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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-09 NASA-02 NSF-02 DOE-15
SOE-02 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 NAS-01 /095 W
----------102479 290900Z /11
R 290606Z JAN 79
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2864
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR
USICA WASHDC

UNCLAS KUWAIT 0486

CINCEUR ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, PINS, MASS, SOPN, TGEN, KU
SUBJECT: "UFO" SIGHTINGS CAUSE SECURITY CONCERN IN KUWAIT

1. A SERIES OF "UFO"SIGHTINGS ON NOVEMBER 9 CAUSED THE
GOK TO APPOINT AN INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FROM
THE KUWAIT INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (KISR).
THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT WHICH WAS RELEASED JANUARY 20 DESCRIBED
EIGHT SIGHTINGS FROM NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 14. A NUMBER OF
THE EARLY SIGHTINGS TOOK PLACE NEAR A KUWAIT OIL COMPANY
GATHERING CENTER NORTH OF KUWAIT CITY. RELEASE OF THE
COMMITTEE'S REPORT WAS SOMETHING OF A MEDIA EVENT AS IT
COINCIDED WITH JAN 21 FRONT PAGE STORIES OF YET ANOTHER "UFO"
SIGHTING OVER KUWAIT CITY, WHICH INCLUDED PHOTOGRAPHS IN
LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.
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2. THE KISR COMMITTEE REJECTED THE NOTION THAT THE
"UFO'S" WERE ESPIONAGE DEVICES BUT REMAINED EQUIVOCAL
ABOUT WHETHER THEY WERE OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL ORIGIN.
THE KISR COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE, RATIB ABU ID, TOLD
EMBOFF THAT THE SCIENTISTS DID NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE
PHENOMENA TO SAY WITH CERTAINTY THAT THEY WEREN'T

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"SPACESHIPS." THE REPORT WENT
ON TO RECOMMEND THAT THE GOVERNMENT TAKE ALL POSSIBLE
MEASURES TO PROTECT KUWAIT'S AIR SPACE AND TERRITORY AS
WELL AS THE COUNTRY'S OIL RESOURCES.

3. SOME LOCAL WAGS HAVE MADE LIGHT OF THE FIRST UFO
SIGHTINGS WHICH CAME NEAR THE END OF THE LONG AND
TRADITIONALLY EXUBERANT HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS OF ID-AL-
ADHA. HOWEVER WE HAVE LEARNED RECENTLY OF AN EVENT
COINCIDENT WITH ONE OF THE UFO SIGHTINGS WHICH HAS
CONFOUNDED SOME OF OUR MOST LEVEL-HEADED KUWAITI FRIENDS,
AND MAY HAVE BEEN WHAT PERSUADED THE GOK TO MAKE A SERIOUS
INVESTIGATION OF THE MATTER. A SENIOR KUWAIT OIL COMPANY
(KOC) OFFICIAL TOLD US THE THE "UFO" WHICH FIRST
APPEARED OVER THE NORTHERN OIL FIELDS SEEMINGLY DID
STRANGE THINGS TO KOC'S AUTOMATIC PUMPING EQUIPMENT.
THIS EQUIPMENT IS DESIGNED TO SHUT ITSELF DOWN
WHEN THERE IS SOME FAILURE WHICH MAY SERIOUSLY DAMAGE
THE PETROLEUM GATHERING AND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM AND
IT CAN ONLY BERESTARTED MANUALLY. AT THE TIME OF THE
"UFO'S" APPEARANCE THE PUMPING SYSTEM AUTOMATICALLY
SHUT ITSELF DOWN AND WHEN THE "UFO" VANISHED THE
SYSTEM STARTED ITSELF UP AGAIN. THIS EVENT WAS NOT
ADDRESSED BY THE KISR COMMITTEE REPORT.

4. EVEN THOSE WHO ARE NOT INCLINED TO BELIEVE IN
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VISITORS FROM OUTER SPACE DO TEND TO THINK SOMETHING
STRANGE HAS BEEN GOING ON IN KUWAITI AIRSPACE.
THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION, FOR EXAMPLE, ABOUT
HELICOPTERS OR HOVERCRAFT BRINGING REFUGEES OR
MONEY OUT OF BELEAGUERED IRAN. AT THE LEAST, THE
PHENOMENA HAVE STIMULATED A NEW DEGREE OF INTEREST
AMONG TOP KUWAITI OFFICIALS IN THE COUNTRY'S AIR
DEFENSE SYSTEM, WHICH DID NOT REACT IN ANY WAY TO THE
"EVENTS" IN THE KOC NORTH FIELD BECAUSE IT WAS CLOSED DOWN
FOR THE NIGHT (SEPTEL).
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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 MCE-00 /044 W
----------112177 300953Z /12
R 291313Z JAN 79
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2872
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
SECDEF WASHDC
DA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CDRMIRCOM RSA AL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KUWAIT 0508

CINCEUR ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: RDS 1/28/85 (MAESTRONE, FRANK E.) OR-M
TAGS: MPOL, MASS, KU, US, SA
SUBJECT: (C) U.S. DEMONSTRATION PROVES EFFECTIVENESS OF
KUWAIT'S I-HAWK MISSILE AND RADAR SYSTEMS

1. SUMMARY (C) BECAUSE OF THE FAILURE TO OPERATE ITS AMERICAN-SUPPLIED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM CORRECTLY, SENIOR KUWAITI OFFICIALS GAINED THE FALSE IMPRESSION THAT THIS EQUIPMENT DID NOT WORK PROPERLY. AT THE AMBASSADOR'S SUGGESTION, DEMONSTRATIONS WERE CONDUCTED BY A U.S. MILITARY TEAM WHICH PROVED CONCLUSIVELY THAT KUWAIT I-HAWK AND RADAR SYSTEMS WORK WELL. NEVERTHELESS, KUWAIT IS A LONG WAY FROM HAVING AN OPERATIONAL AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. PERSONNEL PROBLEMS MAY GET MORE ATTENTION AS KUWAIT SCRUTINIZES ITS AIR DEFENSE IN THE LIGHT OF EVENTS IN IRAN. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) IN NOV 1978 USLOK (EMBASSY MAAG EQUIVALENT) OFFICERS BEGAN HEARING COMPLAINTS FROM THE WORKING LEVEL OF THE KUWAITI MILITARY ABOUT THE UNSATISFACTORY
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PERFORMANCE OF ITS U.S.-ORIGIN AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT (I-HAWK MISSILE SYSTEM WITH TSQ-73 CONTROL CENTER AND TPS-32 RADARS). DISSATISFACTION WITH THE EQUIPMENT SHARPENED FOLLOWING A NUMBER OF NIGHT "UFO" SIGHTINGS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, WIDELY REPORTED IN THE LOCAL PRESS AS UNDETECTED BY KUWAIT'S AIR DEFENSE RADARS. ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION,

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INQUIRIES BY THE DEFENSE MINISTER ELICITED THE COMMENT
BY THE KUWAIT AIR DEFENSE (KADF) COMMANDER THAT THE
EQUIPMENT WAS TO BLAME. THIS WAS PRESUMABLY PASSED ON
BY THE DEFENSE MINISTER TO THE CROWN PRINCE/PRIME MINISTER.

3. (C) THE TRUTH WAS THAT THE AIR DEFENSE
RADARS, WHICH WERE BEING OPERATED ONLY DURING KADF
WORKING HOURS (0730-1300), WERE TURNED OFF AT THE TIME,
AND THE KADF COMMANDER WAS UNWILLING TO ADMIT THIS.

4. (C) WHEN INFORMED OF THIS DEVELOPMENT (PARA 2),
THE AMBASSADOR DECIDED THAT THIS ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION
ABOUT OUR AMERICAN EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE PROMPTLY CORRECTED.
HE ASKED THAT USLOK ORGANIZE, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
THE U.S. CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS CONCERNED, A DEMONSTRATION
THAT THE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM COULD BE OPERATED PROPERLY.
THE KUWAITIS ACCEPTED THIS PROPOSAL, BUT, IN ORDER TO
BE REASSURED THAT THE EQUIPMENT COULD EVENTUALLY BE
OPERATED BY THEIR OWN PERSONNEL PRESENTLY IN TRAINING,
REQUESTED THAT AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL, RATHER
THAN CIVIAN CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL, OPERATE THE
EQUIPMENT DURING THE DEMONSTRATION.

5. (C) U.S. ARMY MISSILE MATERIEL READINESS COMMAND
(MIRCOM) PROVIDED A MILITARY TEAM (AT GOK EXPENSE)
WHICH CONDUCTED TWO SUCCESSFUL DEMONSTRATIONS IN
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KUWAIT IN EARLY JANUARY USING ACTUAL TARGETS (KUWAIT
AIR FORCE A-4'S). THE KUWAIT AIR FORCE AND THE KADF
COMMANDERS WITNESSED THE FIRST AND THE ARMED FORCES
CHIEF OF STAFF ATTENDED THE SECOND, HELD UNDER MORE
DIFFICULT CLIMATIC CONDITIONS, WHICH PROVED CONCLUSIVELY
THAT THE U.S. AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT PURCHASED BY
KUWAIT CAN IDENTIFY, TRACK, AND SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGE
HOSTILE AIRCRAFT. COMMENTING AFTER THE SECOND
DEMONSTRATION, CHIEF OF STAFF SHAIKH MUBARAK SAID,
"I AM COMPLETELY SATISFIED THAT THE EQUIPMENT WORKS AS
A SYSTEM AND THAT IT CAN DESTROY EVEN VERY LOW FLYING
AIRCRAFT." HE ADDED THAT THE SYSTEMS "MUST WORK LIKE
THIS EVERYDAY."

6. (LOU) KUWAITI CONCERN ABOUT ITS AIR DEFENSE
SYSTEM WAS NO DOUBT INCREASED BY THE PROSPECT OF A
VISIT BY A SAUDI MILITARY DELEGATION LED BY COLONEL
MANSOUR AL-NASER AL-GHUNAIM, THE COMMANDER OF THE
SAUDI AIR DEFENSE FORCES. WE ARE TOLD THE SAUDIS
WANTED TO VISIT IN DECEMBER, BUT THAT THE KUWAITIS
POSTPONED THE TRIP UNTIL AFTER THE I-HAWK RADAR HAD
BEEN TESTED AND DEMONSTRATED. ON JAN 21, THE KUWAITI

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MISSILE BATTALION TEAM (WITH THE ATTENDANCE OF 3
MIRCOM TEAM MEMBERS AT KADF REQUEST) SUCCESSFULLY
DEMONSTRATED THE I-HAWK MISSILE SYSTEM FOR THE SAUDI
VISITORS. THE SAUDI COMMANDER WAS REPORTED TO HAVE
COMMENTED THAT KADF PERFORMANCE SURPASSED THAT OF HIS
FORCES WHICH HAD BEGUN THEIR TRAINING EARLIER.

7. (C) COMMENT. WHILE IT HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT THE
RADAR DETECTION AND TRACKING PART OF THE AIR DEFENSE
SYSTEM WORKS, AND WORKS WELL, KUWAIT IS A LONG WAY
FROM HAVING AN OPERATIONAL AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM.
ALTHOUGH THE KADF NOW HAS ENOUGH TROOPS TRAINED TO MAN
ALL SIX HAWK FIRING UNITS (2 BATTERIES AND 4 BATTERIES
MINUS), ONLY ONE UNIT HAS BEEN ABLE TO DEPLOY TO AN
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OPERATIONAL SITE. MOREOVER, THE INFORMAL
KUWAITI STANDARD OF ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING CLASSES
(AVERAGING LESS THAN 50 PERCENT), AS WELL AS THE

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 MCE-00 /044 W
----------112467 300953Z /12
R 291313Z JAN 79
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
SECDEF WASHDC
DA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CDRMIRCOM RSA AL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KUWAIT 0508

CINCEUR ALSO FOR POLAD

ATTRITION AND DIVERSION OF TRAINED PERSONNEL, PLUS

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THE SHORT WORK DAY, ARE THE REASONS WHY THE RADAR EQUIPMENT IS NOT KEPT IN 24-HOUR OPERATION, AS IT SHOULD BE.

8. (C)HOWEVER, SENIOR KUWAIT MILITARY OFFICIALS ARE NOW SATISFIED
THAT THE AMERICAN EQUIPMENT WORKS
WELL. THE DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE ALSO SERVED TO PROVIDE A STIMULUS FOR AN IMPROVED KUWAITI EFFORT TO MAKE ITS OWN DEFENSE VIABLE. THE TROUBLES IN IRAN HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE HEIGHTENING OF KUWAITI SECURITY CONCERNS. IT IS HOPED THAT, WITH THE PROPER URGING OF USLOK ADVISERS, KADF TRAINING AND OPERATION OF ITS AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WILL BE REASONABLY IMPROVED. IN FACT, AS A RESULT OF THESE DEMONSTRATIONS, THE KADF IS AMBITIOUSLY PLANNING FOR JOINT AIR DEFENSE ACTIVITIES WITH THE SAUDIS. USLOK PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE REACHED AGREE-
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MENT ON A MEMORANDUM CALLING FOR JOINT SUPPLY SUPPORT FOR THE I-HAWK AND TO JOINT USE OF RANGES IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR ANNUAL LIVE FIRING EXERCISES. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS NEW KADF MOMENTUM WILL BE MAINTAINED.
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