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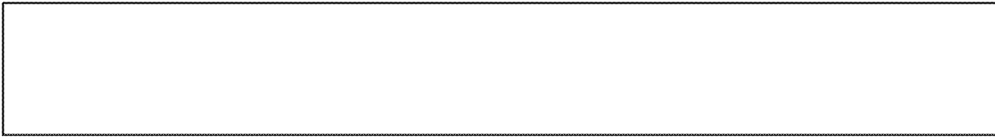
JAMES SCHWELL  
OC1  
7842  
9 DECEMBER 63

SECRET

BOOK MESSAGE IS BELOW

ROUTINE

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FORWARD

NEAR EAST AFRICA BRIEF

(INFO [redacted] NO NOFORN IN THIS MESSAGE)

1. SYRIA: THE POWER STRUGGLE WITHIN THE SYRIAN REGIME APPEARS TO BE RESOLVING IN FAVOR OF THE MODERATE FACTION LED BY PREMIER HAFIZ.

EFFORTS BY HAFIZ, A MILITARY MEMBER OF THE BAATH PARTY, TO ASSOCIATE THE REGIME WITH NON-BAATHI POLITICAL ELEMENTS HAVE GAINED MOMENTUM, AND BAATHIST EXTREMISTS LED BY VICE PREMIER UMRAN WHO OPPOSE THIS MOVE ARE BEING ECLIPSED. GENERAL UMRAN STILL OCCUPIES HIS GOVERNMENTAL POST, HOWEVER, AND DESPERATE COUNTERACTION BY HIM AND HIS SUPPORTERS IN THE ARMY AND THE BAATH DOMINATED NATIONAL GUARD CANNOT BE COMPLETELY DISCOUNTED.

THERE IS ALSO A POSSIBILITY THAT PRO-NASIR GROUPS WILL TRY TO EXPLOIT THE DIVISION WITHIN THE REGIME BY ATTEMPTING TO SEIZE POWER.

(CONF)

END OF MESSAGE

SECRET

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