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INTELLIGENCE REPORT – IRAN/IRAQ WAR UPDATE
REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT
EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1982

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2075-034/154
2075-034/156 (DDI)

23 December, 1982

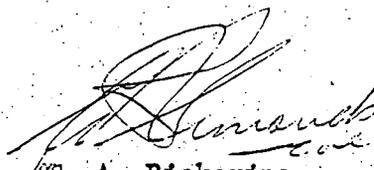
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REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1982

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A. Pickering
Major General

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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

IRAN/IRAQ WAR UPDATE

REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1982

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IRAN/IRAQ WAR UPDATE

REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1982

INTRODUCTION

1. In Sep 1980, after several border incidents, Iraq invaded Iran. With Iran in disarray due to the Islamic revolution and its military forces weak and disorganized, Iraq hoped for a quick victory. Iraq's war aims included:

- a. the seizure of disputed border areas, most notably the Shatt-al-Arab waterway;
- b. preventing Iran from exporting its revolution to the Shia population in Southern Iraq;
- c. the overthrow of the despised Khomeini regime; and
- d. demonstrating Iraq's pre-eminence in the Arab world in general and the Gulf in particular.

(CONFIDENTIAL)

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS 1981-82

2. By the spring of 1981, Iraqi controlled areas reached the limits shown at Annex A. By mid summer 1981, Iran's military began to gain local successes which culminated in the capture of Khorramshahr in May 1982 and the subsequent Iraqi withdrawal from most Iranian territory in June 1982. Iranian victories were largely a result of the effective mass use of highly motivated revolutionary guards, successful use of infiltration tactics, the regular army's improved use of manoeuvre and judicious use of limited military material resources. Iraq contributed to the Iranian victories through its decision to restrict casualties by fighting a non aggressive defensive battle, its use of an over-extended linear defence, a failure to react in a timely way to Iranian battlefield moves and a lack of fighting will that was reflected in mass surrenders.

3. In July 1982, Iran launched several major attacks inside Iraq near Basra. The Iranian offensive failed due to Iraq's improved defensive measures, army leadership changes and an apparent increase in the will to fight - probably because the combat was in defense of Iraqi soil. An Iraqi Shia uprising did not occur as hoped for by Iran. Iran has now shifted its emphasis from the southern front near Basra to the central front opposite Baghdad and south central opposite Amarah. Although Iran continues to slowly push Iraq out of its last footholds in Iran and has even penetrated 3 to 5 kms inside Iraq opposite Amarah, there is little prospect for a decisive victory. Iraq has failed to use its air superiority to advantage and Iran continues to have difficulties in maintaining its material resources at the level required to mount intense sustained operations. The FEBA as of mid-Nov 82 is approximately as shown at Annex B. Annex C shows the estimates of casualties for both sides.

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- 2 -

IRAQ ECONOMIC/INTERNAL SITUATION

4. Since the beginning of the war the Gulf States have provided Iraq with \$20 billion in loans. Iraqi oil exports have dropped from 3 million barrels per day (B/D) before the war to 650,000 B/D through the Iraqi/Turkish pipeline, the only export facility available to Iraq. Iraq's financial resources are presently sufficient to pay for all of its military imports and President Hussein has effectively insulated the average Iraqi from any serious economic effects of the war. If the oil glut continues, the Gulf States will find it increasingly difficult to continue providing such a high level of financial assistance and the economic effects of the war will become more difficult to conceal.

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5. Internally, Hussein's position in Iraq has improved since his reorganization of the Revolutionary Command Council in June of 1982. Although Iraq's Kurdish population still presents an internal security threat it is being contained. There is no serious identifiable threat to Hussein's position and to date his security apparatus has dealt ruthlessly with any dissidents.

(CONFIDENTIAL)

IRAN ECONOMIC/INTERNAL SITUATION

6. Iran's financial situation is slowly recovering from cash shortages as a result of an increase in oil exports from 800,000 B/D to approximately 2 million B/D compared with 3.5 to 4.5 million B/D in the late 1970's. Iran is offering cut rate prices and is bartering some of its oil. If Iran maintains or expands this export level, it should be able to cover import costs and finance the war.

(SECRET)

7. Most of Iran's present economic problems stem from years of revolution and political turmoil. Internal dissent and violence still exist notably from various Iranian opposition groups, but the government appears to have the situation under control. There is no immediate threat to Khomeini's present clerical ruling clique, although there are some differences of opinion within the government.

(SECRET)

PEACE DEMANDS AND PROSPECTS

8. Iraq is unlikely to undertake any renewed offensives. It is seeking to end the war as quickly as possible without sacrificing territory or the Baath party's hold on power. (CONFIDENTIAL)

9. Iran's official war aims as stated [REDACTED] are:

- a. Iraqi withdrawal from Iranian territory;
- b. the return of Iraqi Shi'ites of Iranian heritage who were expelled to Iran;
- c. declaration of Iraq as the aggressor; and
- d. payment of reparations by Iraq.

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- 3 -

As well, the Islamic Republican Party radicals have repeatedly demanded the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the Baath party, and the establishment of an "Islamic State" in Iraq. The recent formation of an "Islamic Government in Iraq in Exile" sponsored by Iran and consisting of discontented exiled Iraqi clerics is an indication of Iran's persistence in its attempt to overthrow Hussein.

(SECRET)

10. Peace efforts by the Islamic Conference, the Arab League, the UN and numerous countries have been unsuccessful in dealing with Iran's requirements. To date Algerian mediation seems to hold the best prospects for peace but even Algeria is pessimistic about achieving results.

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OUTLOOK/ASSESSMENT

11. The prospect for an early peace is poor. Iran will continue to maintain pressure on Iraq by attempting to regain pockets of its territory still held by Iraq - a tactic at which Iran has had notable success as only 300 to 400 sq kms remain under Iraqi control. As well, Iran can be expected to capture Iraqi territory where ever possible - to date Iran holds approximately 250 sq kms of Iranian territory. There is an apparent division within the Iranian government as to whether to continue the war until Hussein goes and a friendly government is established or whether to negotiate a ceasefire after regaining all Iranian territory. However, as long as Khomeini remains in power a ceasefire is unlikely, particularly as Iran is in little danger of losing the war.

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12. Iraq is preparing for the worst - a long war that could see some Iraqi border areas fall into Iranian hands. Iraq hopes that time and stubborn resistance will force Iran to settle for a negotiated peace. As long as Iraqi morale holds, the war could go on indefinitely. Neither country is capable of mounting a decisive military offensive under the present circumstances. A long war of attrition appears to be the most likely prospect as long as the current leaders remain in power.

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ANNEX A
TO: 2075-034/154 (DDI)
1075-034/156 (DDI)

IRAQ

IRAN

BAAGHDAD

AL AMARAH

AL BASTAH

KHORMANSHAHR

KUWAIT

IRAN IRAQ WAR
APPROXIMATE FEBA SPRING 1981

FEBA

150 kms

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ANNEX B
TO: 2075-034/154 (DDI)
2075-034/156 (DDI)



IRAN IRAQ WAR
APPROXIMATE FEBA NOVEMBER 1982

Iranian Territory Held by Iraq 
Iraqi Territory Held by Iran 

150 kms

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KUWAIT

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ANNEX C
TO: 2075-034/154 (DDI)
2075-034/156 (DDI)

IRAN/IRAQ WAR
ESTIMATES OF CASUALTIES
EFFECTIVE 1 NOVEMBER 82

	IRAQ POP. 13 MILLION	IRAN POP. 40 MILLION
KILLED IN ACTION	45,000 – 50,000	70,000 ⁽¹⁾
PRISONER	40,000	5,000
COMBAT AIRCRAFT	130-150 ⁽²⁾	170
TANKS	1,000 ⁽³⁾	800
APC	1,000	– ⁽⁴⁾
ARTILLERY	400 ⁽⁵⁾	400

- (1) KIA for Iran is conservative and could exceed 100,000
(2) Iraq has replaced most of its aircraft losses while Iran has not received any replacements and may have only 75 operational combat aircraft remaining.
(3) Most Iraqi tank losses have been replaced while Iran has replaced only 200 tanks (T-54/55 from Libya and T-69 from N. Korea).
(4) No loss estimates.
(5) Most Iraqi losses have been replaced – some Iranian losses have been replaced.

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