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MEA BRIEF AP-MEAB 79-022 FOR JAN 31, 1979.

FROM: NFAC

CONTENTS: 4

2. SYRIA-IRAQ: RESULTS OF TALKS 4

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SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD AND IRAQI POLITICAL LEADER SADDAM HUSAYN ENDED THREE DAYS OF TALKS IN DAMASCUS TUESDAY WITH VAGUE PLEDGES OF CLOSER DEFENSE COOPERATION AND OF FURTHER STUDY OF FORMULAS TO ACHIEVE BAAATH PARTY UNITY. IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI SAID MUCH WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON A "UNITY FORMULA" AND IMPLIED THAT SYRIAN AND IRAQI LEADERS MAY NOT MEET AGAIN FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THESE PLEDGES FALL CONSIDERABLY SHORT OF REAL MILITARY OR POLITICAL INTEGRATION, AND A RUMORED MEETING BETWEEN ASSAD AND IRAQI PRESIDENT BAKR EARLY NEXT MONTH NOW SEEMS UNLIKELY.