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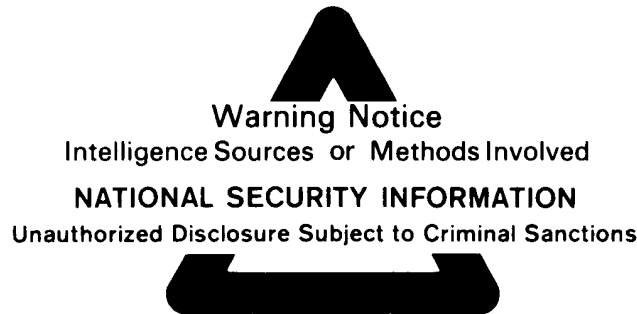
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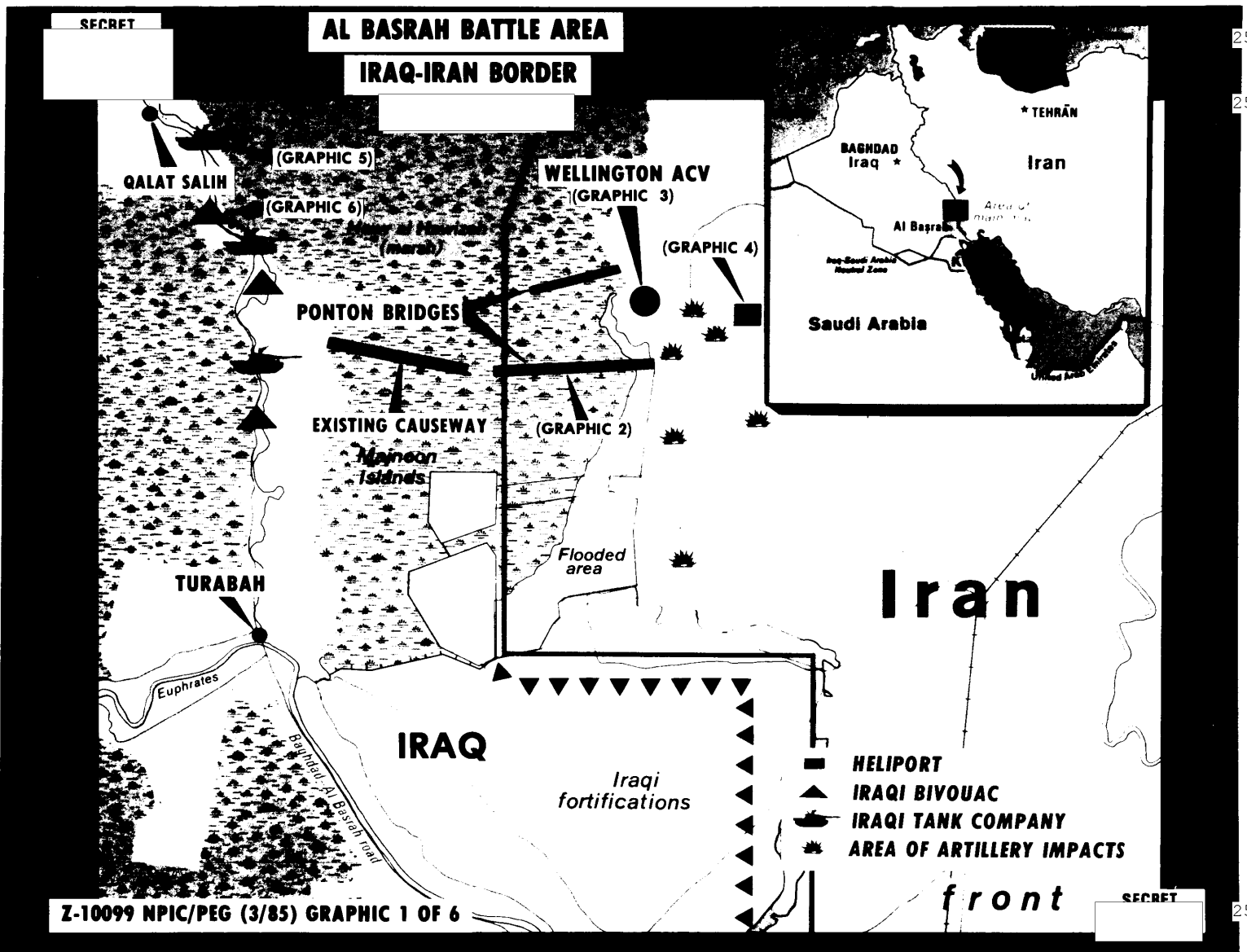
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AL BASRAH BATTLE AREA
IRAQ-IRAN BORDER



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1. SIGNIFICANCE: IRAN IS PREPARING TO LAUNCH AN OFFENSIVE NEAR THE MAJNOON ISLANDS. (SWN)
2. REMARKS: EXTENSIVE PREPARATIONS FOR AN IRANIAN OFFENSIVE ARE OBSERVED JUST NORTH OF THE MAJNOON ISLANDS. TWO LARGE PONTON BRIDGES ARE BEING EXTENDED ACROSS THE MARSH FROM AN IRANIAN CAUSEWAY TOWARDS AN IRAQI CAUSEWAY (GRAPHIC 2). BOTH BRIDGES EXTEND FROM NEAR 31-17N 047-43E TO 31-17N 047-40E AND CURRENTLY TERMINATE ABOUT 3 NM SHORT OF THE IRAQI CAUSEWAY. A NARROWER PONTON BRIDGE, POSSIBLY FOR INFANTRY, IS BEING BUILT NEAR 31-23N 047-46E. TWO WELLINGTON AIR CUSHION VEHICLES (ACV), THE FIRST TO BE DEPLOYED IN THIS AREA IN OVER A YEAR, ARE IN REVERTED POSITIONS NEAR THE NARROW PONTON BRIDGE (GRAPHIC 3). ACV HAVE BEEN USED TO TRANSPORT TROOPS ACROSS THE MARSH. IRAN IS ALSO CONSTRUCTING TWO HELIPORTS EAST OF THE MARSH (ONE ON GRAPHIC 4), AND NUMEROUS DEFENSIVE AND LOGISTICAL POSITIONS. ADDITIONAL COMBAT AND SUPPORT UNITS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED IN THIS AREA. THIS ACTIVITY APPEARS TO BE NEW SINCE MID-FEBRUARY. (SWN)

IRAQ HAS RESPONDED BY SHELLING THE NEW IRANIAN DEPLOYMENT AREAS AND BY REINFORCING THE STRATEGIC NORTH-SOUTH ROAD BETWEEN THE TOWNS OF TURABAH AND QALAT SALIH. AT LEAST THREE TANK COMPANIES HAVE DEPLOYED THERE, AND AT LEAST THREE BIVOUACS CONTAINING TENTS AND SUPPORT VEHICLES HAVE ALSO BEEN ESTABLISHED (GRAPHICS 5 & 6) (NOT ALL ON GRAPHIC). (SWN)

3. BE N/A, COORDINATES N/A (C)



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