

C O N F I D E N T I A L/LIMDIS

TEHRAN 0431/1

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2033
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 TEHRAN 00431

APPROV: MIN: CWNAAIS
DRAFTD: POL: JDSTEMPEL: HG
CLEAR: POL: GELAMBRAKIS
DISTR: POL-3 AMB DCM
ECON-2 PM OR
CHRON/18

LIMDIS

E.O. 12065: RDS-4 1/9/99 (STEMPEL, JOHN D.) -OR=P
TAGS: PINR, PINS, POBS, IR
SUBJECT: TWO OPPOSITIONIST VIEWS -- BACKING OFF
CONFRONTATION

Chron

REF: TEHRAN 367

SUMMARY: NEW LIBERATION MOVEMENT (LMI) SOURCE SAYS LMI
WILL NOT CHALLENGE BAKHTIAR GOVT NOW, WILL HELP TO
MAKE SHAH'S EVENTUAL DEPARTURE AS PEACEFUL AS POSSIBLE,
AND URGES U.S. TO PREVENT ARMY FROM OVERTHROWING CIVILIAN
EFFORT. MODERATE RELIGIOUS LEADERS MOVING FASTER IN
SIMILAR DIRECTION TO TRY AND AVOID TROUBLE WHEN SHAH LEAVES
COUNTRY. SOURCE BELIEVES RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATION ON
REGENCY COUNCIL WOULD HELP EASE SITUATION AND SAYS
SHARIAT-MADARI GROUP IS PROBABLY READY TO PARTICIPATE.
END SUMMARY

1. IN TWO CONVERSATIONS MORNING JAN 9, POLOFF GOT IM-
PRESSION THAT BOTH MODERATE RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND LMI ARE
PREPARED TO TOLERATE BAKHTIAR GOVT FOR LIMITED TIME IN
ORDER TO EASE SHOCK OF SHAH'S DEPARTURE FROM COUNTRY.
BOTH SOURCES NOW BELIEVE SHAH INTENDS TO DEPART, AND
RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO EMPOFF'S URGING THAT THEIR ORGANI-
ZATIONS PLAN NOW TO MAKE POST-DEPARTURE SCENARIO AS
ORDERLY AS POSSIBLE.

2. EMPOFF MET AMIR ENTEZAM, LMI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER,
FOR FIRST TIME (STRONGLY PROTECT). PROF RICHARD COTTAM
HAD VOUCHERED FOR EACH OTHERS' BONA FIDES, AND DISCUSSION
IMMEDIATELY TURNED TO POTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF POST-SHAH
IRAN. ENTEZAM EXPRESSED LMI BELIEF THAT "ARMY CAN NOT
TURN AGAINST PEOPLE IF THE U.S. OPPOSES THIS." EMPOFF
IMPLIED THAT U.S., IN ITS CONTACTS WITH IRANIAN MILITARY,
WAS URGING OBEDIENCE TO CIVILIAN GOVT, BUT LMI HAD BETTER
STRAIGHTEN ITSELF OUT ABOUT EXTENT AND DEPTH OF U.S.
INFLUENCE WITH IRANIAN MILITARY, ESPECIALLY ON VITAL ISSUES
WHERE OFFICER PERCEPTIONS MAY NOT BE SUBJECT TO MUCH
FOREIGN PERSUASION. AFTER SHORT DISCUSSION OF DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN "CONTROL" AND "INFLUENCE," ENTEZAM ACKNOWLEDGED
LIMITATION ON U.S. ROLE (AT LEAST FOR PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION).

3. EMPOFF REITERATED THAT U.S. WAS OPPOSED TO IDEA OF
MILITARY COUP, DID NOT THINK IT WAS A LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO
IRAN'S PROBLEMS, AND HAD SO STATED BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRI-
VATELY ON NUMBER OF OCCASIONS. FOR THIS REASON, USG WAS
PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN WHAT LMI AND OTHERS WERE DOING
TO PREVENT PROVOCATION TO MILITARY WHICH WOULD LEAD TO
DISORDER AND CHAOS WHEN SHAH LEFT IRAN. ENTEZAM STATED

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