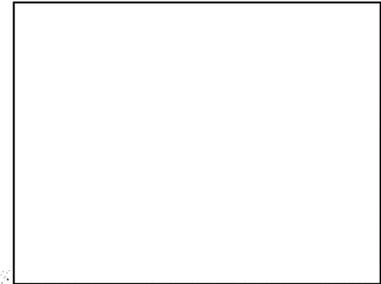




Director of
Central
Intelligence

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National Intelligence Daily

Thursday
18 December 1980

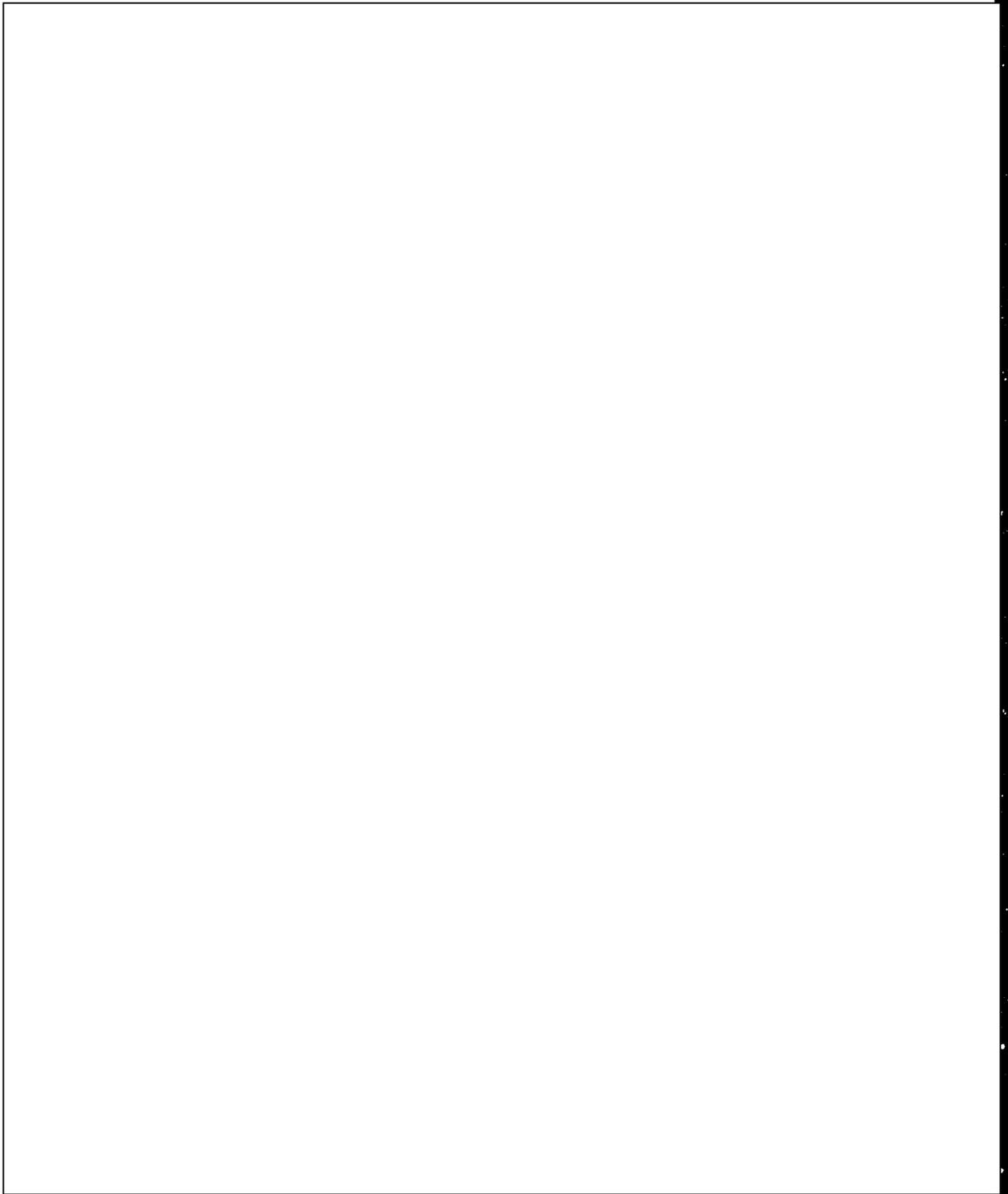
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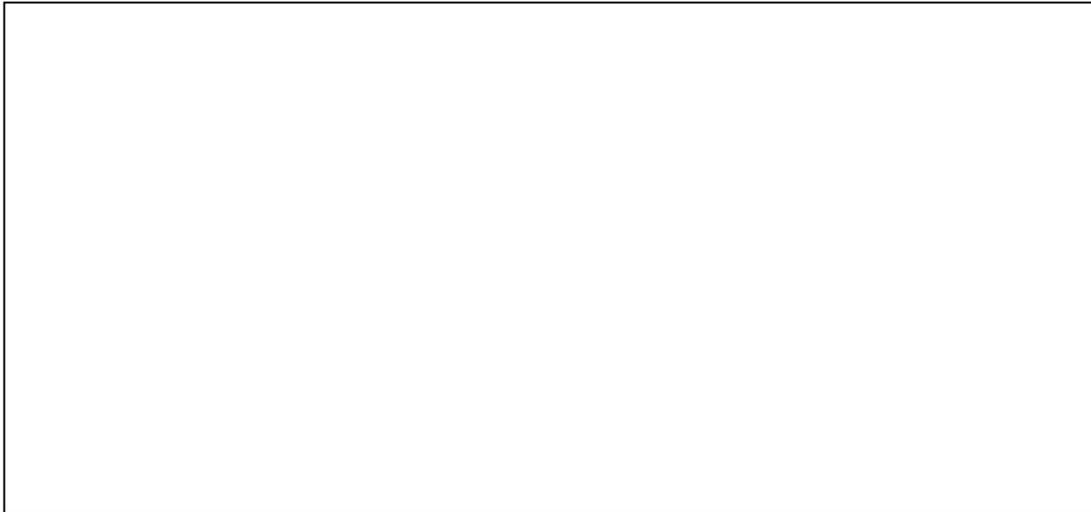
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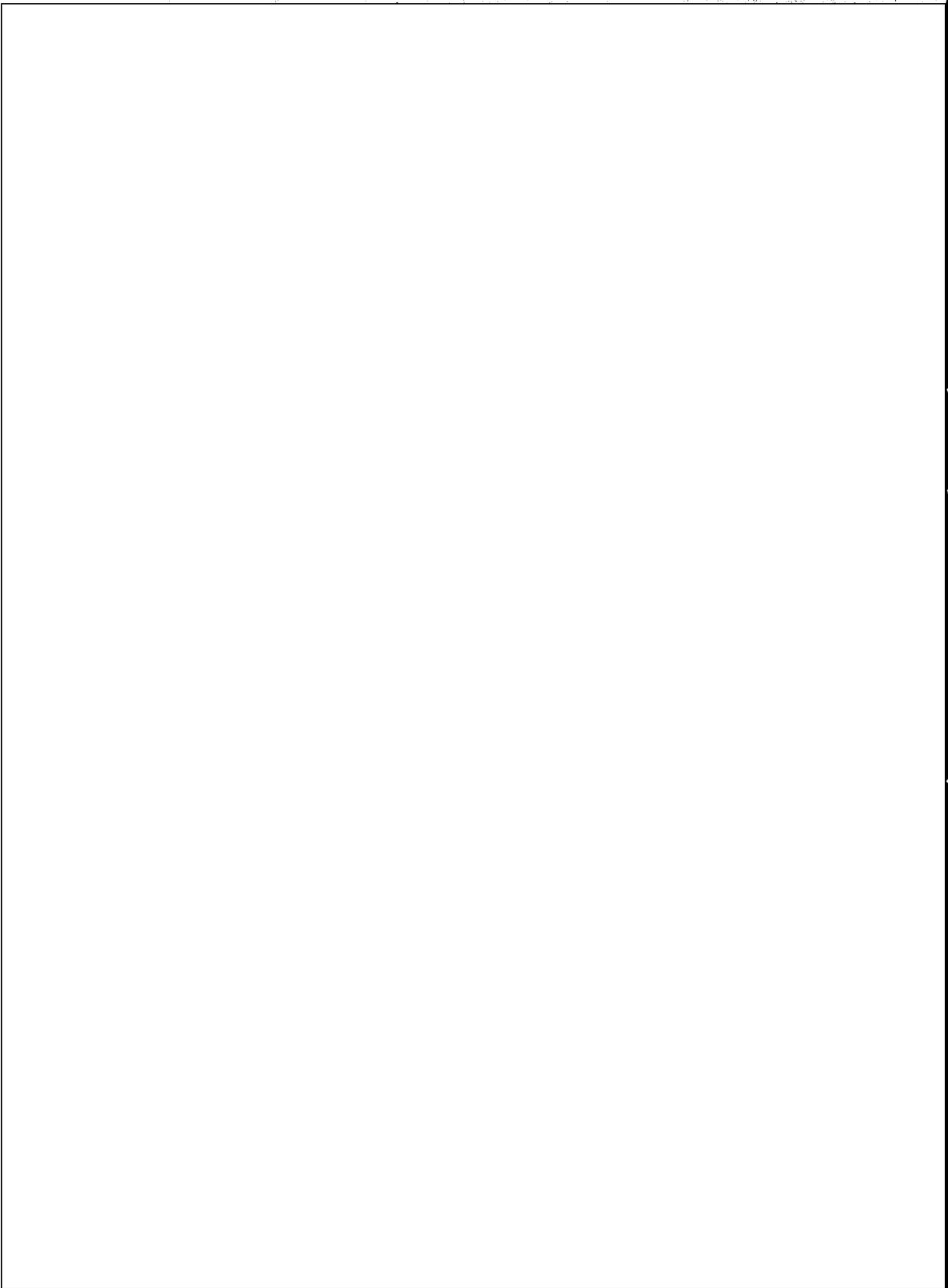
Special Analysis

Iran-Iraq: *A Military Overview*. 8



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SPECIAL ANALYSIS

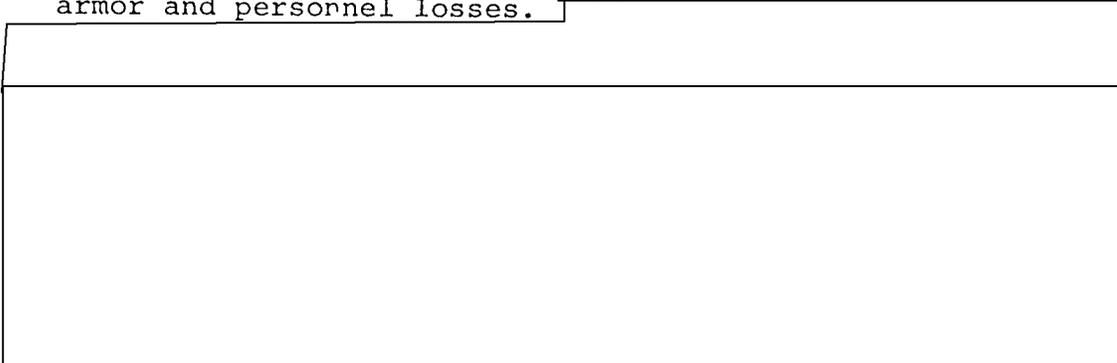
IRAN-IRAQ: A Military Overview



The reduction in the level of fighting since late October combined with supplies being acquired by both sides should allow a continuation of military operations at the current level at least until spring. The USSR's refusal to supply Iraq with tanks and aircraft almost certainly has influenced Baghdad's decision to rule out any major new offensives. Iran is relying on revolutionary fervor, its larger population, and stock of equipment purchased under the Shah to wear down the Iraqis.



The Iraqis recently have been relying on artillery attacks against Iranian positions while trying to limit armor and personnel losses.



The Iraqis have the bulk of three armored and two mechanized divisions plus several infantry brigades in Khuzestan, which should allow them to maintain their positions there through the winter. At full strength, these units would have over 1,500 tanks and 70,000 troops.



Iraq's reluctance to use its military advantage in Khuzestan has enabled Iran to strengthen its forces there. Iran probably now has over 40,000 troops in the province, including forces from two armored and two

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infantry divisions as well as paramilitary forces. The armored force now consists of between 300 and 400 tanks; another 200 probably are not operational. [redacted]

In the coming months, however, the Iranians will not be able to equal the Iraqi armored force in Khuzestan. The majority of the forces from the one armored and two Iranian infantry divisions farther north along the border are likely to remain in place. Only one other division, an incomplete armored unit, apparently has not moved to the west. [redacted]

So far, Iran has relied primarily on artillery, helicopters with antitank missiles, Revolutionary Guards, gendarmerie, and naval commandos to launch local counterattacks. Shortages of trained tank operators, maintenance personnel, and spare parts will continue to restrict the use of armor. [redacted]

The Iranians have been able to draw on large caches of artillery rounds and antitank missiles and have obtained infantry weapons, ammunition, and anti-aircraft weapons from Syria, Libya, and North Korea. [redacted]

[redacted] Iran's soviet-made items include 2,000 armored personnel carriers, 700 tank transporters, and over 20,000 trucks. [redacted]

Air Operations

The air war thus far has been more important psychologically than militarily. Both sides use most fighter aircraft on defensive patrols and are likely to be able to maintain indefinitely the potential for attacking high-visibility targets. Both also rely heavily on attack helicopters to provide close air support. [redacted]

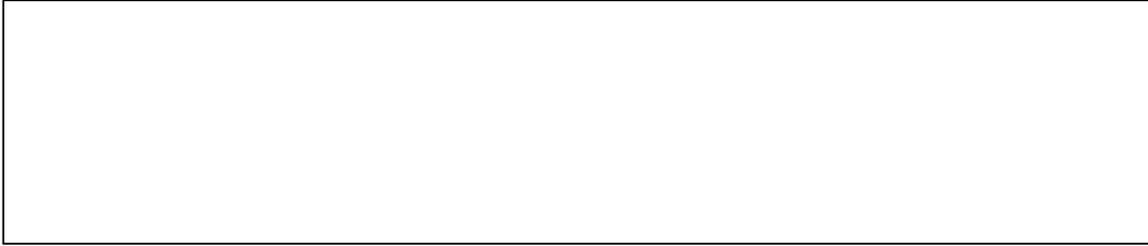
Despite Moscow's refusal to resupply Iraq, Baghdad's Air Force has managed slowly to increase the scale of its fighter operations. [redacted]

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Tehran appears to rely on cannibalization to sustain its Air Force. The Iranians have been able to compensate for some of the 100 fighters they have lost by repairing aircraft considered nonoperational at the outset of hostilities. 

Naval Operations

The Iranian Navy retains its supremacy over Iraqi naval forces and has initiated the limited sea action that has occurred so far. Baghdad appears to have used its missile patrol boats and landing ships only in a defensive capacity. 

The Iranians have attacked Iraqi ships and oil terminals. 

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