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IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2024

TO TEHRAN

30 OCTOBER 1968 (NB)

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ADDRESSED TO TEHRAN TELEGRAM NUMBER 2024 OF 30 OCTOBER REPEATED FOR INFORMATION TO BAHRAIN RESIDENCY DUBAI JEDDA AND SAVING TO DOHA WASHINGTON BAHRAIN AGENCY KUWAIT.

ACTION BY 0600 HOURS 31 OCTOBER.

MY TELNO 1111 TO RESIDENCY BAHRAIN. *(16)*

THE TUNBS.

THE HARD IRANIAN ATTITUDE IN YOUR TELNO 1641 STRUCK US AS DESIGNED TO IMPRESS THE VISITOR AND NOT NECESSARILY TO RULE OUT SOFTER ATTITUDES ON PARTICULAR PROBLEMS (COMPARE THE ATTITUDE OF THE MINISTER OF COURT AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER TO THE TUNBS IN PARA 5 OF THE SAME TELEGRAM). BUT IF THE IRANIANS TOOK THE LINE IN PARA 2 OF DUBAI TELNO 494 TO BAHRAIN - AND THE TONE OF THEIR EARLIER DRAFT DOES NOT MAKE THIS IMPROBABLE - THEY WILL ONLY HAVE THEMSELVES TO BLAME IF RAS AL KHAIMAH TAKES COVER UNDER OUR CONTINUING PROTECTION AND IF THE WHOLE PROBLEM, IN CONSEQUENCE, IS THROWN BACK INTO ITS ORIGINAL IMPASSE. *(23)*

2. YOU HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE IT CLEAR TO THE IRANIANS OVER RECENT YEARS THAT IRANIAN ACTION DESIGNED, OR LIKELY, TO FACE BRITAIN WITH A CHOICE BETWEEN IRAN AND THE GULF ARABS COULD NOT RESULT IN OUTCOMES SATISFACTORY EITHER TO IRAN OR BRITAIN. WE FIND IT AT LEAST SURPRISING THAT THE IRANIANS SHOULD HAVE TAKEN THIS LINE WITHIN TEN DAYS OF THE SHAH'S VISIT TO KING FAISAL, WHOSE CAPACITY TO ASSIST OVER SUCH PROBLEMS IS NATURALLY LIMITED AND CAN HARDLY BE INCREASED BY SUCH IRANIAN TACTICS.

3. LIKE THE POLITICAL RESIDENT WE WOULD PREFER TO KEEP OUT OF THESE EXCHANGES. BUT WE THINK THAT YOU SHOULD, UNLESS YOU SEE OBJECTION, TAKE STEPS TO ASK THE IRANIANS FOR THEIR ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING WITH KHALID; YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WHATEVER THE IRANIANS SAID TO THE RULER OF RAS AL KHAIMAH'S SON SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN AS A BULLYING ULTIMATUM OVER SOVEREIGNTY AND TO HAVE

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2.

GIVEN RISE TO SOME EMOTION, THIS IS RETROGRADE IN TERMS OF THE FUTURE OF THE GULF. YOU COULD THEN MAKE THE LAST TWO POINTS IN PARA 3 OF BAHRAIN TELNO 653, THOUGH, IN VIEW OF OUR HOPE THAT THE IRANIANS AND THE RULER WOULD MOVE AWAY FROM A BARREN DISCUSSION ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY, IT SEEMS PREFERABLE TO AMEND THE FORMULA TO READ AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE . . . THAT IN OUR VIEW HE IS WITHIN HIS STRICT RIGHTS IN STANDING BY HIS SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE TUNBS SO LONG AS SOVEREIGNTY ALONE IS AT ISSUE, AND THAT IF THE IRANIANS WANT . . . UNQUOTE ETC.

(BAHRAIN PASS SAVING TO DOHA AND AGENCY BAHRAIN)

STEWART

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