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NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR WEST

E.O. 12065: GDS 11/28/89 (SAUNDERS, HAROLD H.)

TAGS: APER, SA

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE EVACUATION OF AMERICANS FROM SAUDI
ARABIA (S)

REF: (A) STATE 307076; (B) JIDDA 8103

1. (S) ENTIRE TEXT.
2. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM CHAIRED A MEETING NOVEMBER 28 WHICH INCLUDED AMBASSADORS PARKER HART AND DEAN BROWN IN ADDITION TO DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AND DISCUSSED THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE KEY POINTS IN YOUR MESSAGE (REF. B) WERE FULLY DISCUSSED. WE AGREE WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATION THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH SAG ARE CRUCIAL.

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BEGIN FYI: DURING THOSE CONSULTATIONS YOU MUST BEAR IN MIND WE MAY HAVE TO DRAW DOWN PERSONNEL LEVELS SOMEWHAT EVEN IF SAUDIS PREFER WE NOT DO SO. END FYI. YOU SHOULD SEEK MEETING WITH CP FAHD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND YOU ARE ALSO

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AUTHORIZED TO MEET WITH PRINCE ABDULLAH AND PRINCE SULTAN
IF YOU FEEL IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN FORMULATING YOUR
RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. IN YOUR MEETING WITH CP FAHD YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOW-
ING POINTS:

-- GIVEN THE CONTINUING TENSION IN THE REGION PRIMARILY
RELATED TO IRANIAN EVENTS, THE USG HAS TAKEN A SERIES OF
STEPS TO PROTECT AMERICAN CITIZENS IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN
THE AREA, TO LOWER THE U.S. PRESENCE GENERALLY AND THUS
FORESTALL OTHER HOSTAGE SITUATIONS FROM DEVELOPING; IT ALSO
MAKES IT EASIER FOR LOCAL SECURITY AUTHORITIES TO PROTECT
REMAINING AMERICANS.

-- WE HAVE NOTED SAG'S FIRM AND CORRECT RESPONSE TO THE
MECCA INCIDENT, AND THE SAG'S EXTENSIVE MEASURES TO PROTECT
AMERICAN CITIZENS AND INSTALLATIONS IN THE KINGDOM.

-- WE ARE VERY APPRECIATIVE OF THE STEPPED UP SECURITY YOU
ARE PROVIDING FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS. AT THE SAME TIME,
WE ARE STILL VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE LARGE NUMBER OF
(40,000) AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE KINGDOM, PARTICULARLY IN
THE EASTERN PROVINCE, AND BELIEVE WE MUST CAREFULLY CON-
SIDER WAYS OF LOWERING THIS HIGH PROFILE DURING A TIME OF
HIGH TENSION IN THE AREA. WE WOULD LIKE FAHD'S BEST
ADVICE.

-- WE PLAN TO BE IN CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION WITH THE SAG
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BOTH ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN THE KINGDOM AND ON REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IRANIAN
SITUATION.

-- WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL UNREST IN THE SHIA
COMMUNITY IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE. WHAT ADDITIONAL STEPS
ARE YOU CONTEMPLATING IN THIS AREA TO PREVENT INCIDENTS.

-- WHAT WOULD BE YOUR REACTION IF WE ENCOURAGE A REDUCTION
OF DEPENDENTS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS THROUGH VOLUNTARY MEANS.
THEY WOULD LEAVE THE KINGDOM FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD. WE
HAVE DONE THIS ON MANY OCCASIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

-- SHOULD WE ADVISE AMERICAN BUSINESS TRAVELLERS TO
TEMPORARILY POSTPONE TRAVEL TO THE KINGDOM? WOULD IT BE

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USEFUL IN CONSULTATION WITH YOU IF WE IDENTIFIED CERTAIN NON-ESSENTIAL USG PERSONNEL IN THE KINGDOM AND TEMPORARILY EVACUATED THEM?

-- ANY MEASURES WE RECOMMEND IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD, OF COURSE, BE DONE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMPANIES AND, IN SO DOING, WE WOULD SEEK TO AVOID ANY SERIOUS DISRUPTION IN OTHER SAUDI ARABIAN OPERATIONS.

-- IN ADDITION TO THE MEASURES THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS TAKING, WHAT KINDS OF USG ACTIONS DOES THE SAG CONSIDER APPROPRIATE?

-- (IF ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE U.S. MILITARY ACTIVITIES DURING THIS PERIOD) WE CONTINUE TO SEEK PEACEFUL MEANS TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF OUR HOSTAGE DIPLOMATS IN IRAN. AS FAHD KNOWS, WE CANNOT RULE OUT ANY OPTION. AGAIN, WE WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE WILL BE IN CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION WITH THE SAG ON IRANIAN DEVELOPMENTS.

-- IF FAHD BELIEVES REDUCTION WOULD BE DAMAGING TO SAUDI ARABIA, PLEASE PURSUE WITH HIM AND SULTAN WHETHER SAG WOULD SECRET

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ENGAGE WITH US IN URGENT AND DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLANNING ON COLLECTING OUR PEOPLE INTO REGIONAL SAFEHAVENS AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE AS A STEP TOWARD EXTENSIVE EVACUATION IF NECESSARY. FYI: IF WE ARE NOT GOING TO DRAW DOWN OUR NUMBERS, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE A HARD AND DETAILED PLAN FOR THEIR PROTECTION THAT HAS HIGH PROBABILITY OF WORKING. END FYI.

4. AFTER YOU HAVE REPORTED ON THESE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SAG, WE WILL ISSUE ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSULT WITH THE LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONDUCT PARALLEL BRIEFINGS FOR CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS ABOUT ANY ADDITIONAL STEPS WE MIGHT TAKE CONCERNING THE SECURITY OF AMERICANS IN THE KINGDOM. PENDING RECEIPT OF REPORT OF YOUR TALK WITH FAHD WE INTEND TO RESPOND TO INQUIRIES FROM THE U.S. BUSINESS COMMUNITY BY SAYING WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF CONSULTING WITH THE SAG ON ENHANCING THE SAFETY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE KINGDOM.

5. IF IT IS DECIDED TO REDUCE THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE KINGDOM, WOULD IT BE HELPFUL AT THE SAME TIME TO TAKE SIMILAR STEPS IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION NOT

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INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS? WOULD THIS REDUCE
SAUDI SENSITIVITIES?

6. WE ARE RESERVING A DECISION ON ANY FURTHER ACTION
TOWARD A TEMPORARY REDUCTION OF U.S. PERSONNEL AND
DEPENDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA PENDING THE RESULTS OF YOUR
CONSULTATIONS. VANCE

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