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TEHRAN 03877/01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0850

CLASS: SECRET  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF TEHRAN 03877

E.O. 12065: RGDS 4/12/99 (STEMPEL, J.D.) OR-P  
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, SHUM, IR  
SUBJ: YAZDI MEETING: REVOLUTIONARY TRIALS

REF: A. TEHRAN 3859, B. STATE 90863

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT -- THIS IS A REPORTING MESSAGE)

2. SUMMARY: CHARGE EXPRESSED U.S. CONCERN WITH SUMMARY NATURE OF TRIALS AND EXECUTIONS. YAZDI ACCEPTED CRITICISM, SAID GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO IMPROVE SYSTEM OF JUSTICE, BUT PUBLIC ANGER WAS SUCH THAT NEW GOVERNMENT HAD DIFFICULTY KEEPING REVOLUTIONARIES FROM KILLING FORMER OFFICIALS IN STREETS. TO UNDERLINE HIS POINT, HE SHOWED CHARGE SET OF GRUESOME PHOTOS FROM "OLD SAVAK FILES" OF PERSONS TORTURED TO DEATH AS EVIDENCE OF WHAT PEOPLE WERE MAD ABOUT. THE GOVERNMENT'S PROBLEM WAS IN CONVINCING REVOLUTIONARIES TO MAKE EVIDENCE PUBLIC. YAZDI ALSO NOTED THAT COUNTER REVOLUTIONARIES WERE AT WORK, AND SAID GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY GOT KHOMEINI AGREEMENT TO HUMANITARIAN CLEMENCY AND SENTENCING POLICY. IMPLEMENTATION AWAITED RIGHT POLITICAL MOMENT. END SUMMARY.

3. AFTER PRESENTATION OF U.S. VIEWS ON TIES WITH NEW REGIME (REF A), CHARGE TURNED TO DISCUSSION OF REVOLUTIONARY TRIALS IN SPIRIT OF FRANK AND FRIENDLY DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS. DRAWING ON REF B GUIDANCE, CHARGE EXPRESSED CONCERN BEING FELT BY MANY IN U.S., PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAD SUPPORTED IRANIAN REVOLUTION, AT ACTION OF ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY COURTS. THIS REACTION COULD SLOW DOWN PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION. JUST AS IRANIAN REVOLUTIONARIES SUSPECT U.S. OF CERTAIN THINGS, AMERICANS AND OTHER WESTERN NATIONS ARE DISHEARTED BY THIS APPARENT WARPING OF REVOLUTION AND THIS GENERATES QUESTIONS ABOUT REAL INTENTIONS OF REVOLUTIONARIES. CHARGE EXPRESSED USG AND PERSONAL HOPE THAT REVOLUTIONARY TRIALS AND EXECUTIONS COULD STOP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. U.S. INTEREST WAS HUMANITARIAN AND DID NOT REFLECT CONCLUSIONS OF GUILT OR INNOCENCE OF SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS. RECALLING THAT DEPUTY PM HAD FLED IRAN BECAUSE OF HIS OPPOSITION TO THE SHAH'S REGIME AND LATER RETURNED TO SERVE HIS COUNTRY, CHARGE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT REVOLUTIONARY EXCESSES WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ALIENATE ANOTHER GENERATION FROM PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL LIFE. NOW IS THE TIME, HE SAID, FOR NATIONAL HEALING AND MERCY.

4. YAZDI WAS VERY FORTHCOMING. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD PROBLEM, MANY PEOPLE HAD EXPRESSED SAME THOUGHTS TO GOVERNMENT. AT THIS POINT HE WENT TO HIS DESK AND WITH-

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DREW A FILE CONTAINING 50 OR 60 SHEETS OF PAPER WITH PICTURES ATTACHED. YAZDI SAID THESE WERE SAVAK FILES WHICH HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY REVOLUTION AND SHOWED BEFORE-AND-AFTER RESULTS OF TORTURE ON MANY INDIVIDUALS. THESE, HE SAID, EXPLAIN WHY GOVERNMENT HAS SUCH DIFFICULTY KEEPING REVOLUTIONARIES FROM KILLING OLD REGIME'S OFFICIALS IN STREETS. (COMMENT: PHOTOS, WHICH SEEMED AUTHENTIC, WERE GRUESOME SET OF EVIDENCE SHOWING MANGLED AND TORTURED BODIES. YAZDI CLEARLY HAS EFFECTIVE TACTIC HERE.) YAZDI SAID REVOLUTIONARY COURTS HAD SEEN SUCH PHOTOS AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO COUNSEL LENIENCY IN WAKE OF SUCH EVIDENCE OF ATROCITIES BY OLD REGIME. GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO GET TRIALS INSTITUTIONALIZED TO PREVENT WORST EXCESSES OF REVENGE IN THE STREETS AND HOMES. YAZDI RECOUNTED ONE INCIDENT WHERE EX-SAVAK OFFICER IN ISFAHAN HAD BEEN TORTURED TO DEATH BY REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS. WHEN YAZDI SUMMONED SOLDIER TO HIS PRESENCE FOR EXPLANATION, SOLDIER SHOWED HIM HIS OWN MARRED BODY AND SAID HE HAD JUST DONE TO HIS TORMENTOR WHAT HAD BEEN DONE TO HIM.

5. ON QUESTION OF EVIDENCE, YAZDI SAID THERE WAS AMPLE EVIDENCE LINKING MANY FROM PAST, INCLUDING SOME WHO WERE THOUGHT TO BE "CLEAN" AND ABOVE REPROACH WITH EXCESSES. BAZARGAN, ETEZAM AND YAZDI PERSONALLY OBJECTED TO WAY KHOMEINI COMMITTEE WAS HANDLING MATTER OF SUMMARY JUSTICE. PGOI WAS WORKING TO TRY AND IMPROVE SITUATION. CHARGE EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF PROBLEM, BUT SAID KILLING SOMEONE LIKE KHALATBARI WHO WAS MERELY TECHNICIAN WAS NOT ONLY EXCESSIVE BUT GAVE GOVERNMENT NEEDLESS BAD IMAGE ABROAD. YAZDI READILY ADMITTED EXECUTIONS OF KHALATBARI, MAJLES SPEAKER RIAZI AND SENATOR VAHIDI "WERE PERHAPS EXCESSIVE, BUT ASKED "WHERE DO YOU DRAW THE LINE?" ACTING POL CHIEF SUGGESTED THAT PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE IN PUBLIC TRIAL WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL IN CASES SUCH AS THESE. YAZDI SAID THIS WAS CRUX OF GOVERNMENT'S ARGUMENT WITH KHOMEINI HIMSELF.

6. DEPUTY PM THEN WENT ON TO NOTE THAT TRIALS WERE IN PART POLITICAL -- MANY AGENTS AND OFFICIALS OF OLD REGIME WERE STIRRING UP TROUBLE AND ACTIVELY ATTACKING REVOLUTIONARY FORCES. GOVERNMENT WAS CERTAIN SUCH FORCES WERE

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