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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM:

NO.

K. Roosevelt

DATE

15 March '51

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FWD'D		
1. <i>Deputy Director, Plans</i>		<i>3/15/51</i>	<i>3/17/51</i>	<i>AWD/1</i>	<p><i>It is not our business to prepare estimates - Maybe it is not too late to comment on them, but know you are broad minded + tolerant. I send you Kin Roosevelt's comment on the Iran Paper. I am inclined to agree with his view.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 2em;"><i>AWD</i></p>
2. <i>AD/NE</i>					
3. <i>Mr Langer</i>					
4. <i>NOE-3 Dev. file</i>					
5.					
6.					
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14.					<p>DOCUMENT NO. _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO CHANGE IN CLASS. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFIED</p> <p>CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S © 1991</p> <p>NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____</p> <p>AUTH: HR 10-2</p> <p>DATE: <i>2 Feb 81</i> REVIEWER: <i>009256</i></p>

MAR 17 1951

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15 March 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PLANS

SUBJECT: Comments on NIE Paper (The Current Crisis in Iran) dated 15 March 1951

1. In accordance with the request you made to me this afternoon over the phone I am submitting to you our comments on the present NIE paper on the current crisis in Iran (15 March 1951). There is no need for me to point out that we are not in the estimating business and can comment only in the light of our operating experiences and requirements. As an operator I am bound to look at this paper with the question, "Will this paper help or hinder our program?" An estimator does not take quite that point of view! The following is offered therefore solely for your information.

2. On paragraph 1 of the reference paper: We feel that the economic situation is at least as serious as the political and contributes at least as much to Iran's instability. Moreover, we feel that this instability has been seriously increased by the assassination of Razmara. The demand for nationalization of oil resources is only one of the vigorous demands expressed in this outburst of extreme nationalism.

3. On paragraph 2: "Imminent" is the key word in the first sentence and if the reader capitalizes it and sees it in neon lights we would agree with this sentence. We feel, however, that the tone of the paper as a whole does not encourage him to read "imminent" in that sense. Frankly, we fear that this estimate may encourage a wait-and-see policy rather than the kind of vigorous action which we feel is required.

4. On paragraph 2 (a): Admittedly there have been no cables received to indicate that the armed forces are not able to maintain order but this, in our opinion, is a negative argument. Razmara, in our opinion, was the one man capable of controlling these forces and now that he is dead it is highly likely on the basis of all past experience that the armed forces will break up into rival cliques, making it extremely difficult for whatever government exists to control them.

* with the exception of the Shah who potentially could do so but can not

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5. On paragraph 2 (b): The opening statement in this paragraph is technically correct but is misleading. The extreme nationalists obviously have a considerable following as the recent vote on the oil issue has indicated. The second sentence quite correctly states that the nationalists have a large and widespread popular following but adds that it is "unorganized", which can also be said about every political party or group in Iran with the exception of the Tudeh. At this moment there are leaders such as Kashani and Mossadeq; they have a rallying cry, and a popular following. This could lead to a strong organization by Iranian standards.

6. On paragraph 2 (c): It is admitted by everyone concerned that we have little or no knowledge on the strength and capabilities of the Tudeh Party. We do know they are the best organized and only secure group in Iran. The statement in this paragraph has always been accepted as being true as long as a strong government was in power. With the death of Razmara we can no longer depend upon this cliché. Even if it is admitted that the Tudeh cannot obtain control of the government, the statement that they can ^{not} "seriously. . . disrupt the government's control" is open to serious question.

7. On paragraph 2 (d): In our opinion the statement that "responsible government officials. . . are aware of the difficulties involved in nationalism" is misleading. That some such as the Shah and Ala are against this drastic action is undoubtedly true. That some government officials are "aware" of the difficulties is also true but it does not necessarily follow that they will take any action. With the overwhelming vote in the Majlis there is little that the average Iranian politician can do. That there are many thinking Iranians who are against this precipitous action we also believe is true, but we doubt that at the moment they are in any position to act. We further believe that, in view of the xenophobic nature of the present Majlis, the British can ^{not} offer any compromise that would be accepted.

8. On paragraph 3: While no one can quibble with the statement that "the possibility cannot be excluded" we feel the tone of this paragraph is seriously misleading and that the situation may well be aggravated, not by the unyielding attitude of the British but by the inherent nature of the present crisis and that some unpredictable development such as further assassinations may lead to almost total collapse of the present government. Under these circumstances we can see no reason why the USSR would consider armed intervention when the situation is playing so directly into their hands.

KR
KERMIT ROOSEVELT

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