREMISTS. THEY ARE LIKELY ALSO TO TRY TO USE THE ISLAMIC JIHAD THREAT TO BOLSTER THEIR CLAIM THAT TUNISIAN FUNDAMENTALISTS HAVE LINKS WITH UNPOPULAR FOREIGN TERRORIST GROUPS.

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AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, ISLAMIC JIHAD'S THREAT MAY INCREASE THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERN OVER A POSSIBLE FUNDAMENTALIST BACKLASH TO THE EXECUTIONS, AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS MAY HESITATE IN CARRYING OUT THE SENTENCES. INDEED, THE GOVERNMENT TEMPORIZED WITH GHANNOUCHI HIMSELF, PROBABLY BECAUSE IT LACKED EVIDENCE TYING HIM TO THE HOTEL BOMBINGS AND FEARED THAT A DEATH SENTENCE MIGHT TRIGGER A VIOLENT OUTBURST AGAINST THE REGIME.

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TUNISIAN LEADERS MAY ALSO HOPE THAT GHANNOUCHI'S IMPRISONMENT WILL GIVE THEM SOME LEVERAGE OVER THE LOOSELY ORGANIZED MTI. THEY MAY HOPE, IN PARTICULAR, THAT THE RELATIVELY MODERATE ELEMENTS CLOSELY ALLIED WITH HIM WILL TRY TO WIN HIS FREEDOM BY RESTRAINING VIOLENCE-PRONE EXTREMISTS. FUNDAMENTALIST MODERATES, HOWEVER, MAY NOT HAVE HAD THAT MUCH CONTROL OVER THE RADICALS BEFORE GHANNOUCHI'S ARREST, AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO HAVE LESS INFLUENCE AS LONG AS HE REMAINS IN PRISON AND UNABLE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE MTI.

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3. SRI LANKA-INDIA: AFTERMATH OF HUNGER STRIKE

INDIAN TROOPS WOUNDED AT LEAST TWO TAMIL CIVILIANS YESTERDAY IN COUNTERING VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE EAST SPARKED BY THE DEATH OF A HUNGER STRIKER FROM THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM ON SATURDAY. SCATTERED VIOLENCE CONTINUING IN THE NORTH AND EAST. SEVERAL MORE HUNGER STRIKERS AFFILIATED WITH THE TIGERS TOOK THE DEAD TIGER DEPUTY LEADER'S PLACE ON A PUBLIC STAGE. THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN SRI LANKA MET SATURDAY WITH TIGER LEADER PRABHAKARAN TO DISCUSS THE TIGERS' FIVE DEMANDS, WHICH INCLUDE HOLDING MAJORITY REPRESENTATION ON THE PROPOSED PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

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NEW DELHI MAY HAVE GIVEN THE TIGERS ASSURANCES ABOUT PRESSING COLOMBO HARDER TO MEET TIGER DEMANDS. THE FUNERAL OF THE TIGERS' DEPUTY LEADER PROBABLY WILL PROVOKE MORE VIOLENCE BETWEEN INDIAN FORCES AND THE LARGE NUMBER OF CIVILIAN DEMONSTRATORS EXPECTED FOR THE PROCESSION. THE TIGERS WILL USE THE DEATH FASTS AND THE FUNERAL TO WIN GREATER POLITICAL INFLUENCE OVER THE TAMIL POPULACE. THE TIGERS WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS THE PRETENSE OF NONVIOLENT OPPOSITION TO THE ACCORD BUT MAY PROVOKE TAMIL CIVILIANS TO OPPOSE THE INDIAN TROOPS WITH VIOLENCE.

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4. IN BRIEFS

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