

White House

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

16774

Approved in S -
10/30/69

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: October 22, 1969
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: Blair House

SUBJECT: Security in the Persian Gulf Area
(Part 2 of 8)

PARTICIPANTS: Foreign
His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran
H.E. Ardeshir Zahedi, Foreign Minister of Iran
H.E. Amir Aslan Afshar, Ambassador of Iran

United States

The Secretary of State

JJK The Hon. Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State

The Hon. Douglas MacArthur II, American Ambassador to Iran

Mr. Jack C. Miklos, Country Director for Iran

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Referring to Arab countries in the area, the Shah said that many of them were now in the hands of unprincipled bandits who either for their own purposes or in the misbegotten belief that Communism was a wave of the future were disposed to cooperate with the USSR. He saw the Soviets gaining domination of the area through a pincer movement, one arm of which started in the UAR and came up the Arabian Peninsula through Yemen. The other arm extended down from Iraq aimed toward Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The Shah said that Kuwait was vulnerable as was Saudi Arabia about which he was especially concerned. If events continued to unfold in Arab countries as they have in the past he felt there was great danger for Iran. He must, therefore, have the capability to defend himself without outside assistance. Indeed, he said, he must have an "over-kill" capability so that should anyone be tempted to attack Iran they would think twice or even three times. The Secretary asked whether Iran was not already much stronger than Iraq and would it not be madness for Iraq to contemplate attacking Iran. The Shah answered that "those fellows in Iraq are mad." He said that Iraq had all but one division of its troops on the Iraqi-Iranian border. Perhaps this was because of

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their fear of Israel and, of course, some of them were busy with the Kurds, but, he said, he really didn't know if this was the full explanation of why they were there. The Shah went on to describe the military assistance that the Soviets are giving Iraq. He said this included missile launching vessels and pilot training for large numbers of Iraqi air force personnel. The Secretary suggested that the Soviets might counsel moderation to the Iraqis even though they are supplying them with military equipment since the Soviets also realize that Iraq would be no match for Iran. The Shah agreed that the Soviets have a strong incentive in doing so, particularly in view of their "understanding" with Iraq about oil developments in the Rumaila field. With reference to Soviet arms policy the Shah noted that two years ago the Soviets were urging on Iran all sorts of military equipment. Lately, however, they seem to have withdrawn and he and his Foreign Minister have asked the Soviets about a pending Iranian request for military equipment and so far have received no reply. He did not know what to make of this. (Iran reportedly asked the USSR for 400 23mm anti-aircraft guns in early 1969.)

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