

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE 930Z

BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 004513

8 JAN 19 10 59z

000413

E.O. 112365 GDS, 1-7-85, (PRECHT, HENRY)

TAGS: PINS, IR

SUBJECT: FURTHER REPORT OF RICHARD COTTAM

REF: TEHRAN 00366

ACTION
 POL 3
 INFO
 AMB
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 OR
 CRU 2 M R

1. DEP OFF CALLED COTTAM JANUARY 7 FOR REPORT TO SUPPLEMENT REFTEL. COTTAM STRESSED THAT GROUP AROUND KHOMEINI AND OPPOSITIONISTS IN TEHRAN WERE FEARFUL OF A MILITARY COUP WHICH WOULD LEAD TO BLOODY REPRESSION. HE SAID THAT IN HIS FINAL DAYS IN TEHRAN, JANUARY 2-3, OPPOSITIONISTS WERE QUITE DEFINITE IN THEIR INFORMATION ABOUT A COUP. THEY KNEW NAMES OF SIX GENERALS, INCLUDING OVEISSI, RABII, AND NAJROUBD PLUS THREE OTHERS COTTAM COULDN'T REMEMBER AND WERE THE PRINCIPAL MILITARY LEADERS. COUP PLANS BEING WORKED UP IN A BUILDING OWNED BY "RESEARCH CORPORATION" ON NEAR ABAS AVENUE. ACCORDING TO THE OPPOSITION, THE PLANNERS HAD DIVIDED TEHRAN INTO SIX DISTRICTS EACH UNDER A GENERAL OFFICER. ARRESTS AND APPLICATION OF STRICT MILITARY CONTROLS WOULD BE SET IN MOTION AT A GIVEN SIGNAL. MANY IN THE OPPOSITION FEARED THE U.S. WOULD BACK SUCH A COUP.

2. DESPITE HATRED FOR U.S. AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION, COTTAM FOUND KHOMEINI'S CIRCLE AND OPPOSITIONISTS IN TEHRAN

READY TO THINK IN SOPHISTICATED TERMS ABOUT FUTURE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. HE DESCRIBED THEM AS AFRAID OF THE SOVIET UNION AND DESIROUS OF RELYING ON THE U.S. FOR IRAN'S DEFENSE. THEY DID NOT WANT A FORMAL DEFENSIVE RELATIONSHIP BUT DID WANT U.S. BACKING AGAINST THE SOVIET PARTIS. KHOMEINI'S FOLLOWERS THOUGHT MOSCOW WOULD BE GREATLY DISTURBED BY A GOVERNMENT IN IRAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF UNLAWFUL LEADERS WHO MIGHT EXERCISE INFLUENCE BEYOND IRAN'S BORDERS, INCLUDING AMONG SOVIET