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~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

Iraq - North Yemen: Relations [redacted]

Iraq's long-range goal is to see pro-Iraqi Baathist regimes installed in both North and South Yemen, beginning with Sana where the prospects are better. Baghdad has been flexible and patient in pursuing this end over the years. Iraq has quietly supported local Baathists in an effort to be in a position to exploit opportunities. Iraq also would like to impede Soviet penetration in southwest Arabia and to chip away at Saudi plans to dominate the Arabian Peninsula. [redacted]

[redacted]

Iraq recently tried to cool the conflict between the two Yemens, in part to prevent the controversy from upsetting attempts to forge an Arab consensus against the Egyptian-Israeli treaty.

[redacted]

As the military situation worsened, Baghdad--with help from Damascus--took the initiative to stop the conflict. Iraq was more than willing to intervene because it shares the Saudi concern over Soviet inroads in the area.

[redacted]

Iraq has tried, with little success, to pull South Yemen out of the Soviet orbit and into the Arab fold by means of various aid projects.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Several prominent North Yemeni Baathists were also named to important military posts on 21 March, including the new Deputy Chief of Staff, Lt. Col. Ali Qasim Mansur, and the Director of Military Operations, Maj. Abdallah Husayn al-Bashiri. Qasim Salam, a North Yemeni who is a member of the Baghdad-based Baath Party National Command, and who has been identified as a conduit for Iraqi funds into North Yemen, returned to Sana shortly after the war.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Should the fragile regime in Sana fall, as many expect, the Baathists may be in a position to pick up the pieces, or at least have a major role in a successor government. While the term "Baathist" is generally applied to a number of specific prominent political and military personalities in Sana, it is also used loosely to describe a variety of people with "progressive" notions and should not be taken to indicate any unified political approach or philosophy. Some of those in North Yemen receiving subventions from Iraq are more opportunist than Baathist. Even if the present Sana government is replaced by a Baathist or Baathist-oriented regime, the degree to which Iraq will have real control is thus questionable, although Iraq could expect Sana to pursue a foreign policy more sympathetic to its aims.

[REDACTED]

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