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17 SEPT 1974

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO THE WHITE HOUSE

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CITE TEHRAN

TO: GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT

FROM: AMBASSADOR HELMS, TEHRAN

PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER FROM ME

1. IN ABU DHABI EMBTEL 1252 OF SEPTEMBER 15 AMBASSADOR STERNER REPORTED A CONVERSATION IN LONDON WITH SHAYKH ZAYID OF ABU DHABI, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE), IN WHICH SHAYKH ZAYID DISCUSSED HIS DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF THE UAE AND CRITICIZED THREE OF HIS FELLOW SHAYKHLY RULERS FOR DRAGGING THEIR FEET AND RESISTING CENTRALIZATION. AMBASSADOR STERNER SEEMED TO HAVE ACCEPTED THE REMARKS OF SHAYKH ZAYID AT FACE VALUE AND INDICATED THAT HE PLANNED TO DO SOME MISSIONARY WORK WITH THOSE OTHER SHAYKHS TO PERSUADE THEM TO COOPERATE FOR A STRONGER FEDERATION.

2. SOME OF MY RESIDENT AND NEAR-RESIDENT ARABISTS WHO HAVE SPENT MANY YEARS IN AND AROUND THE GULF BELIEVE AMBASSADOR STERNER SHOULD BE CAUTIONED AS TO THE DANGERS OF TRYING TO BROKER A STRONGER UAE WITH THE OTHER SHAYKHS ON BEHALF OF SHAYKH ZAYID. AS SO OFTEN HAPPENS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE REACTION IS LIKELY TO BE STRONGER THAN THE ACTION, AND QUITE NEGATIVE IN SEVERAL RESPECTS.

3. THE UAE IS VERY MUCH ZAYID'S SHOW AND AMBASSADOR STERNER'S

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CABLE, WHETHER HE REALIZES IT OR NOT, MAKES THAT POINT LOUD AND CLEAR. ZAYID COMPLAINS ABOUT EACH STATE HAVING ITS OWN ARMY AND INTEL SERVICE, BUT HIS OWN STATE HAS THE LARGEST OF BOTH. IF HE FEELS SO STRONGLY ABOUT THIS, WHY DOES HE NOT LEAD THE WAY BY COMBINING HIS ARMY (12,000) WITH THE UNION DEFENSE FORCE (2,600)? THIS GESTURE MIGHT GET A POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE OTHER STATES. AS LONG AS HE KEEPS HIS OWN FORCE AND INTEL SERVICE, HOW CAN HE EXPECT THE OTHERS TO DO LESS? THE FACT IS HE WISHES TO BRING THEM ALL UNDER HIS CONTROL.

2 4. ZAYID CAN BE A VERY CHARMING FELLOW AND THIS IS APPARENT FROM REFTTEL. BUT ZAYID CAN BARELY READ, AND THOUGH SHREWD, IS A NEWCOMER TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. HE CAN HARDLY CALL RASHID OF DUBAI UNINTELLIGENT. RASHID WAS MAKING HIS STATE GO WITH NOTHING WHILE ZAYID WAS BEING BILKED FOR MILLIONS. UNLIKE ABU DHABI, RASHID HAS VERY FEW FOREIGN ADVISORS - DUBAI IS RUN BY NATIVE DUBAYYANS.

5. IF AMBASSADOR STERNER STARTS TO TALK "UNION" WITH RASHID, OR WITH SULTAN OF SHARJAH, OR SAQAR OF RAS-AL-KHAYMAH, HE IS LIKELY TO GET CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A NASTY GAME, WITH THE USG THE ULTIMATE LOSER. HIS MOVES WILL NOT BE LOST ON IRAN, WHICH HAS ITS OWN IDEAS ABOUT THE UAE AND HAS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH DUBAI AND SHARJAH. I AM NOT STATING THAT A STRONG UAE IS NOT IN USG INTEREST, IT MOST CERTAINLY IS. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, MORE AND SAFER OPTIONS OPEN TO US THAN THOSE PROPOSED IN ABU DHABI EMBTEL. AMBASSADOR STERNER'S PROPOSALS CONCERN ONLY OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ZAYID AND DO NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE BROADER AREA REALITIES.

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6. WHILE WE ARE ALL PLEASED BY THE SAUDI-UAE (ABU DHABI) BORDER AGREEMENT, LET US NOT FORGET THAT THE AGREEMENT HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED AND THERE ARE STILL POINTS TO BE IRONED OUT ON THE GROUND. ALSO, LET US WAIT UNTIL THE FIRST SAUDI AMBASSADOR ARRIVES IN THE UAE BEFORE WE CONCLUDE EVERYTHING IS SMOOTH SAILING. THE QUESTION IS, DO WE WANT TO ASSOCIATE OURSELVES WITH ZAYID'S UAE, OR WITH THE UAE AS A VIABLE ENTITY PREPARED TO PLAY A ROLE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS IN INSURING THE SECURITY OF THE GULF? RIGHT NOW ZAYID'S VIEWS ARE THE UAE'S VIEWS. HIS VIEWS RE IRAN, AND ON ARABIZING THE GULF, ARE HARDLY COMPATIBLE WITH USG POLICY. WE SHOULD WORK ON ZAYID AS WELL AS THE OTHER SHAYKHS, NOT ON THE OTHER SHAYKHS FOR ZAYID.

RELEASED: _____

Alexander Helms in draft

