

White House

Approved
10/30/69

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

16775

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: October 22, 1969
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: Blair House

SUBJECT: Defense Needs (Part 3 of 8)

Foreign
PARTICIPANTS: His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran
H.E. Ardeshir Zahedi, Foreign Minister of Iran
H.E. Amir Aslan Afshar, Ambassador of Iran

United States

The Secretary of State

JF The Hon. Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State

The Hon. Douglas MacArthur II, American Ambassador to Iran

Mr. Jack C. Miklos, Country Director for Iran

COPIES TO:

S	S/S	CIA	Amembassy Tehran
U	INR/OD	DOD	
J	S/PC	NEA (3)	
D	White House	PM	
C			

The Shah said that the security of the Persian Gulf area must be the responsibility of its member countries. Ideally this could best be provided for primarily through some arrangement between its two most powerful members, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Since there were a number of uncertainties about Saudi Arabia's future, however, including the question of a successor to King Feisal, Iran cannot bank on this. It must be prepared to stand by itself if necessary. The Shah said that his first priority in providing for his defense is his air force. He will need additional F-4's and a successor aircraft to replace his F-5's. He said he intends to ask Secretary Laird about our intentions with respect to the Northrop P-530 aircraft. If it appears that this plane will not be developed then he is thinking in terms of replacing his F-5's with F-4EF's (a stripped-down version of the F-4). He said he was much impressed with the F-4EF which can do many of the same things that an F-4 can do but is less expensive and has less sophisticated electronics. The acquisition of additional aircraft will require additional pilot training. He hopes that the US can provide 100 pilot training spaces in the future. He said he also needs USAF technicians to help him maintain these planes and hopes that we can continue to provide for these.

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The Secretary observed that we have some problems with the size of our military presence abroad and we are trying to reduce it where we can. The Shah countered that the Soviet Union has at least 1,000 military advisors in the UAR so we should not feel inhibited in providing our good friend Iran with a considerably smaller number. The Shah said that he hopes Secretary Laird can tell him whether we expect to continue to purchase Sheridan tanks for our own military forces. If we do not and the manufacture of Sheridans will be only for replacement purposes the Shah said he would not be interested in acquiring any more himself. As a substitute he intended to refurbish his present inventory of M-47 tanks and outfit them with a 105 mm gun, a laser beam which would permit them to operate under any condition of visibility and a gyro-stabilizer which would permit them to fire while underway. He expressed hope that the US could help him with his tank rehabilitation program. In addition he was much attracted to the idea of acquiring armored helicopters which have substantial maneuverability advantages over tanks. In this connection the Shah also mentioned that he has already received delivery of 150 jet star helicopters and he hoped to acquire several Sikorsky helicopters to be used in the Persian Gulf by his navy.