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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SY-05 SYE-00 ICAE-00 PM-06 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
INRE-00 EB-08 MCT-02 SES-01 SSN-02 SPH-01 L-03
USSS-00 OC-06 CCO-00 OCS-06 CA-01 A-02 OPR-02
OMB-01 ACDA-12 ANAE-00 /097 W
-----112353 221205Z /13

O 221111Z NOV 79
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8045
DIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
USLO RIYADH NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE 4396
AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T JIDDA 8073

DEPT PLS PASS NIACT IMMEDIATE TO A/SY/CC/TAGS

E.P 12065; GDS 11/22/85 (PLACKE JAMES A) OR-M
TAGS: PINS ASEC SA
SUBJ : (S) OCCUPATION OF GRAND MOSQUE MECCA
SITUATION AS OF 0800 GMT NOV 22

REF: (A) JIDDA 8039 (B) JIDDA 8047

1. (S -ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. USMTM RIYADH PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH FOLLOWING:
OCCUPATION OF GRAND MOSQUE WHICH BEGAN AT 0530 NOV 20 CONTINUES.
EVENING OF NOV 21 SAUDI FORCES GAINED ENTRY TO THE FIRST FLOOR BY
MEANS OF THEIR M-113 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, WHICH PROVIDED
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ADEQUATE COVER AGAINST THE OCCUPIERS' FIRE.
HOWEVER, OCCUPIERS RETREATED TO UPPER STORIES OF MOSQUE.
ARCHITECTURE OF SECOND FLOOR IS SUCH THAT OCCUPIERS HAVE PLENTY
OF COVER BEHIND SMALL PORTALS, ETCMN MAKING IT EASY FOR THEM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
DATE/CASE ID: 06 JUL 2006 200600046

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TO FIRE OUT AND DIFFICUTL FOR SAUDI TO HIT THEM. MOREOVER,
OPEN COURTYARD OF GRAND MOSQUE MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR SAUDIS TO
USE TEAR GAS.

3. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE BELIEVES THAT NUMBER OF HOSTAGES IS NOW
DOWN TO ABOUT 30. ONE HOSTAGE RECOVERED BY SAUDIS REPORTED THERE
IS NO FOOD AND LITTLE WATER ON SECOND FLOOR. HOSPITALS IN MECCA
ARE FULL OF CASUALTIES, BUT AS OF 0830 GMT, NO WOUNDED HAD BEEN
BROUGHT DOWN TO JIDDA MILITARY HOSPITAL.

4. MODA BELIEVES OCCUPIERS INCLUDE SAUDIS, YEMENIS, EGYPTIANS AND
NATIONALS OF "THE GULF STATES." MIN INFO YAMANI HAS DECLARED MOST
OF THEM HAVE BEEN CAPTURED HOWEVER, MODA SEEMS TO CONTRADICT THIS
IN THEIR ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGY OF DISSIDENTS. MODA :MIN ON DEF)
SAYS DISSIDENTS ARE FIGHTING TO THE DEATH, AND MANY HAVE BEEN
KILLED.

5. TWO SAUDIS WELL INFORMED ON RELIGIOUS MATTERS TELL US THAT
WHEN CAUST, THE MOSQUE INVADERS WILL PROBABLY NOT BE EXECUTED
UNTIL THE MONTH OF MUHARRAM IS OVER, EVEN IF THE TRIAL IS
COMPLETED IN MUHARRAM. THERE ARE THREE HOLY MONTHS IN WHICH
EXECUTIONS ARE NOT CARRIED OUT: DHU AL-QIDAH, DHU AL-HIJJ,
AND MUHARRAM. THIS PROHIBITION STEMS FROM TRIBAL TRADITION OF
EARLY TIMES, THERE WAS TRUCE DURING THOSE MONTHS TO
ALLOW MOSLIMS TO TRAVEL IN SAFETY TO MECCA DURING THE ANNUAL
PILGRIMAGE. ALL KILLING WAS FORBIDDEN DURING THIS PERIOD.
PENALTIES IMPOSED FOR CRIMES WERE DOUBLED, BUT EXECUTIONS WERE
POSTPONED. MUHARRAM WILL BE OVER ABOUT DECEMBER 20.
HOWEVER, A SAUDI WITH LEGAL TRAINING TELLS USTHAT KILLING IS
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PERMITTED DURING THE THREE HOLY MONTHS IF IT IS THE
RESULT OF INCITEMENT. THUS, IN HIS VIEW, THE MOSQUE INTRUDERS
COULD BE EXECUTED. WEST

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