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Authority *NND 969000*  
By *EW* NARA Date *5-31-02*

*POL 33 PERSIAN  
GULF*

Department of State

TELEGRAM



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ACTION 98-451

INFO: OCT-01 /046 W

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R 101300Z DEC 70  
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2951  
INFO AMEMBASSY DHAHRAN  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
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COMIDEASTFOR  
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Tehran 5-334  
12-10-78*

~~██████████~~ SECTION 1 DE 2 TEHRAN: 5334

SUBJECT: SHAH'S VIEW ON (A) TUNBS AND ABU MUSA AND  
(B) FUTURE OF MIDEASTFOR:

REF: TEHRAN 5011

A. TUNBS AND ABU MUSA

1. IN DEC 9 MEETING WITH SHAH I ASKED HIM ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN GULF SINCE LAST I SAW HIM. HE SAID THERE NO PROGRESS ON TUNBS AND ABU MUSA AND THAT CONTRARY TO HIS EXPECTATIONS AND TO HIS GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT KING FAISAL HAD BEEN OF NO HELP WHATSOEVER AND KUWAIT GOVT HAD BEEN ACTUALLY HOSTILE BY ENCOURAGING SHEIKHS NOT TO REACH AGREEMENT. HE SAID FAISAL TOOK POSITION, WHICH WAS DIFFICULT TO ASSAIL, THAT BRITISH HAD CREATED GULF PROBLEM BY SEIZING THESE ISLANDS DURING COLONIAL ERA AND ARBITRARILY ALLOCATING THEM TO SHEIKHOOMS. SINCE THEY HAD CREATED PROBLEM, IT WAS UP TO BRITISH TO SETTLE IT BEFORE THEY DEPARTED FROM GULF NEXT YEAR. HE FRANKLY DID NOT KNOW WHY KUWAIT WAS SO HOSTILE TO AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN SHEIKHS AND IRAN, PARTICULARLY SINCE KUWAIT WITHOUT A STRONG

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FRIENDS SUCH AS IRAN WAS VERY VULNERABLE INDEED TO IRAQ WHOSE CLAIMS AND ASPIRATIONS RE KUWAIT HAD NEVER BEEN RENOUNCED.

2. TURNING TO ISLANDS, HE SAID HE HAD MADE ABSOLUTELY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY CLEAR TO BRITISH AND ARAB FRIENDS ON OTHER SIDE OF GULF THAT THESE ISLANDS WERE IRANIAN AND AT VERY LEAST IRAN WOULD INSIST ON STATIONING FORCES ON THEM. IF SHEIKHS WERE UNWILLING TO REACH SOME AGREEMENT, FAULT WOULD BE THEIRS, BUT IRAN COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT LEAVE THESE ISLANDS WHICH CONTROLLED MOUTH OF GULF SOLELY IN HANDS OF TINY SHEIKHDOMS WHICH MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT SURVIVE RADICAL ARAB OFFENSIVE WHICH HAS ALREADY BEGUN THROUGH INSTALLATION OF SUBVERSIVE CADRES. IF SHEIKHS REMAIN UNCOOPERATIVE, THEY COULD NOT LATER EXPECT COOPERATION FROM IRAN.

3. TURNING TO FEDERATION, HE SAID IRAN HAD RECENTLY REAFFIRMED AGAIN TO SHEIKHDOMS THAT IF THEY WANTED FEDERATION (FAA) IRAN FAVORED IDEA WHETHER FAA BE LARGE OR SMALL. HOWEVER, AT SAME TIME GOI HAD MADE CLEAR THAT ISLANDS QUESTION MUST BE SETTLED FIRST AND THAT IF IT WERE NOT, IRAN WOULD BE ACTIVELY OPPOSED TO A FEDERATION SHOULD SHEIKHDOMS TRY TO ACTUALLY BRING ONE INTO BEING. SHAH THEN MENTIONED THAT IF THERE IS ARAB-ISRAEL SETTLEMENT AND SUEZ CANAL IS OPENED, RUSSIANS WOULD BE ABLE TO INCREASE THEIR NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN AND ARABIAN SEA AREA WHICH WAS ADDITIONAL CAUSE OF CONCERN RE GULF, AS OBVIOUSLY RUSSIANS WILL SUPPORT RADICAL ARAB REGIMES, PARTICULARLY IRAQ, AS CATSPAWS TO PULL DOWN MODERATE ARAB REGIMES IN ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THUS INCREASE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA. THIS AFFORDED ME OPENING TO RAISE FUTURE OF MIDEASFOR AS FOLLOWS:

B. FUTURE OF MIDEASFOR

1. I REPLIED SOVIETS INCREASING THEIR NAVAL PRESENCE IN MEDITERRANEAN AND AGREED FULLY WITH HIM THEY ALSO DOING SAME THING IN INDIAN OCEAN AND GULF AREA. SAID I UNDERSTOOD HE HAD RECENTLY SEEN REPORTS OF CONCERN IN UK AND US OVER STEADILY INCREASING SOVIET PRESENCE



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IN INDIAN OCEAN AREA, WHETHER US OR IRAN LIKED IT OR NOT, THIS WAS FACT OF LIFE AND WE WOULD DOUBTLESS SEE FURTHER EXPANSION OF SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN INDIAN OCEAN, ARABIAN SEA AND PERSIAN GULF. I WAS SURE HE WOULD AGREE IT WOULD BE GREAT TRAGEDY IF RUSSIANS SUCCEEDED IN TURNING INDIAN OCEAN AND GULF AREA INTO WHAT AMOUNTED TO SOVIET LAKE. FOR THESE REASONS USG WANTED HIM TO KNOW CONFIDENTIALLY THAT WE PLANNED TO CONTINUE MIDEASTFOR AS AT PRESENT. THIS WOULD HELP COUNTERBALANCE INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE BOTH

IN GULF AND IN INDIAN OCEAN AREA WHERE MIDEASTFOR SPENT APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF ITS TIME COVERING ITS AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY FROM CEYLON ACROSS TO AFRICA.

2. SHAH REPLIED HE HAD MADE CLEAR TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT WHEN BRITISH NAVY LEFT GULF HE DID NOT WANT IT REPLACED BY SOVIETS, AMERICANS OR ANYONE ELSE. (HE ADDED HE TOLD BRITISH HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO BRITISH NAVAL BASE OUTSIDE GULF IN OMAN.) I SAID I KNEW HE DID NOT WISH A BRITISH OR AMERICAN PRETEXT FOR RUSSIANS TO COME INTO GULF BUT HARD FACT OF LIFE IS THAT THEY ARE ALREADY IN GULF AND OBVIOUSLY INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN SOME SORT OF PRESENCE THERE WHETHER ANYONE LIKED IT OR NOT. I POINTED OUT THAT FOR SIXTY YEARS FROM DESTRUCTION OF IMPERIAL RUSSIAN FLEET BY ADMIRAL TOGO IN 1905 TO ABOUT TWO AND HALF YEARS AGO THERE HAD BEEN NO RUSSIAN NAVAL VESSELS IN GULF. HOWEVER, IN LAST TWO AND HALF YEARS THERE HAD BEEN FIVE VISITATIONS OF GROUPS OF SHIPS. SHAH NODDED AND SAID, "YES TWO OF THEM VISITED IRANIAN PORTS." I WENT ON THAT PERHAPS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT WAS FACT THAT RUSSIANS CONSTRUCTING NAVAL FACILITY IN UMM-AL-QASR IN IRAQ NOMINALLY FOR IRAQ BUT OBVIOUSLY TO HAVE AN AVAILABLE PORT UNDER CONTROL OF A COUNTRY HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON SOVIET UNION FOR ASSISTANCE. OBVIOUSLY RUSSIAN SHIPS WOULD USE THIS PORT AS THEY USE PORT THEY CONSTRUCTING IN EGYPT AS MAS-AL-MATRU WHICH WHILE NOMINALLY FOR UAR, IS ACTUALLY FOR SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS. FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS, INCLUDING THOSE I HAD CITED, WE HAD DECIDED FREE-WORLD INTERESTS WOULD BEST BE SERVED BY CONTINUING MIDEASTFOR, WHICH WHILE HOME-PORTED IN BAHREIN DID NOT

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HAVE ANY CONVENTIONAL NAVAL BASE THERE. CONTINUATION  
OF PRESENT MIDEASTFOR ARRANGEMENTS WOULD ENABLE US TO  
HAVE SHIPS IN GULF PERIODICALLY AS WELL AS CONTINUING  
PRESENCE IN ARABIAN SEA AND INDIAN OCEAN WHERE, AS I  
HAD POINTED OUT, SHIPS SPENT TWO-THIRDS OR MORE OF THEIR  
TIME.  
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ACTION: SS-45

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INFO: OCT-01 /046 W

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R 101300Z DEC 70  
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2952  
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
CINCS TRIKE/CINCM EAFSA  
COMIDEASTFOR  
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3. SHAH DID NOT COMMENT, OFFERING NO RPT NO SPECIFIC OBJECTION AND DISCUSSION ON MIDEASTFOR ENDED ON THIS NOTE. I DID NOT PRESS HIM TO AGREE BECAUSE WE FELT HE MIGHT PREFER NOT TO BE PUT IN POSITION OF APPROVING FOR REASONS CITED IN PARA 2(A) REFTEL. MY IMPRESSION IS HE ACCEPTS OUR "DECISION" EVEN IF NOT WITH ANY ENTHUSIASM ALTHOUGH I CANNOT OF COURSE BE ENTIRELY CERTAIN THAT HE MAY NOT RAISE QUESTIONS LATER. I THEREFORE FEEL THAT HAVING GIVEN HIM NOTICE OF OUR INTENT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE NOW TO INFORM SAUDIS AND KUWAITIS AND THE BAHRAIN OF OUR PLANS. HOWEVER IN DISCUSSING THIS WITH SAUDIS, KUWAITIS, BAHREINIS, ETC., I STRONGLY RECOMMEND WE NOT RPT NOT VOLUNTEER FACT WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH GOI. IF THEY RAISE QUESTION ABOUT POSITION OF IRAN, WOULD RECOMMEND WE SIMPLY SAY IRAN ALSO BEING INFORMED AND WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE GOI WILL OBJECT. OF COURSE, HAVE NO OBJECTION TO FILLING IN BRITISH RE MY TALK WITH SHAH BUT IF WE DO SO, I WOULD LIKE TO BE NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE AS TO WHEN WE WILL INFORM BRITISH AND WHAT WILL BE SAID SO THAT I CAN ALSO AT SAME TIME FILL IN UK AMB DENIS WRIGHT WHO IS HELPFUL AND COOPERATIVE ON MANY MATTERS. GP-3.

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