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EYES ONLY

TEHRAN

TO: DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER, WASHINGTON

FROM: AMB. RICHARD HELMS, TEHRAN

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PLEA FOR U.S. MEDIATION

1. DURING POST-PRESENTATION-OF-CREDENTIALS TALK WITH SHAH ON 5 APRIL, HE ASKED ME TO INFORM PRESIDENT THAT EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ZAYYAT ON RECENT VISIT HERE PLEADED WITH SHAH TO INTERCEDE WITH PRESIDENT TO PERSUADE HIM TO ARRANGE SOME KIND OF SETTLEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. ACCORDING TO SHAH ZAYYAT SAID QUOTE EGYPT WILL ACCEPT THE ROGERS PLAN UNQUOTE. WHEN SHAH QUERIED FOREIGN MINISTER AS TO WHY HE WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT SETTLEMENT, ZAYYAT ASSERTED THAT SADAT IS IN PRECARIOUS DOMESTIC SITUATION AND THAT NEW LEADERS MIGHT TAKE OVER EGYPTIAN ARMY AT ALMOST ANY TIME. ASKED BY SHAH WHO THESE LEADERS MIGHT BE, ZAYYAT HEMMED AND HAWED, FINALLY SAID QUOTE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD UNQUOTE. SHAH INTERPRETED THIS TO MEAN RADICAL ELEMENTS BUT ADMITS ZAYYAT DID NOT SPECIFICALLY SAY SO. NEVERTHELESS SHAH WAS STRUCK WITH ZAYYAT'S PLEADING TONE. HE SAID HE SYMPATHIZED WITH

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CAN EVER REASSERT HERSELF, SHE WILL GO RIGHT BACK TO TRYING TO ORGANIZE THE LEADERSHIP OF ARAB WORLD. HE MUSED ABOUT THE UTILITY OF RECREATING THE FOUR-POWER APPROACH TO THE ARAB-ISRAELI QUESTION, THEN OPINED THAT IF THIS WERE NOT VIABLE, PERHAPS A FEW OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT BE ADDED TO PROVIDE LESS OF THE GREAT-POWER SYNDROME. HE QUICKLY SHRUGGED OFF THE DESIRE OF IRAN TO BECOME INVOLVED IN SUCH MEDIATION, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT QUOTE IF DRAFTED, HE WOULD RUN UNQUOTE.

2. SHAH STATED THAT HE SENSED IN ZAYYAT'S ATTITUDE ALMOST IRRESISTIBLE DOMESTIC PRESSURE IN EGYPT TO RESUME SOME TYPE OF HOSTILITIES AGAINST ISRAEL. WITH LARGE ARMY ON ACTIVE DUTY PLUS CONCOMITANT COSTS OF MAINTAINING IT, EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP FEELING INCREASINGLY IMPELLED QUOTE TO DO SOMETHING UNQUOTE. SHAH SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD ZAYYAT MOST EMPHATICALLY THAT EGYPT SHOULD NOT FRONTALLY ATTACK ISRAEL ACROSS THE CANAL UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. QUOTE FIRE YOUR GUNS IF YOU WANT UNQUOTE THE SHAH STATES HE TOLD HIM, BUT AN ATTACK INTO SINAI QUOTE WOULD BE SUICIDAL FOR EGYPT UNQUOTE.