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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER. SY. LE. PREL
SUBJECT: AMERICAN/FRENCH KIDNAPPEES: UNSUBTANTIATED
-- REPORT

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY:

[REDACTED] WHOSE RELIABILITY WE REGARD AS SUSPECT, TOLD A WESTERN DIPLOMAT THAT THE RADICAL HIZBALLAH GROUP LED BY TUFAYLI HOLDS THE AMERICAN KIDNAPPEES AND THE TWO FRENCH DIPLOMATS, THAT KILBURN IS DEAD, AND THAT THE AMERICANS ARE CONSTANTLY BEING MOVED AROUND. END SUMMARY.

3. A KNOWLEDGEABLE AND RELIABLE WESTERN DIPLOMAT RELATED FOLLOWING ACCOUNT TO EMBOFF JULY 10. SOURCE HAPPENED TO BE INTRODUCED TO [REDACTED]

SOURCE JOINED THE [REDACTED] THE EVENING OF JULY 9 AT THE SHERATON, WHERE THEY WAITED FOR KHADDAM'S MEETING WITH LEADERS OF AMAL, THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT, AND THE PNSF TO BREAK UP. THE [REDACTED] WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN SEEING [REDACTED]

DECLASSIFIED IN PART

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By

NARA, Date

2/6/03



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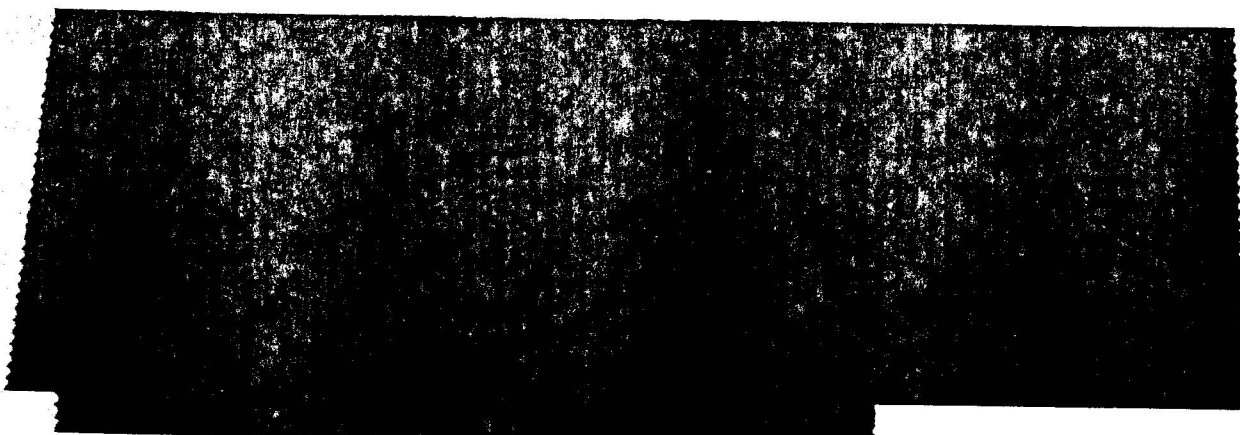
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5. CONVERSATION FOCUSED ON THE TWO FRENCH DIPLOMATS.

[REDACTED] DID NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE TWO FRENCH JOURNALISTS. THOUGH HE SUGGESTED THAT THEY ARE HELD BY "THE LESS FANATICAL HIZBALLAH GROUP UNDER MUSAWI." THE FRENCH DIPLOMATS, HE SAID, ARE HELD BY "THE MORE FANATICAL HIZBALLAH GROUP UNDER TUFAYLI." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN CARTON AND FONTAINE PERSONALLY, WITH THEIR HEADS SHROUDED, AT A VILLAGE FIVE KILOMETERS SOUTH OF BA'LBAKK. SUBSEQUENTLY, THEY WERE MOVED. THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN HELD THERE FOR SOME TIME.

6. AS FOR THE AMERICANS, [REDACTED] TOLD SOURCE [REDACTED] THAT THERE ARE ONLY SIX--KILBURN IS DEAD. THEY ARE HELD BY THE TUFAYLI GROUP BUT NOT HELD WITH THE TWO FRENCH DIPLOMATS. THEY ARE BEING MOVED "EVERY TWO HOURS" BECAUSE OF THE TUFAYLI GROUP'S FEARS OF ATTACK BOTH FROM THE AMERICANS AND THE SYRIANS.

7. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, [REDACTED] STATED THAT "THE SYRIANS KNOW ABOUT THE TUFAYLI GROUP. KNOW WHO IS HOLDING THE AMERICANS EVEN IF THEY DO NOT ALWAYS KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THEY ARE BEING HELD, BUT HAVE NOT BEEN WILLING TO PUT SUFFICIENT PRESSURE ON THE TUFAYLI GROUP

TO BRING ABOUT RELEASE."

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8. COMMENT: WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT OUR SOURCE REPORTED ACCURATELY WHAT WAS HEARD, BUT WE HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF OR CONFIDENCE IN THE RELIABILITY OF [REDACTED] INDEED, IT IS NEWS TO US THAT THE [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AND OUR INFORMATION HAS BEEN THAT THEY ARE SUNNI. (INCIDENTIALLY, SOURCE ALSO SAID THAT [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ARE HIGHLY ALARMED AT THE ACTIVITIES AND SPREAD OF HIZBALLAH IN THE BA'LBAKK AREA.) WE WARN AGAINST MAKING TOO MUCH OUT OF HIS INFORMATION. WE FEAR THAT [REDACTED] FALLS INTO A COMMON LEBANESE MOLD--FABRICATING AND EMBELLISHING FACTS WITHOUT ANY FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE, MAKING CLEVER GUESSES, AND TELLING AN ENTICING STORY IN ORDER TO IMPRESS AN AUDIENCE.

NOTE: SOURCE IS EXTREMELY NERVOUS ABOUT HAVING REVEALED THIS INFORMATION AND SUBSOURCE; THEY MUST BE VERY CLOSELY HELD.

9. BEIRUT MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. EAGLETON