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8712-B

26 Oct 87

1400

No perceived aggressive acts against US-flagged vessels during time window 23 Oct to 31 Oct 1987. However, shortly after close of time window (first week November(?), esp. 3 Nov 87) perception of grey, frigate-sized warship with smoke and blackened superstructure amidships. Vessel is not moving, or is moving only very slowly, and is at angles to what its course of motion should have been. Profile of vessel is similar to that of a US frigate or destroyer, but specific nationality is ambiguous. There is a further perception of attack aircraft ranging up and down along long axis of Gulf seeking targets of opportunity; this also seems to be occurring early to mid November. There is a sense of ambivalence among the Iranians themselves as to whether to actually engage in further belligerent, risk-taking behavior-- i.e., is it worth the price considering other demands on resources elsewhere?

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