



Department of State

TELEGRAM

F0008

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AM: DB20425-0118

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 1910-07 INR-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00  
EB-08 DODE-00 NSAE-00 CTHE-00 OOE-10 TRSE-00 PH-09  
STR-14 ACDA-12 JUS-01 USIF-00 MCE-02 /093 W  
-----231542 200732Z /10

R 200635Z SEP 82  
FM USINT BAGHDAD  
TO USDOC WASHDC  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4077  
USDA/FAS WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/ER

*Marie M. Henry* DATE 1/24/83

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 3175

USDOC FOR MARK ROTH/4520/NEA  
ATHENS FOR RT00  
DAMASCUS FOR AGATT

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: BEXP, BTOI, IZ  
SUBJ: HELICOPTERS AND AIRPLANES FOR IRAQI MINISTRY OF  
AGRICULTURE AND AGRARIAN REFORM

REF: A) BAGHDAD 03048 B) STATE 249453

1. SUMMARY: THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURAL AVIATION HAS INVITED  
U.S. CROP SPRAYING AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURERS TO PROVIDE PROMOTIONAL  
LITERATURE FOR A JUNE 83 PURCHASE. A PILOT TRAINING PACKAGE IS  
EXPECTED TO BE INCLUDED. AIRCRAFT SALES ARE EXPECTED TO TRIPLE  
AS THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT EXPANDS THEIR AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM.  
END SUMMARY.

2. THE DIRECTOR HAS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN PURCHASING  
MULTI-PURPOSE CROP-SPRAYING AIRCRAFT FROM U.S. SOURCES. SIX  
HELICOPTERS AND SIX FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT WITH ONE TON

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MINIMUM LOAD CAPACITY ARE ENVISIONED AS THE INITIAL PURCHASE.

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DIRECTOR IMPLIED THAT PRICE DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN HELICOPTER OR FIXED-WING WILL DICTATE SALE.

3. THE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYS 80 MECHANICS AND 30 PILOTS. ALTHOUGH 25 PILOTS HAVE COMMERCIAL LICENSES, THEY DO NOT HAVE HELICOPTER LICENSES FOR WHICH THE TRAINING PACKAGE WILL BE PART OF THE DEAL. SOME PILOTS HAVE BEEN FLIGHT TRAINED IN THE STATES.

4. 20 SOVIET DESIGNED, POLISH BUILT, AGING FOUR-MAN CHOPPERS ARE CURRENTLY DEPLOYED FOR CROP SPRAYING, DUSTING, FERTILIZING AND SEEDING. MAXIMUM LIFE CYCLE LOG HOURS PER CHOPPER IS 1000 HOURS. IN-SERVICE USE AT ANY ONE TIME IS A MAXIMUM OF 1/3 OF FLEET. LACK OF SPARE PARTS HAS PLAYED HAVOC WITH DOWN TIME. HEAD ENGINEER STATED THAT ALL CHOPPERS OF THIS TYPE ARE ONLY BEING CONSTRUCTED IN POLAND AND, WITH CURRENT PROBLEMS WITHIN POLAND, SPARE PARTS DELIVERIES ARE AT LEAST ONE YEAR BEHIND. ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTOR, SOME PILOTS WHO HAVE BEEN FLYING FOR OVER 20 YEARS ARE EXPERIENCING CHEST PAINS FROM INHALING INSECTICIDE FUMES. COMATT WAS SHOWN THROUGHOUT CHOPPER BASE AND WITNESSED LACK OF VENTILATION WITHIN HELICOPTERS. DURING THE TOUR THE DIRECTOR PROUDLY POINTED OUT A FIXED-WING CESSNA PONY WHICH HE CONSIDERED AS THE MOST EFFICIENTLY DESIGNED AIRCRAFT TO DATE RECEIVED.

5. THE DIRECTOR STATED THAT HE EXPECTED TO GRADUALLY REPLACE ALL 20 POLISH CHOPPERS WITHIN THREE TO FOUR YEARS. AFTER SOME PROBING, THE DIRECTOR AGREED THAT CURRENT INVENTORY WAS BASED UPON AN AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN DORMANT. WITH NEWLY AWARDED LARGE LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS, AND ADDITIONAL FUNDING OF AGRICULTURAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAMS (FARMS), AIR FLEET IS EXPECTED TO TRIPLE (60 AIRCRAFT) TO ABSORB THE DEMAND FOR PEST CONTROL. AS ONE PILOT REMARKED, UPCOMING MAJOR JOBS WILL

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INCLUDE TWO CRAFTS IN OPERATION FOR A PERIOD OF 2 AND ONE HALF MONTHS, COVERING A MINIMUM OF 1200 DONUM.

6. ALL ENQUIRIES, INCLUDING CATALOGUES, TECHNICAL AND OPERATING INFO SHOULD BE MAILED/DIRECTED TO: THE DIRECTOR OF THE AGRICULTURAL AVIATION DEPARTMENT, ABU GHRAIB, BAGHDAD, IRAQ. TEL. 555-0801 TELEX: 212222 ZIRA IK  
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