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FM LONDON → 3  
TO PUSD 185 IMMEDIATE → 4  
TO RESEARCH DEPT 234 IMMEDIATE → 5  
TO MOD 913 IMMEDIATE  
TO CABINET OFFICE 721 IMMEDIATE  
TO SECURITY SERVICE 100 IMMEDIATE → 6  
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LEDGER UK S E C R E T/DELICATE SOURCE/UK EYES ALPHA → 8  
REQUIREMENTS: 2LIAPX01 → 9  
LEDGER DISTRIBUTION:  
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18 CABINET OFFICE - JIC (ASSESSMENTS STAFF → 15  
GCHQ - Z10A2 → 16  
SECURITY SERVICE - G9A5, G6A5 AND G6A3  
BRITISH AUTHORITIES INFORMED:  
CAIRO  
TUNIS → 17  
WASHINGTON

19 CX 95/53452 (R/ME/C) OF 04 DECEMBER 1995 (GTN [-----] EXT [-----])  
/REPORT

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REPORT NO: 95/53452 (R/ME/C)

TITLE: LIBYA: PLANS TO OVERTHROW QADAHFI IN EARLY 1996 ARE WELL ADVANCED

SOURCE: A NEW SOURCE WITH DIRECT ACCESS WHOSE RELIABILITY HAS NOT BEEN

SUMMARY

5 Libyan colonels in charge of plans to overthrow QADAHFI, scheduled to coincide with the next General Peoples Congress in February. Coup will start with unrest in Tripoli, Misratah and Benghazi. Coup plotters are not associated with Islamic fundamentalists. MUSA QADHAF AL-DAM murdered by coup plotters in June. Attempt to assassinate QADAHFI in August thwarted by security police.

DETAIL

1. In late November 1995 [Removed to protect TUNWORTH's identity] described plans, in which he was involved, to overthrow Colonel QADAHFI. He said that 5 colonels from various parts of the armed

← 20

forces were in charge of the coup plot. These included [blank-----  
-----blank] The latter was most likely to  
take overall control.

22

2. The coup was scheduled to start at around the time of the next  
General Peoples Congress on 14 February 1996. It would begin with  
attacks on a number of military and security installations including  
the military installation at TARHUNA. There would also be  
orchestrated civil unrest in Benghazi, Misratah and Tripoli. The  
coup plotters would launch a direct attack on QADAHFI and would  
/either

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either arrest him or kill him

3. The coup plotters had 1275 active sympathisers in the  
following areas: TRIPOLI 240 persons; BENGHAZI 135; TOBRUK 114;  
MISRATAH 148; SIRTE 40; AL-ZAMIYA 180; AL ZUMARAH 300; AL KHUMS 28;  
GHADAMIS 50. Their occupations ranged from students, military  
personnel and teachers through to businessmen, doctors, police  
officers and civil servants. The plotters were divided into 5  
groups, each with 5 officers in charge. Messages to members of each  
group were passed via schools and Mosques. The start of the coup  
would be signalled through coded messages on television and radio.  
The coup plotters had sympathisers working in the press, radio and  
television.

4. The military officer said that the plotters would have cars 24  
similar to those in QADAHFI's security entourage with fake security  
number plates. They would infiltrate themselves into the entourage  
in order to kill or arrest QADAHFI.

25 ~~One group of military personnel were currently being trained  
in the desert area near KUFRA for their role of attacking QADAHFI and  
his entourage. The aim was to attack QADAHFI after the GPC, but  
before he had returned to SIRTE. An officer and 20 men were being  
trained especially for this attack~~ 26

6. The coup plotters were not associated with the Islamic 27  
fundamentalists who were fermenting unrest in Benghazi. However,  
they had had some limited contact with the fundamentalists, whom the  
military officer described as a mix of Libya veterans who served in  
Afghanistan and Libyan students. The coup plotters also had limited  
contact with the Algerian and Tunisian governments, but the latter  
did not know of their plans.  
/7.

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7. The coup plotters were responsible for the death of [blank,--  
Names removed to protect security-----blank] was about  
to take up the position as head of Military Intelligence when he was  
forced off the Tripoli-Sirte road and was killed. The 2 coup  
plotters involved escaped unhurt. In August 1995, 3 army captains  
who were part of the coup plot attempted to kill Colonel QADAHFI.  
However, security police caught them waiting at the roadside on the

Tripoli-Sirte road awaiting QADAHFI's entourage. Bothe men escaped to TUNISIA.

8. The plotters had already distributed 250 Webley pistols and 28 500 heavy machine guns amongst the groups.

SOURCE COMMENT

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A. The coup plotters expected to establish control of Libya by the end of March 1996. They would form an interim government before discussions with tribal leaders. The group would want rapproachment with the West. They hoped to divide the country into smaller areas, each with a governor and a democratically elected parliament. There would be a federal system of national government.

30 B. The officer was disclosing this information in the hope that if the coup was successful, the new government could enlist HMG support. Other plotters were aware of the officer's contact with HMG, but did not entirely approve of it.

GRS C0616