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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name FORTIER, DONALD: FILES

Withdrawer

RBW 4/17/2019

File Folder YEMEN (SAUDI ARABIA)

FOIA

F2004-026

Box Number 19

COLLINS

410

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
233600	MEMO	DRAFT DENNIS ROSS TO PAUL WOLFOWITZ RE. COOPERATION	5	3/26/1981	B1
233601	REPORT	RE. SAUDIA RABIA: MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS EXPECTED [PARTIAL]	10	10/27/1981	B1
		PAR 4/17/2019 NLR-195-19-39-2-1 #233601			
233602	CABLE	SANAA 7932	3	12/7/1981	B1
		R 4/17/2019 NLR-195-19-39-4-9 #233602			
233603	CABLE	12/09/81	3	12/9/1981	B1
233604	CABLE	STATE 332154	1	12/16/1981	B1
233605	CABLE	STATE 340468	3	12/24/1981	B1
233606	CABLE	STATE 340499	2	12/24/1981	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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233607 CABLE	MUSCAT 0593	2	2/3/1982	B1
233608 CABLE	MUSCAT 1069	1	3/6/1982	B1
233609 CABLE	MUSCAT 1219	4	3/15/1982	B1
233610 CABLE	STATE 080425	2	3/25/1982	B1
233611 CABLE	MUSCAT 2299	2	5/20/1982	B1

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233601	REPORT RE. SAUDIA RABIA: MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS EXPECTED [PARTIAL]	10	10/27/1981	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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DIAIAPPR 170-81



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DIA REVIEWED 25-Aug-2011: SANITIZED FOR RELEASE IN PART

REFER TO DOS

Intelligence Appraisal Saudi Arabia: Major Policy Decisions Expected(U)

DOS REVIEWED 29-Aug-2011: NO OBJECTION TO RELEASE AS SANITIZED

27 OCTOBER 1981

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
Authority CRIST #233601
BY PW NARA DATE 4/17/19

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NOCONTRACT	Not Releasable to Contractors/ Consultants.
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Intelligence Appraisal

SAUDI ARABIA: MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS EXPECTED(U)

PREPARED BY

25x1

DB-3C

This is a Department of Defense Publication
Produced by the Defense Intelligence Agency

Classified by Multiple Sources
Review on 22 Oct 01

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~~SECRET~~**SAUDI ARABIA: MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS EXPECTED (U)**Summary

(C) Saudi Arabia faces several key decisions during the coming year that will impact on regional political alignments, such as the influence of the US among moderate Arab states and intra-Arabian Gulf defensive measures. The future of Saudi Arabian relations with Egypt is entering a period when reconciliation is possible. Saudi relations with the US have reached a pivotal situation. The US decision on the AWACS sale could have a profound effect on US-Saudi cooperation for years. Finally, the Saudis have taken the lead in promoting defensive cooperation among the smaller Arabian Gulf states.

DiscussionRelations with Egypt:

(S/NOFORN) Saudi Arabia's relations with Egypt have been strained since the Camp David Accords were reached in the Fall of 1978. The Saudi view of the agreement was that Israel would relinquish control of the Sinai Peninsula in order to remove Egypt as a military threat while making no meaningful concessions concerning the status of Jerusalem and Palestinian autonomies. The latter two issues are considered by the Saudis as key elements to any initiative for peace. Additionally, the Saudis felt slighted because Sadat did not seek their counsel. The only major difference of opinion in Riyadh was whether President Sadat had honestly expected Israeli concessions on the Palestinian and Jerusalem issues or if he really only intended to reach a separate peace. Sadat's intentions were not considered relevant because the Saudis believed Israel's goal of a separate peace would not change. Nothing has occurred over the past 3 years to change Riyadh's analysis of ultimate Israeli goals.

(S/NOFORN) Prospects for a Saudi-Egyptian rapprochement deteriorated further due to exchanges of personal attacks on the Saud family in the Egyptian press and milder ones on Sadat in the Saudi press. Additionally, the reelection of Prime Minister Begin ended any Saudi hopes that a new Israeli Government might make the concessions on Palestine and Jerusalem which would be necessary if Saudi Arabia were to shift its support behind Sadat's policy. Nevertheless, there had been some indications a Saudi-Egyptian rapprochement could be achieved following the April 1982 Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. The Saudis' reasoning probably was that Egypt would not do anything to jeopardize the return of the Sinai, but Israeli intransigence, coupled with the lack of effective political pressure on Israel, would convince Sadat that further gains were unlikely. At that time, Sadat would realize that Egyptian interests would be best served by rejoining the Arab fold. Then, appropriate peace initiatives, such as the Fahd Plan, would emerge so all parties, except perhaps Israel, could save face and ensure Arab relations with the US would not be overly strained.

(C/NOFORN) The death of Sadat was by no means a cause for celebration in Riyadh. Political realities dictated a subdued official Saudi response, but the assassination was a shock to the Royal family. However, the assassination will improve the political climate between Cairo and Riyadh now that the source of

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DIA Intelligence Appraisal

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the personal animosities is gone. Also, the personal attacks may not have been as damaging as otherwise believed. As recently as last June, Prince Sultan stated that Saudi Arabia was quick to pass over past disputes and would even forgive those who had insulted the Saudi leadership on a personal basis. Only insults to Islam and attempts to disrupt internal security would cause Saudi Arabia to refuse to mend differences. The Sultan's remarks were in the context of Saudi-Libyan relations, but their implication for improved Saudi-Egyptian relations is obvious. Such an improvement is even more likely now, since Mubarak is known for his role in urging Sadat to seek better relations with the Monarchy.

(S/NOFORN) The Saudis apparently have adopted a wait-and-see policy towards President Mubarak. Mubarak's pledge to continue Sadat's foreign policy should have been expected by Riyadh because any other announcement would easily jeopardize the scheduled return of the Sinai. Likewise, sympathetic Saudi eulogies or representation at Sadat's funeral would be widely interpreted as a Saudi break from the Arab consensus and would have placed them in a somewhat precarious diplomatic situation. An overt attempt to reconcile relations is possible but unlikely in the near term. Such a shift would have to be carefully orchestrated, given the stated positions of the respective governments and the Saudis' penchant for private, methodical diplomacy. Progress could be realized after Mubarak regains the lost territory and may even be hastened if the recent Libya-South Yemen-Ethiopia pact quickly evolves into a serious common threat. In the long term, the mutual political, economic, and military benefits to be gained from a reconciliation should guarantee its eventual occurrence, even though the emergence of a politically strong Egypt may reduce Saudi gains as a leader in the Arab world.

Relations with the US:

(C) Saudi Arabia has been the Arab world's most consistent supporter of the US for nearly 50 years. US-Saudi ties reflect mutual strategic, economic, political, and moral perceptions, except for the Israeli issue. Saudi Arabia accepts the reality of Israel, and Saudi foreign policy announcements strongly imply Israel's right to exist. The Saudis also believe that resolving the issues of Palestinian autonomy and Jerusalem are central to any attempt to achieve peace. Israel is viewed as an expansionist state without any inclination to compromise on the vital issues. US military, economic, and political support is viewed as the primary cause of Israeli intransigence. Any erosion of that support would, in the Saudi view, result in increased Israeli flexibility. Therefore, Saudi policy reflects attempts to convince the US that its ties with moderate Arab states are as important as US-Israeli relations and that exerting pressure on Israel to come to terms with the Arabs benefits everyone but the Soviets and Arab radicals.

(C/NOFORN) The paradox caused by the strong US-Israeli association leads to many potential embarrassments for Saudi Arabia. Riyadh views the US as the final and most effective impediment to global Communist advances and, in a regional context, as the final guarantor of Saudi security. A close relationship with the US would be highly desirable, except it would leave the Saudis vulnerable to charges of ignoring the Palestinian issue for their own gain. Saudi commitment to support Palestinian rights, as defined by the Arab consensus, is irrevocable and reflects deep-seated moral convictions. If forced to choose between supporting

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Arab goals or furthering US-Saudi relations, the Saudis will opt for the former. It must be remembered that Riyadh views peace as the ultimate Arab goal and that peace will eventually allow close US-Arab cooperation.

(C) The Saudis do not consider themselves a military threat to Israel. Saudi participation in past wars has been token and essentially designed to meet political obligations. Planned improvements in Saudi Arabia's armed forces should not alter its level of participation in any future Arab-Israeli wars. The Saudis feel that their greatest contribution to any future conflict will be, as it was in 1973, economic.

(S/NOFORN) Since Saudi Arabia will probably not emerge as a military confrontation state against Israel, it views Israeli opposition to proposed arms purchases as attempts to drive political wedges between the US and Saudi Arabia while advancing exaggerated arguments of defense and security concerns. The Saudi perception is that the ultimate Israeli goal is to create friction between the US and moderate Arabs whenever possible, thus reducing Arab influence in Washington and allowing Israel to further consolidate its territorial gains.

(C) The Saudis view the proposed AWACS sale as a watershed case to test US intentions and reliability. Approval of the sale would be interpreted in Riyadh as an expression of a US commitment to Saudi security and a willingness to provide tangible support to Arabs in the face of strong Israeli opposition. The sale would also allow the Saudi Government to counter internal arguments that Saudi support of the US in economic and energy matters is not appreciated or rewarded.

(C) The refusal to sell AWACS would lead to alterations in US-Saudi relations. Changes would not be sudden or dramatic for several reasons. The Saudis do not generally engage in diplomatic dramatics, preferring extensive preparations and the certainty of prior private consultation. Furthermore, long-term continuing programs insure an indefinite period of US-Saudi cooperation. However, the Saudis are expected to favor alternate suppliers for goods and services. It remains unlikely that the USSR would be included among the alternate sources. The basic Saudi opposition to establishing ties with the USSR is firmly based in Islamic precepts and is unlikely to change regardless of the state of relations with the US.

(C) In the military context, increased purchases from Western Europe should be expected. France already has made major inroads as an arms supplier for the Army and Navy. The French position would be further enhanced if the Saudis opt to purchase Mirage 4000 jet fighters. British assistance was expected to decline as the Lightning jet fighters were replaced by F-15s. The potential sale of Nimrods -- British AWACS equivalent -- and the Tornado jet fighter -- a combined UK-German-Italian venture -- would propel the UK forward as a major competitor in Saudi arms sales. Other potential alternate suppliers include Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Brazil, and South Korea.

(C) A deterioration of relations would also have economic ramifications. Riyadh will probably be less cooperative as a relative moderating influence in the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC). Many Saudi planners argue that Saudi interests would be better served by reducing oil production and charging

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what the market will bear. Although Saudi production/pricing policies are more sophisticated than merely being a reflection of relations with Washington, the US has had some influence. Any reduction in that influence will surely enhance the position of those technocrats favoring maximum profit and resource conservation. OPEC price unity could lead to lower Saudi production regardless of other concerns. As with other issues, it is unlikely any Saudi shift would be sudden and dramatic. Also, any new policy would be tempered by its potential impact on major Western economies. Economic instability clearly is not in Saudi interests. This concern was one of the major factors leading to the end of the oil embargo in 1974.

(C/NOFORN) While a congressional veto of the AWACS sale will increase pressures on Riyadh to place some distance between itself and the US, the potential damage should not be overstated. As stated, current programs will insure a continued US presence. Also, Saudi Arabia will have to retain a degree of cordiality in relations to insure that it retains some influence with the US. Despite differences, the Saudis view the US as instrumental to achieving a Middle East peace. The Saudis realize they provide a valuable bridge between the US and less moderate Arab states and will not wish to abandon that role. Also, their perception of the US as the only power capable of guaranteeing the survival of the regime should serve to keep many doors open.

Defense Agreements:

(S/NOFORN) Saudi Arabia traditionally has viewed Iraq, Israel, and South Yemen as its primary external threats. Iraq and Israel were deemed as the most potent of the three, but also the least likely to attack. In the past, Iraq's capabilities were tempered by internal problems with the Kurds and occasional periods of increased tension with Iran. It was believed that Saudi relations with the US, along with the minor contribution Saudi Arabia would most likely make to any Arab-Israeli conflict, would minimize any Israeli enthusiasm to attack Saudi Arabia. Although South Yemen seemed willing to attack Saudi Arabia almost from the day it achieved independence, its marginal military capabilities limited its hostile activities to extreme southern Saudi Arabia.

(S/NOFORN) Events over the past 3 years have significantly altered what had been a manageable situation. The most important event was the Iranian revolution. The Shah was perceived as being untrustworthy because of his occupation of the Tunbs and Abu Musa Islands, lingering suspicions of his claims to Bahrain, and ties to Israel. Generally, however, Saudi Arabian and Iranian goals were parallel and Iran's role as the area's policeman was never challenged. The revolution shattered the regional status quo by transforming this former quasi-benign competitor into a potential threat. The threat became less potential and more active with the onset of the Iran-Iraq War. Saudi Arabia's thinly veiled support of Iraq has probably insured that satisfactory relations will exist with Iraq for some time to come, but has clearly alienated its relations with Iran. Increased Saudi military deployments in the east and heightened concern over the activities of Saudi Shia Muslims reflect the revised Saudi view of Iranian intentions.

(C) Another landmark incident to change Saudi perceptions of the threat was the Israeli bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor last June. The technical feasibility of an Israeli attack against eastern Saudi Arabia had been conceded at the

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intellectual level, and the Iraqi raid proved the point. The vulnerable key oil facilities, which had not been attacked for over 40 years, suddenly had one active threat -- Iran --and one less ominous, but highly lethal, threat -- Israel.

(C) Most recently, the Libyan-Ethiopia-South Yemen Alliance has emerged. South Yemen had been an irritant along the southern border since the British granted independence in 1967. Limited military capabilities, coupled with preoccupation with supporting subversive movements, kept the South Yemen threat at a low level well into the 1970s. The acquisition of two allies, coupled with continuing force improvements, could significantly change the status quo.

(S/NOFORN) The primary Libyan contribution will have to include a large financial commitment to make this pact potent. Arms transfers and token military support cannot be discounted. Ethiopia is in a more suitable geographic position to engage in military activities against Saudi Arabia. Ethiopian intentions may have been revealed during the 1979 conflict between the two Yemens when there were indications that Ethiopian military personnel were dispatched to assist South Yemeni efforts. Ethiopian air and naval assets could be effective in attacking southwestern Saudi Arabia and Saudi ships in the Red Sea.

(S/NOFORN) Saudi Arabia has few viable military allies. The smaller Arabian Gulf states would support the Saudis during a crisis, but all except Oman maintain relatively ineffective forces and all have limited force-projection capabilities. Jordan would be sympathetic to any Saudi plight. However, Jordanian concerns over Syria, Israel, and, perhaps again in the future, Iraq would preclude an effective contribution to Saudi defense. Nevertheless, some progress has been realized in air defense cooperation. Egypt would offer some hope, assuming a reconciliation can be achieved between Riyadh and Cairo. The US stands potentially as Saudi Arabia's most effective ally, but Saudi reservations of the US' dependability, the prospects of increased domestic and regional criticism of Saudi-US relations, and continuing disagreement over the proper means for achieving a Middle East peace are major blocks to enhancing US-Saudi cooperation. The refusal to sell the AWACS or the emergence of strategic cooperation agreements between the US and Israel would further lessen Riyadh's enthusiasm for closer security ties with the US.

(S/NOFORN) Given the uncertainties of the situation, Saudi Arabia has embarked on two programs to enhance its defensive posture. One is to bring the Saudi Army closer to its authorized strength. This will be accomplished by transferring as many as 15,000 Pakistani soldiers to Saudi Arabia. The Pakistanis are expected to provide most of the personnel for one armored brigade while rounding out the personnel levels in the other armored and mechanized infantry brigades. The Pakistanis should be in place by mid-1982. A follow-on program may be initiated to provide naval personnel in conjunction with Riyadh's recent purchase of French naval equipment.

(S/NOFORN) Saudi Arabia also is attempting to achieve improved defense cooperation among the smaller Arabian Gulf states. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was formed this year mainly in reaction to unsettled conditions relating to the the Iran-Iraq War. Early prospects for meaningful defense cooperation were muddled because of Kuwait's concerns of excessive US influence in the area as reflected in Omani facilities-access agreements with the US. The

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Iranian attack on Kuwaiti oil fields in September has altered Kuwaiti perspectives, and real progress toward security cooperation among GCC states now seems probably. Oman and Saudi Arabia have taken the lead in pressing for defense cooperation, with both proposing linkage of command-and-control centers, combined exercises, and integrated defense planning. The major difference between the Saudi and Omani positions is that the Omanis favor a more ambitious implementation schedule. The Saudi view will probably prevail within the GCC and the Saudis will very likely emerge as the dominate factor in any future GCC alliance.

Outlook

(S/NOFORN) Saudi Arabia is not likely to pursue any policy that would jeopardize its role as the leader of the moderate Arab states. Nevertheless, Egypt, an outcast among Arabs for 3 years, and Saudi Arabia appear to be edging toward a reconciliation. The mutual political, economic, and military advantages of such a rapprochement are too great for either to ignore. Progress will be impeded pending the realization of expected developments, such as the return of Sinai, but it is quite likely that appropriate face-saving tactics will be initiated and a useful partnership developed.

(S/NOFORN) Saudi relations with the US will not improve significantly if the AWACS sale is approved. The Saudi commitment to the Arab consensus on the proper conditions for an Arab-Israeli peace precludes Riyadh from becoming much more cordial with the US. However, a cancelation of the sale will probably cause the Saudis to restrain future relations with the US. Although mutually beneficial relations will be continued, Saudi military ties to other western nations will increase, Saudi moderation in OPEC may decline, and growing elements in Saudi society will view the US as an unreliable partner.

(S/NOFORN) Prospects for increased regional defense cooperation are promising. However, the military effectiveness of most imaginable alliances would be inadequate to counter a major threat. The defensive aspects of the GCC may assist in countering regional threats, but planning has just begun and it will be several years before any tangible results are realized. Likewise, the augmentation of the Saudi armed forces with Pakistani personnel will improve Saudi defense capabilities, but not enough to counter the larger threats to the Kingdom. Only Egypt, of the remaining regional powers, appears to offer possibilities as a defensive partner. Defensive agreements between Riyadh and Cairo may be forthcoming if a political reconciliation can be achieved. (Classified by multiple sources; review on 22 Oct 01)

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Department of State

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TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-11

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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
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USICA FOR NEA DIRECTOR CURRAN
E.O. 12065: GDS 12/2/87 (CAVNESS, WILLIAM D., JR.) DR-D
TAGS: MU, US, MASS, MARR, MILI
SUBJECT: BRIGHT STAR - 82 -- ANALYSIS OF OMANI PUBLIC OPINION

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION IN OMAN ON OMANI PARTICIPATION IN BRIGHT STAR 82 HAS PRECLUDED THE USUAL EMBASSY REPORTING OF MEDIA REACTION/EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON THE EXERCISE. A NUMBER OF OMANIS, HOWEVER, HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED THEIR OPINIONS ON THEIR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ALLOW U.S. FORCES TO EXERCISE HERE, AND ON THE OVERALL DIRECTION OF U.S. STRATEGY IN THE GULF REGION. THE FOLLOWING GENERAL THEMES EMERGED FROM THESE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS: A) AMONG THE SMALL NUMBER OF INFORMED OMANIS WHO KNOW OF THE EXERCISE AND ARE WILLING TO EXPRESS OPINIONS ON IT, A SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT DOES NOT AGREE WITH THE DECISION OF THEIR GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW THE EXERCISE, OR WITH THE DIRECTION OF U.S. POLICY IN THE GULF; B) THE OMANI GOVERNMENT, SOME FEEL, HAS NOT MADE A SATISFACTORY PUBLIC CASE FOR ITS DECISION, AND THIS HAS CONTRIBUTED TO MISUNDERSTANDING OVER BOTH ITS POLICIES AND U.S. MOTIVES; C) MANY OF THOSE OMANIS WHO EXPRESSED AN OPINION SEEM TO FEEL THAT THERE IS LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT SOVIET MILITARY ACTION IN THE GULF, BUT THAT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE RUSSIANS OR THEIR CLIENTS WILL EXPLOIT INTERNAL UNREST ARISING FROM THE CONTINUATION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM; CONSEQUENTLY, THE U.S. IS PURSUING THE WRONG COURSE THROUGH ITS STRATEGIC MILITARY EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE REGIONAL STABILITY; AND D) OPPOSITION TO BRIGHT STAR 82 SEEMS MORE INTENSE AMONG PERSONS FARTHEST REMOVED FROM THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. AMONG OPPONENTS, OPPOSITION WILL NOT GO BEYOND PRIVATE EXPRESSIONS OF DISCONTENT. END SUMMARY.

3. THE OMANI PRESS, ACTING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION, HAS SAID VIRTUALLY NOTHING ABOUT THE OMAN SEGMENT OF BRIGHT STAR 82. LOCAL REPORTING HAS FEATURED STRAIGHT WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS OF BRIGHT STAR EXERCISES IN EGYPT, WITH ALMOST NO MENTION OF OMANI PARTICIPATION. (OMANGOV SENSITIVITIES ON BRIGHT STAR PUBLICITY HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN NUMEROUS EMBASSY MUSCAT CABLES.) THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE DID NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE OMANI PARTICIPATION UNTIL NOV 26. IN AN EFFORT TO GAUGE PUBLIC SENTIMENT ON OMAN'S ROLE IN BRIGHT STAR, THE PAO DISCUSSED THE EXERCISE INFORMALLY WITH TWENTY PRINCIPAL POST AND EMBASSY CONTACTS BEGINNING OCT 26, WHEN NEWSWEEK PUBLISHED DETAILS ON BRIGHT STAR IN OMAN. THESE CONTACTS INCLUDED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS, JOURNALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN. A NUMBER OF WESTERN-EDUCATED, YOUNGER OMANIS WERE ALSO CONTACTED. ALTHOUGH THIS SMALL SAMPLE CANNOT BE CONSIDERED COMPREHENSIVE, THE NEAR UNANIMITY OF THINKING ON CERTAIN ISSUES SUGGESTS THAT THESE OPINIONS MAY BE MORE WIDESPREAD AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN PLANNING BOTH FUTURE MILITARY COOPERATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OMAN.

4. THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSIONS FREELY EXPRESSED THEIR OPPOSITION TO OMANI PARTICIPATION IN BRIGHT STAR AND TO MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. REACTIONS RANGED FROM UNDISGUISED RESENTMENT AT THE U.S. DESIRE TO PLAY "INTERNATIONAL GAMES" WITH THE RUSSIANS TO SUSPICIONS THAT THE U.S. HAS "HIDDEN MOTIVES" FOR CREATING THE RDJTF, SUCH AS PROPPING UP UNPOPULAR REGIMES. THE YOUNGER SET WAS MOST VEHEMENT IN ITS OPPOSITION. SEVERAL STATED THAT BRIGHT STAR WOULD ONLY INCREASE TENSION IN THE AREA AND WOULD FORCE SOVIET CLIENT STATES, PARTICULARLY PDRY, INTO A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE USSR, THUS REQUIRING A FURTHER U.S.-OMANI RESPONSE. THE ANSWER, THEY BELIEVE, IS TOTAL DEMILITARIZATION OF THE AREA. AS FOR RUSSIAN MOTIVES BEHIND THEIR MILITARY BUILDUP IN THE AREA, THESE YOUNG OMANIS SAID THAT THEIR PRESENCE IS THE RESULT OF BAD U.S. POLICIES IN THE REGION. ANOTHER REACTION WAS LESS EXTREME: A GRUDGING ACCEPTANCE OF MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. AS A NECESSARY EVIL IN THE FACE OF SOVIET DESIGNS.

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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
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INFO COMRDTF BRIGHT STAR '82 IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9599
USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
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MEDIA, POLICIES WERE NOT PROPERLY EXPLAINED. IN THE CASE OF BRIGHT STAR, THIS MEANT THE PUBLIC THOUGHT THE GOVERNMENT WAS "HIDING SOMETHING" AND THIS CREATED SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE MOTIVES OF THE US.

7. ON THE GENERAL TOPIC OF MEDIA HANDLING OF BRIGHT STAR, A SENIOR MINISTRY OF INFORMATION OFFICIAL SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE EXERCISE WAS "NO SECRET," GOVERNMENT POLICY WAS TO SAY AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY SINCE HOSTILE PROPAGANDA WOULD HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE PEOPLE, "WHO LOVE HIS MAJESTY AND SUPPORT HIS POLICIES." INDEED, NO PARTICIPANTS IN THESE DISCUSSIONS SUGGESTED THAT THE REGIME WAS EXPERIENCING ANY DIFFICULTIES OVER BRIGHT STAR, AND SEVERAL TOOK PAINS TO EMPHASIZE THE STABILITY OF THE REGIME AND THEIR ADMIRATION FOR THE SULTAN. WHEN THERE WAS CRITICISM, IT WAS MAINLY DIRECTED EITHER AT THE US OR THE USSR.

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5. MANY OF THE LESS-SENIOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSIONS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE HOSTILE TREATMENT OMAN WAS RECEIVING FROM ITS GULF NEIGHBORS IN THE PRESS AND IN MEETINGS WITH THE OTHER GULF STATES BECAUSE OF ITS INCREASING TIES TO THE U.S. ONE PROMINENT FIGURE, WIDELY RESPECTED HERE FOR HIS DEVOTION TO ISLAM, REPEATEDLY ASSERTED THAT "ARAB PUBLIC OPINION" IS AGAINST A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE GULF, AND ALTHOUGH HE WOULD NOT FLATLY STATE THAT THIS INCLUDED OMANI PUBLIC OPINION, HE CLEARLY MEANT THIS WAS THE CASE. (THIS DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT A DINNER PARTY WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER OMANIS PRESENT, NONE OF WHOM DISAGREED WITH HIM.) OBJECTIONS TO BRIGHT STAR ALSO AROSE FROM ITS TIMING, SINCE PUBLICITY ON THE EXERCISE AND NUMEROUS NEWS LEAKS FROM WASHINGTON ON OMAN'S ROLE BEGAN BUILDING AT THE SAME TIME THE U.S. AND ISRAEL WERE PUBLICLY DISCUSSING "STRATEGIC COOPERATION," AND JUST BEFORE THE GCC AND ARAB SUMMITS. ONE MINISTER SAID THAT THIS WAS "TERRIBLE" FOR OMAN, SINCE IT GAVE THE ENEMIES OF U.S. - OMANI COOPERATION A CLUB TO BEAT THE OMANIS WITH IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHER ARABS. PROBLEMS WITH BRIGHT STAR BECAUSE OF U.S. PUBLICITY AND HIGHLY VISIBLE U.S. COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL WERE MENTIONED MOST OFTEN BY THE MORE SENIOR OMANI PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

6. A LEADING JOURNALIST (WHO IS ALSO AN OFFICIAL OF THE NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE STATE) STATED THAT THE OMANI GOVERNMENT HAS MISHANDLED THE PR ASPECTS OF BRIGHT STAR AND THAT AS A RESULT, THE PUBLIC DID NOT HAVE CORRECT INFORMATION ON THE SCOPE OF THE EXERCISE OR THE REASONS BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT DECISION TO ALLOW US FORCES TO EXERCISE. HE SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF LOCAL INFORMATION, THE PUBLIC GOT ITS NEWS FROM NEIGHBORING STATES, WHERE THE PRESS IS DOMINATED BY PALESTINIANS WHO ARE ANTI-AMERICAN. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS A DUTY TO BUILD PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ITS POLICIES THROUGH THE USE OF THE MEDIA, BUT OWING TO THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF THE

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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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INFO COMRDJTF BRIGHT STAR '82 IMMEDIATE

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8. THE DOMINANT ISSUE ON WHICH CRITICS OF BRIGHT STAR AND MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE US IN GENERAL BASED THEIR OPPOSITION WAS THAT THE US HAD NOT CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN THE REGION - NAMELY, THE INSTABILITY CAUSED BY THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. WITHOUT A RESOLUTION OF THIS QUESTION, AS EVERY SINGLE PARTICIPANT IN THESE DISCUSSIONS EMPHASIZED, THE DOOR WOULD BE OPEN FOR ALL KINDS OF RUSSIAN ADVENTURISM OR RUSSIAN-INSPIRED TURMOIL. THOSE FEW PARTICIPANTS WHO SPOKE FAVORABLY OF MILITARY TIES WITH THE US POINTED TO THE DIFFICULTY CREATED FOR OMAN BY US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL; THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO SPOKE AGAINST MILITARY COOPERATION POINTED TO ISRAEL AS THE "REAL ENEMY" OF THE ARABS AND SAID AMERICANS SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED THAT MANY ARABS CONSIDERED THE RUSSIANS AS THEIR FRIENDS, SINCE RUSSIA SUPPORTED THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE. IN THIS LATTER GROUP, SEVERAL CONDEMNED THE US FOR EMPHASIZING THE SOVIET THREAT AS JUSTIFICATION FOR A MILITARY BUILDUP AND MILITARY EXERCISES IN THE GULF WHILE THE ISRAELIS BOMBED IRAQ AND LEBANON WITH US-SUPPLIED WEAPONS AND MOVED TOWARD CLOSER STRATEGIC COOPERATION WITH THE US. THE CENTRALITY OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IN ALL DISCUSSIONS AND VEHEMENCE WITH WHICH THEIR CAUSE WAS ARGUED WERE SURPRISING, SINCE THIS ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN PERCEIVED AS A MAJOR FACTOR IN OMTNI THINKING IT SHOULD BE ADDED HERE THAT FOR THE MOST SENIOR PARTICIPANTS, THE EMPHASIS ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION DID NOT SEEM TO ARISE FROM AN IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENT TO PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, BUT INSTEAD SPRANG FROM A FEAR OF THE PRESSURES PALESTINIANS COULD EXERT IN OTHER GULF STATES.

9. A FURTHER CONCERN EXPRESSED BY SOME PARTICIPANTS WAS THE APPARENT PREDOMINANCE OF SECURITY MATTERS IN THE U.S. RELATIONSHIP WITH OMAN. AS THE HEAD OF THE MAJOR CULTURAL ORGANIZATION IN MUSCAT SAID, "YOU (THE US) ARE NOT DOING THE RIGHT THINGS TO GAIN THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE OMANIS." HE ARGUED THAT THE US NEEDED TO DO MUCH MORE HERE IN THE WAY OF NON-MILITARY ACTIVITIES, AND REPEATED HIS LONG-STAND-

ING REQUEST FOR US SUPPORT FOR HIS ORGANIZATION'S CULTURAL AND ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES. ALONG THE SAME LINES, HE LAMENTED THE MANY CHANGES IN OMANI SOCIETY WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE GROWING WESTERN PRESENCE HERE, EVEN GOING SO FAR AS TO SPEAK FONDLY OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME, DURING WHICH OMANIS LEAD LIVES OF "SPIRITUALITY" AND "DISCIPLINE," AND OMAN WAS NOT A FOCUS OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN.

10. CONCLUSION: ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSIONS STATED OBJECTIONS TO OMANI PARTICIPATION IN BRIGHT STAR, NONE EXPRESSED ANGER AGAINST THE OMANI GOVERNMENT FOR ITS DECISION TO ALLOW THE EXERCISE, NOR DID THOSE PARTICIPANTS MOST CRITICAL OF US POLICY ARGUE THAT OMAN SHOULD RENEGE ON ITS AGREEMENTS WITH THE US. OPPOSITION TO THE DECISION SHOULD THEREFORE NOT BE TAKEN AS A SIGNAL OF WIDER DISSATISFACTION WITH THE REGIME. AS ONE PARTICIPANT STATED, "MOST EDUCATED OMANIS WOULD APPROVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IF THEY HAD THE FACTS." THE CLOSED PROCESS BY WHICH THE OMANI GOVERNMENT ARRIVED AT ITS DECISION MAY BE SEEN AS A FACTOR IN THE OBJECTIONS TO IT HEARD IN THE COURSE OF THIS STUDY. SIGNIFICANTLY, THOSE OMANIS FARTHEST FROM THE CENTER OF DECISION MAKING AND POLICY ANALYSIS VOICED THE STRONGEST OBJECTIONS, WHILE THOSE MOST FAMILIAR WITH GOVERNMENT THINKING WERE MOST COMFORTABLE WITH IT. PROBLEMS OVER US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL AND DOUBTS OVER THE US CONCEPT OF THE SOVIET DANGER TO THE REGION WERE ALSO IMPORTANT FACTORS. AS A FINAL NOTE, THERE ALSO SEEMED TO BE AN ELEMENT OF DOUBT OVER THE DETERMINATION OF THE US TO LIVE UP TO ITS COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE GULF. ONE MINISTER, A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, REMARKED THAT OMAN WAS PREPARED TO FIGHT "TO THE LAST MAN." HE WONDERED IF THE U.S. COMMITMENT, AS EMBODIED IN THE RDJTF, WAS AS STRONG.

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233603	CABLE	3	12/9/1981	B1
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233604	CABLE STATE 332154	1	12/16/1981	B1

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233605	CABLE STATE 340468	3	12/24/1981	B1

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233606	CABLE STATE 340499	2	12/24/1981	B1

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233607	CABLE MUSCAT 0593	2	2/3/1982	B1

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233608	CABLE MUSCAT 1069	1	3/6/1982	B1

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233609	CABLE MUSCAT 1219	4	3/15/1982	B1

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233610	CABLE STATE 080425	2	3/25/1982	B1

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
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- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.