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MEETING WITH YAZDI: IRANIAN CONCERNS

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 From: IRAN TEHRAN | TEHRAN OR-P
 Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014
 To: DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT; ACTION REQUIRED)

2. SUMMARY: YAZDI RAISED QUESTION OF PRESENCE OF AMCITS IN OR NEAR NAGHADEH AT TIME OF RECENT DISTURBANCES.

FONMIN ASKED WHAT PROSPECTS WERE FOR GETTING JURISDICTION OVER CRIMINALS FROM OLD REGIME WHO HAD FLED TO U.S. UNDER ASSUMED NAMES, AND FOR BLOCKING ACTIVITIES OF PAHLAVI FOUNDATION IN U.S. CHARGE SAID WE WOULD LOOK INTO PROBLEMS AND AGAIN URGED GOI TO HIRE A GOOD LAWYER. END SUMMARY.

3. AT END OF DISCUSSION OF U.S. PRESENCE PROBLEMS (SEE REFTTEL), YAZDI ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY PENNSYLVANIANS IN NORTHWESTERN IRAN. HE SAID PGOI HAD REPORTS OF "TWO OR THREE AMERICANS FROM PENNSYLVANIA" BEING PRESENT THERE JUST BEFORE TROUBLES. EFFORTS HAD BEEN MADE TO SECRET

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TRACE THEM LATER, BUT TO NO AVAIL. ALLEGED AMERICANS SPOKE GOOD KURDISH AND TOLD PEOPLE THEY WERE ORIENTALISTS ON A MISSION TO STUDY THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE OF KURDISH PEOPLE. CHARGE AND ACTING POL CHIEF SAID WE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF AMCITS AND EXPRESSED DOUBT U.S. SCHOLARS WOULD BE WANDERING ABOUT IRAN AT THIS TIME. CHARGE REQUESTED WHATEVER FURTHER INFO PGOI COULD PROVIDE AND

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SUGGESTED THAT STORY COULD BE RESULT OF DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN, BUT PROMISED TO CHECK. (SUBSEQUENTLY, POLOFF LEARNED FROM LOCAL U.S. ACADEMIC THAT THERE HAD BEEN UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGISTS AT HASSANLOO--A SHORT WALK FROM NAGHADEH--UP UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO, BUT NONE WERE THERE NOW. CHECK OF OUR BADLY TRUNCATED CONSULAR RECORDS SHOWS NO AMCITS IN REGION, EITHER, BUT THIS DOES NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY OF VISITORS. ABOVE BEING PASSED TO YAZDI IN SPIRIT OF HELPING DEFUSE ISSUE.) ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE CHECK ASAP WITH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA AND LEARNED SOCIETIES TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THERE ARE SCHOLARS IN AREA. TWO DAYS AGO AMIR ENTEZAM TOLD PRESS THAT HE WOULD PROVIDE INFO TO PRESS ON SPY RING THURSDAY, MAY 3. WE HAD HOPED THIS WAS REFERENCE TO A SOVIET CAPER GONE SOUR (REPORTED ELSEWHERE) BUT YAZDI'S QUESTION RAISES POSSIBILITY WE WILL BE TARGET OF ATTACK OR THAT "FOR BALANCE" BOTH MATTERS WILL BE RELEASED AT SAME TIME.

4. FONMIN THEN RAISED QUESTION OF HOW IRAN COULD GO ABOUT TRYING TO GET CUSTODY OF "SEVERAL CRIMINALS" FROM OLD REGIME. YAZDI SAID GOI HAS TRACED SEVERAL WANTED EXSAVAK MEN TO U.S., INCLUDING ALLEGED PERPETRATOR OF ABIDAN REX CINEMA FIRE WHICH KILLED OVER 400 PEOPLE IN AUGUST 1978. CHARGE REPLIED THAT SINCE THERE WAS NO IRAN-U.S. EXTRADITION TREATY, PROBLEM WAS GOING TO BE SECRET

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DIFFICULT AND THAT HE WOULD SEEK ADVICE. CHARGE CONFIRMED THIS WAS QUESTION OF SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE WANTED ON SPECIFIC CHARGES. YAZDI SAID ALL HAD NEW PASSPORTS IN ASSUMED NAMES ISSUED BEFORE BAKHTIAR GOVERNMENT FELL. HE DID NOT PURSUE QUESTION OF HOW GROUP GOT VISAS TO U.S. (AS MAJOR BENEFICIARY OF PAST LACK OF EXTRADITION TREATY BETWEEN U.S. AND IRAN, YAZDI IS CERTAINLY MORE BLOODTHIRSTY ON THIS POINT THAN ONE MIGHT EXPECT.) COMMENT: PLEASE ADVISE ME WHETHER ANY ACTION CAN BE TAKEN IN U.S. COURTS BY PGOI FOR CRIMES COMMITTED ABROAD.

5. YAZDI THEN RAISED QUESTION OF HOW PGOI COULD STOP PAHLAVI FOUNDATION IN NEW YORK FROM SELLING OFF ITS ASSETS--BUILDING, ETC. IRAN'S CENTRAL BANK HAD LOANED FOUNDATION DOLS 39 MILLION, AND PGOI WANTED TO STOP WHAT WAS APPARENT ATTEMPT BY OLD REGIME LEADERS TO MILK OUT LOAN THROUGH SALE OF BUILDINGS. TWICE ALLUDING TO FACT THAT EX-SECSTATE WILLIAM ROGERS WAS CHAIRMAN OF PAHLAVI BOARD, YAZDI SAID IRANIAN PEOPLE HAD TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING NUANCES OF LAW, BUT UNDERSTOOD THEY HAD BEEN ROBBED. HE CONCLUDED THAT USG HAD OBLIGATION TO HELP PGOI STOP THIS. PGOI IS PREPARED TO SHOW PAHLAVI FOUNDATION ASSETS.

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TION ASSETS WERE IRANIAN TREASURY FUNDS ILLEGALLY CHANNELED TO FOUNDATION. EMBOFFS SAID CENTRAL BANK COULD PROBABLY USE U.S. COURTS IF THERE WERE VIOLATIONS OF LAW WITHIN US JURISDICTION. AS EMBOFFS WERE NOT LEGAL SPECIALISTS, HOWEVER, CHARGE WOULD HAVE TO ASK DEPARTMENT FOR ITS VIEWS ON SUBJECT. YAZDI MADE CLEAR THAT HIS QUERY WAS NOT LIMITED TO CBI LOAN BUT COVERED ALL PAHLAVI FOUNDATION ASSETS. CHARGE URGED YAZDI (AS HE HAS URGED OTHERS) TO CONVINCING HIS COLLEAGUES TO HIRE A GOOD LAW FIRM TO FIGHT THE NUMBER OF CASES WHICH ARE COMING TO COURT. HE CITED INSTANCES WHERE GOI MIGHT HAVE WON ITS POINT WITH SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADS-00 NEAE-00 NSCE-00 SP-02 L-01 SY-02 SYE-00 INR-04 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SES-01 EB-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SSO-00 ANAE-00 /037 W -----008228 011603Z /46

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SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY ARGUMENT IF IT HAD BEEN REPRESENTED IN COURT. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED U.S. TRADE UNION SUIT AGAINST OPEC COUNTRIES, NOTING MATERIAL WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO PGOI SHORTLY. YAZDI NOTED THAT USG COULD SAY PRIVATELY IT WISHED TO IMPROVE ITS TIES WITH ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, BUT IF IT REALLY WANTED TO DO SO, IT MUST DO SOMETHING TO HELP.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE BEEN WONDERING WHEN PGOI WOULD GET AROUND TO RAISING QUESTIONS SUCH AS THE ABOVE. YAZDI WAS VAGUE ENOUGH ON DETAILS OF EXTRADITION PROBLEM AND PAHLAVI FOUNDATION SITUATION THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO POSE SPECIFIC LEGAL QUESTIONS, BUT POLITICAL THRUST OF HIS APPROACH IS CLEAR: U.S. MUST AT LEAST TRY TO HELP. AS DEPT KNOWS, CORRUPTION WAS BIGGEST POLITICAL ISSUE IN REVOLUTION WHICH DREW SUPPORT FROM ALL REPEAT ALL CLASSES OF IRANIAN SOCIETY. I WOULD LIKE A STATEMENT FROM L ON STEPS PGOI COULD TAKE IN COURTS IF IT WISHED, TO RECOVER

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PAHLAVI FOUNDATION ASSETS. NAAS

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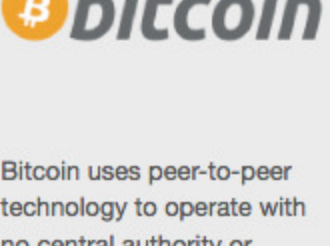
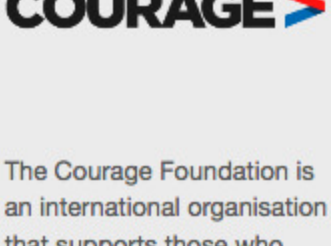
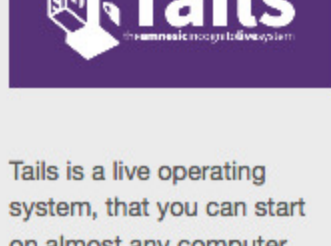
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