

WITHDRAWN ITEMS
BOX 1, NMD 969030
FOLDER POL 33
PERSIAN GULF

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Department of State
TELEGRAM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 603

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 02225 01 OF 02 251009Z

17-S 12
ACTION NEA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-20 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INR-06 CIAE-00
NSAE-00 EUR-12 IO-04 ~~RRR-01~~ RSE-01 L-02 E-02 /067 W
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*Tehran 2225
5-25-70*

P R 250800Z MAY 70
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1305
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
 Retain class'n Change/classify to _____
 Declassify with concurrence of _____
 after Review in 2006
EO 12958, 25X (S)
FPC/HDR by DM Date: 5/7/90
Withdrawal No. _____

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 2225

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ROME FOR TOSEC

DEPT FOR ACTING SECRETARY AND ASST SECY SISCO FROM MACARTHUR

SUBJECT: ABU MUSA CONCESSION DISPUTE AS IT RELATES TO
FUTURE OF GULF

REF: (A) TEHRAN 2182
(B) STATE 79456

I AM DEEPLY DISTURBED BY VARIOUS TELEGRAMS WE HAVE RECENTLY
RECEIVED FROM LONDON AND DEPARTMENT INDICATING BRITISH
FOREIGN OFFICE HAS DECIDED TO PROCEED DOWN PATH OF INTER-
NATIONAL ARBITRATION BETWEEN SHARJA AND UMM-AL-QAIWAIN WITH
RESPECT TO DISRUPTED WATERS OFF ABU MUSA. TO PROCEED DOWN
THIS PATH AT THIS TIME WILL, WE BELIEVE, PUT BRITAIN AND
IRAN ON A HEAD-ON COLLISION COURSE--A COURSE WHICH WILL
ULTIMATELY OBLIGE US TO SIDE EITHER WITH BRITAIN, WHICH IS
WITHDRAWING FROM GULF AND WILL HAVE PROGRESSIVELY LESS
INFLUENCE THERE, OR IRAN, WHICH HOLDS BEST HOPE OF PEACE

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E.O. 12958, as amended
June 21, 2006

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 02225 01 OF 02 251009Z

AND STABILITY IN GULF AND PREVENTION OF EXTENSION OF RADICAL ARAB-SOVIET INFLUENCE INTO THAT VITALLY IMPORTANT BODY OF WATER.

2. PROBLEM IN SIMPLE TERMS IS THAT, IN OUR BEST JUDGMENT, IRAN HAS NOT AND WILL NOT RENOUNCE ITS CLAIMS TO THREE SMALL ISLANDS IN GULF (THE TUNBS AND ABU MUSA) WHICH IT BELIEVES ARE VITAL TO ITS NATIONAL SECURITY--ISLANDS WHICH BRITAIN SEIZED BY FORCE IN LAST CENTURY AND NOW FOR ITS OWN CONVENIENCE DESIRES TO DISPOSE OF, HANDLING PROBLEMS INHERENT IN RELINQUISHMENT IN A WAY WHICH WILL JUSTIFY ITS ORIGINAL ACT OF SEIZURE AND ALLOCATION TO RESPECTIVE SHEIKHDOMS.

3. WE BELIEVE SHAH WILL REGARD AS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE AND REACT VERY STRONGLY AGAINST A BRITISH PROPOSAL FOR ARBITRATION BETWEEN TWO OF ITS PROTECTORATES (SOON TO BE INDEPENDENT) OVER ISLAND WATER (ABU MUSA) WHICH BRITISH KNOW IRAN CLAIMS BECAUSE SUCH ARBITRATION NOT ONLY DISREGARDS IRAN'S HISTORIC CLAIMS AND OFT-STRESSED SECURITY INTEREST IN ABU MUSA BUT ALSO REINFORCES SHARJA'S CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY. IF ARBITRATION PROPOSAL IS IMPLEMENTED, EITHER IRANIAN ACQUIESCENCE OR ACCEPTANCE WOULD AMOUNT TO ADMISSION BY IRAN THAT SOVEREIGNTY OVER ABU MUSA RESTS ELSEWHERE. SIMILARLY, WE DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT SHAH WOULD ACCEPT PROPOSAL FOR SOME FORM OF ARBITRATION INVOLVING TWO SHEIKHDOMS AND IRAN WHILE ARBITRATION OFTEN USEFUL IN DISPUTE OF LEGAL NATURE, IT IS NON-STARTER IN THIS DISPUTE WHICH IS TERRITORIAL AND THEREFORE HIGHLY POLITICAL INVOLVING WHAT IRAN CONSIDERS ITS MOST VITAL SECURITY INTERESTS. ACCEPTANCE OF ARBITRATION BY IRAN WOULD BE TACIT ACCEPTANCE THAT ITS CLAIMS TO ABU MUSA ARE OPEN TO QUESTION, ADMISSION WE DO NOT BELIEVE SHAH WILL MAKE IN VIEW OF FACT HE REGARDS CONTROL OF TUNBS AND ABU MUSA AS VITAL TO IRAN'S SECURITY, PARTICULARLY SHOULD ARAB SIDE OF GULF FALL TO RADICAL ARAB-SOVIET SUBVERSION.

4. WE BELIEVE BRITISH AMB DENIS WRIGHT AND UK EMBASSY HERE ARE AWARE OF REALITIES OF GULF SITUATION (REF A). WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT AT THIS JUNCTURE BEST HOPE OF A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD NOT CREATE A MAJOR CRISIS IN GULF BETWEEN IRAN, SHEIKHDOMS AND UK LIES IN AN IRAN-SHARJA SETTLEMENT WHERE NEITHER PARTY WOULD BE OBLIGED TO REAFFIRM OR RENOUNCE ITS SOVEREIGNTY AS SUGGESTED IN REF A. HOWEVER, MESSAGES FROM

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E.O. 12958, as amended
June 21, 2006

WITHDRAWN ITEMS
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Department of State **TELEGRAM**

11
10/11/10 10 27 25

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PAGE 03 TEHRAN 02225 01 OF 02 251009Z

LONDON AND INDICATIONS GIVEN TO DEPT BY UK COUNSELOR
MOBERLY LEAD US TO CONCLUSION THAT CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN UK
FOREIGN OFFICE LACK UNDERSTANDING OF (A) THE INTENSITY OF
IRAN'S FEELING AND (B) THE REALITIES OF WHAT WILL PROBABLY
HAPPEN IF BRITISH INITIATE THEIR ARBITRATION PLAN NOW (RPT
NOW) INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR IRAN TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH
SHARJA OVER ABU MUSA. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT DISCUSSIONS
BETWEEN ABU MUSA AND IRAN SHOULD NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF SHARJA-
UMM-AL-QAIWAIN TERRITORIAL WATERS PROBLEM. BUT THIS SHOULD
INITIALLY BE DEALT WITH IN CONTEXT OF IRAN-SHARJA AND THEN
IRAN-UMM-AL-QAIWAIN NEGOTIATIONS AND NOT BY ACTIVATION
BRITISH PROPOSAL FOR ARBITRATION BETWEEN TWO SHEIKHDOMS WHICH
WE BELIEVE WILL "TEAR" IT.

5. IF BRITISH SHOULD PROCEED WITH THEIR ARBITRATION
PROPOSAL, WE MUST BE PREPARED NOT ONLY FOR SHAH'S VERY
STRONG REACTION AGAINST SHEIKHDOMS AND BRITISH BUT ALSO FOR
A REQUEST FROM HIM FOR US TO SUPPORT HIS POSITION. WHILE
WE SHOULD TRY TO STAY OUT OF THIS DISPUTE, IF BRITISH MOVE
FORWARD WITH ARBITRATION WE DOUBT WE WILL BE ABLE TO DO SO.
ZAHEDI HAS ALREADY TOLD US (IN HIS TALK WITH SISCO MAY 14,
STATE'S 075064) IRAN IS COUNTING ON US SUPPORT FOR ITS
CLAIMS TO DISPUTED GULF ISLANDS. IF, AS SEEMS MOST PROBABLE,
SHAH SEEKS OUR SUPPORT OF HIS POSITION HE WILL REGARD OUR
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WITHDRAWN ITEMS
BOX
FOLDER

POL 23 PERSIAN GULF

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 02225 02 OF 02 251018Z

17-S 12
ACTION: NEA-08

INFO: OCT-01 SS-20 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSQ-00 L-02 EUR-12 INR-06
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PIR 250800Z MAY 70
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1306
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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~~██████████~~ SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 2225

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RESPONSE AS MEASURE OF WHAT FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH US IS WORTH ON MATTER ON WHICH HE BELIEVES IRAN'S SECURITY AND EVEN SURVIVAL MAY DEPEND, AS WELL AS TEST OF OUR SINCERITY IN WANTING IRAN TO PLAY MAJOR STABILIZING ROLE IN GULF AFTER UK WITHDRAWAL IN KEEPING WITH NIXON DOCTRINE WHICH UNDER SECRETARY RICHARDSON RECENTLY ASSURED SHAH WAS RELEVANT TO IRAN'S FUTURE ROLE. AND, OF COURSE, IRAN'S COOPERATION NOT ONLY IN FUTURE OF GULF BUT IN MANY OTHER MATTERS (FACILITIES, OVERFLIGHTS, ONLY AIR CORRIDOR TO ASIA FROM EUROPE, ETC.) IS VITALLY IMPORTANT, INDEED ESSENTIAL TO OUR OWN NATIONAL INTEREST.

6. THEREFORE, AS VERY MINIMUM WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT USG AT HIGH LEVEL (IF POSSIBLE BY SECRETARY TO STEWARD IN ROME) TELL BRITISH VERY FRANKLY THAT WE THINK THEIR PROPOSAL IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS; THAT COMING AT PRESENT TIME IT COULD CREATE SERIOUS CRISIS WITH IRAN INVOLVING BOTH BRITAIN AND SHEIKHDOMS WHICH COULD THREATEN FORMATION OF GULF FEDERATION; THAT IT COULD ALSO ENVENOM GULF ATMOSPHERE IMPROVED BY IRAN'S STATESMANLIKE ACTION IN GIVING UP ITS CLAIM TO BAHREIN, MAKING FUTURE IRAN-MODERATE ARAB COOPERA-

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 02225 02 OF 02 251018Z

TION (ON WHICH FREE WORLD'S VITAL GULF INTEREST SO HEAVILY DEPEND) DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE; THAT WE BELIEVE THEY SHOULD CONCENTRATE THEIR ENERGIES AT THIS TIME ON ACTIVE ENDEAVORS TO ACHIEVE AN IRAN-SHARJA SETTLEMENT ALONG LINES OF REF A RATHER THAN MUDDYING WATERS WITH MICRO-LEGAL ARBITRATION PROPOSAL RELATING TO OIL COMPANY INTERESTS AND RISKING A MAJOR CRISIS WHICH BRITISH WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL; AND THAT IF THEY PROCEED ON ARBITRATION COURSE AND CREATE CRISIS WITH IRAN THEY MUST NOT EXPECT OUR SUPPORT. IN SHORT, UK SHOULD BE REMINDED OF VITAL INTEREST THEY, WE AND FREE WORLD AS WHOLE HAVE IN ENSURING MAXIMUM DEGREE OF STABILITY IN GULF AFTER BRITISH WITHDRAWAL (GULF SUPPLIES ONE-THIRD FREE WORLD'S PETROLEUM; TWO-THIRDS OF WORLD'S PROVEN OIL RESOURCES; 90 PERCENT OF JAPAN'S OIL; 56 PERCENT NATO OIL; BRITAIN ABLE TO PAY IN STERLING FOR GULF OIL PROTECTING STERLING; GULF OIL BENEFITS US BY ABOUT \$2 BILLION IN ITS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, ETC.) THEY SHOULD ALSO BE REMINDED CRITICALLY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN GULF STABILITY WILL BE RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND MODERATE GULF ARABS; AND IPSO FACTO SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF IRAN-SHEIKHDOM DISPUTES RE ABU MUSA AND TUNBS; AND THAT STEWART ONLY RECENTLY REASSURED IRANIANS UK WILL USE ITS FULL INFLUENCE WITH GULF RULERS TO BRING ABOUT SETTLEMENT (MAY 15 CENTO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, STATE'S 075132).

7. WE URGE THIS COURSE OF ACTION BECAUSE OUR OWN INTERESTS IN GULF ARE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE AND BECAUSE WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT WITH DEPARTURE OF BRITISH MILITARY FROM GULF NEXT YEAR, BRITISH INFLUENCE THERE WILL CONTINUE TO SHRINK PROVIDING LITTLE IF ANYTHING IN PRACTICAL TERMS TO CAPACITY OF MODERATE AND FRIENDLY GULF FORCES TO RESIST SOVIET-RADICAL ARAB EFFORTS TO TAKE OVER. WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT IRAN IS KEY TO HOLDING GULF AND CONSTITUTES ONLY POSITIVE ELEMENT OF STRENGTH AND PROGRESS THERE WITH WHICH WE AND OTHERS CAN WORK. GP-3.
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