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Department of State



TO: SAC, NEW YORK (100-100000) FROM: SAC, WASHINGTON (100-100000) (P) (U) (100-100000)

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cc: JF
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAG 0321

E O 12356 DECI- OADR
TAGS PPEL, US, IZ, MOP, MOPS
SUBJECT IRAQ REACTS ANGRILY TO US CONDEMNATION OF CW USE

EAGLETON

REF: A1 FBST JN 062159, B1 FBST JN 061522

1. (C) SUMMARY: IRAQ'S SENIOR LEADERSHIP HAS REACTED SWIFTLY AND ANGRILY TO OUR PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF IRAQ'S USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS. THE MEDIA IS GIVING WIDE PUBLICITY TO THEIR REBUTTAL.

(b)(1)

END SUMMARY

2. SENIOR IRAQI LEADERS HAVE REACTED SWIFTLY AND ANGRILY TO THE CONDEMNATION OF IRAQI USE OF CW BY DEPT PRESS SPOKESMAN MARCH 6. ON MARCH 6, MINISTER OF DEFENSE ADHAN KHARALLAH AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH A FOREIGN JOURNALIST'S REJECTED OUR CHARGES CALLING THEM "HYPOCRITICAL," THAT SAME EVENING IRAQI TELEVISION AND RADIO NEWS ANNOUNCERS READ VERBATIM TEXT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT (UN 062159) IN WHICH AMONG OTHER THINGS OUR STATEMENT WAS AGAIN DECLARED "HYPOCRITICAL" AND CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING BEEN "IMBALANCED" AND "OVERLY DIPLOMATIC IN DEALING WITH IRAN'S AGGRESSION AGAINST IRAQ." THE MINISTRY'S STATEMENT WENT ON TO DENOUNCE THE US POSITION AND SAID "THEir LINE WITH PREVIOUS ALLEGED US INTENTIONS TOWARD IRAQ AND THE STATEMENT CONCLUDED BY RECALLING IS USE OF OTHER WEAPONS HAS NOT DEPRIVED US OF OUR RIGHT TO DEFEND OURSELVES AND OURS AND SAID "THEir LAST COUNTRY WITH THE RIGHT TO SPEAK ABOUT THE ETHICS OF WAR."

3. LATER THE SAME EVENING, IRAQI TELEVISION CARRIED THE SPEECH OF PRESIDENT SAIDAM HUSSEIN TO THE ARAB LABOR CONFERENCE WHICH IS MEETING IN BAGHDAD. IN HIS SPEECH SAIDAM NOTED THE US CHARGES AND IMPLIED THAT THE US WAS SUPPORTING IRAN BY REPEATING ALLEGATIONS WHICH WERE USED BY IRAN TO COVER ITS BATTLEFIELD FAILURES. HE ACCUSED THE US OF TRYING TO CURRY FAVOR WITH IRAN IN AN EFFORT TO BUILD BRIDGES TO IT.

4. (C) THE IRAQIS APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN STUNNED BY OUR PUBLIC CONDEMNATION.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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2. (U) SENIOR IRAQI LEADERS HAVE REACTED SWIFTLY AND ANGRILY TO THE CONDEMNATION OF IRAQI USE OF CW BY DEPT PRESS SPOKESMAN MARCH 5. ON MARCH 6., MINISTER OF DEFENSE ADMAN KHARALLAH AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH FOREIGN JOURNALISTS REJECTED OUR CHARGES CALLING THEM "HYPOCRITICAL." THAT SAME EVENING IRAQI TELEVISION AND RADIO NEWS ANNOUNCERS READ VERBATIM TEXT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT UN #621591 IN WHICH AMONG OTHER THINGS OUR STATEMENT WAS AGAIN DECLARED "HYPOCRITICAL" AND CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING BEEN "IMBALANCED" AND OVERLY DIPLOMATIC IN DEALING WITH IRAN'S "AGGRESSION AGAINST IRAQ" THE MINISTGER'S STATEMENT WENT ON TO DENOUNCE THE US POSITION AND SAID THAT IT WAS IN LINE WITH PREVIOUS ALLEGED US [ILLEG] INTENTIONS TOWARD IRAQ. THE STATEMENT CONCLUDED BY RECALLING USE OF ATOMIC WEAPONS AGAINST JAPANESE CITIES IN WW II TO SHORTEN THE WAR AND REDUCE CASUALTIES AND SAID THE US IS "THE LAST COUNTRY WITH THE RIGHT TO SPEAK ABOUT THE ETHICS OF WAR."

3. (U) LATER THE SAME EVENING, IRAQI TELEVISION CARRIED THE SPEECH OF PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN TO THE AREA LABOR CONFERENCE WHICH IS MEETING IN BAGHAD. IN HIS SPEECH, SADDAM NOTED THE US CHARGES AND IMPLIED THAT THE US WAS SUPPORTING IRAN BY REPEATING ALLEGATIONS WHICH WERE USED BY IRAN TO COVER ITS BATTLEFIELD FAILURES. HE ACCUSED THE US OF TRYING TO CURRY FAVOR WITH IRAN IN AN EFFORT TO BUILD BRIDGES TO IT

4. (C) THE IRAQIS APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN STUNNED BY OUR PUBLIC CONDEMNATION.