

IMMEDIATE

~~TOP SECRET~~ 060850 Z APR 73

EYES ONLY TEHRAN

TO: DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER, WASHINGTON

FROM: AMB. RICHARD HELMS, TEHRAN

SUBJECT: KOSYGIN ARMS OFFER TO SHAH

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH SHAH AFTER PRESENTATION CREDENTIALS ON 5 APRIL, HE ASKED THAT I PASS FOLLOWING TO PRESIDENT ONLY AND NOT TO STATE DEPARTMENT. FOREIGN MINISTER KHALATBARI, ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT, WAS ALSO HEARING THIS INFORMATION FOR FIRST TIME.

2. DURING VISIT TO IRAN IN MID-MARCH, KOSYGIN OFFERED SHAH QUOTE MIG-25'S AND T-65'S UNQUOTE. WHEN MY EYEBROWS WENT UP AT NOMENCLATURE, SHAH SAID QUOTE WHEN HE GOT NO REACTION FROM ME, HE BEGAN TO TALK ABOUT MIG-23'S AND T-62'S ALTHOUGH THE TANK HE WAS DESCRIBING HAD 120 MM. GUNS AND I BELIEVE T-62 HAS ONLY 115 MM ONES. IN ANY EVENT I BELIEVE HE USED THE HIGH NUMBERS AT THE OUTSET TO EXCITE ME, WHICH OBVIOUSLY FAILED. MY READING OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OFFER IS THAT IF HE COULD SELL MIG-23'S TO IRAN, THEN HE WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN INTRODUCING THEM INTO THE ARAB STATES OF THE REGION. I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT THIS IS WHAT

RELEASING OFFICER:  
WJ

HR70-14  
(U)

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PAGE 2

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THE SOVIETS WANT TO DO. I FINALLY TOLD HIM THAT THE INTRO-  
DUCTION OF OTHER THAN U.S. PLANES INTO MY AIR FORCE WOULD  
FOUL UP MY LOGISTIC SYSTEM, AND THIS I DID NOT INTEND TO DO.  
THE TANKS DON'T MEAN MUCH ONE WAY OR THE OTHER UNQUOTE.

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