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OF 062253Z SEPTEMBER 90
INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, UKDEL NATO, ACTOR, ESC LONDON, MODUK

SIC I9M

MY TELNO 2145: IRAQ/KUWAIT: NEW REGIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURES

SUMMARY

1. BAKER'S TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ABOUT A NEW REGIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURE SPARKS PRESS INTEREST. BUT ADMINISTRATION CONTACTS SAY WORK STILL IN ITS INFANCY.

DETAIL

2. WE REPORTED IN TUR THAT BAKER HAD ANNOUNCED DURING HIS TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON 4 SEPTEMBER THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WERE GIVING SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHT TO A NEW REGIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURE FOR THE GULF. THIS WAS PICKED UP BY THE WASHINGTON POST OF 5 SEPTEMBER, WHICH RAN A STORY TALKING IN TERMS OF A TREATY ORGANISATION SOMEWHAT ANALOGOUS TO NATO WITH A PERMANENT US PRESENCE. IN THE REGION. ON 5 SEPTEMBER, IN HIS APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, BAKER SAYING THAT BACKED AWAY FROM SUCH INTERPRETATION OF HIS REMARKS, QUOTE ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENT WOULD HAVE TO FIT REGIONAL REALITIES UNQUOTE AND THAT HE HAD NO PARTICULAR MODEL, SUCH AS NATO, IN MIND. HE ALSO REFUSED TO SPECULATE ON WHAT ROLE THE US MIGHT, OR MIGHT NOT PLAY IN ANY SUCH STRUCTURE.

3. WE HAVE FOLLOWED UP BAKER'S REMARKS WITH A VARIETY OF CONTACTS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. WE UNDERSTAND FROM THEM THAT THE POLICY PLANNING STAFF IN STATE HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR INSERTING THE RATHER FORWARD-LOOKING REFERENCE TO REGIONAL SECURITY STRUCTURES INTO BAKER'S TESTIMONY OF 4 SEPTEMBER (WITHOUT CLEARING THIS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS). AND THE PLANNING STAFF HAD SIMILARLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STEP BACKWARDS ON 5 SEPTEMBER. THAT SAID, THERE ARE APPARENTLY AT LEAST THREE CENTRES OF ACTIVITY WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION ON THESE IDEAS, THE PLANNING STAFF, THE POL/MIL BUREAU (STATE) AND THE NSC. ALL OF THE STUDIES ARE AT A VERY EARLY STAGE, AND THERE HAS BEEN NO INTRA-AGENCY, LET ALONE INTER-AGENCY DISCUSSION. BUT THE GENERAL VIEW HERE APPEARS TO BE THAT THE TIME IS NOW RIPE TO BEGIN THINKING ABOUT SUCH MATTERS AND WE WILL KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH DEVELOPMENTS.

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