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FM AMBASSADOR BYROADE  
TO AMBASSADOR HELMS

EYES ONLY FOR HELMS FROM BYROADE

I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT STATE 055319 ON THE SUBJECT OF PAKISTANI TANKS CAME AS MUCH OF A SURPRISE TO ME AS I AM SURE IT DID TO YOU. IN FACT, IT WAS NOT UNTIL I REACHED THE LAST PART OF PARAGRAPH 2 THAT I REALIZED THE MESSAGE WAS ADDRESSED TO YOU INSTEAD OF ME. WHILE I NATURALLY WELCOME ANY STRAW IN THE WIND THAT MIGHT HELP ME WITH MY PROBLEM HERE, AND WOULD OF COURSE BE DELIGHTED IF THE SHAH WOULD HELP, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THE MESSAGE YOU HAVE RECEIVED WAS IN NO WAY PROMPTED BY ME, NOR HAS THERE BEEN ANY TRAFFIC FROM ME ON THE SUBJECT OF THE TANKS ON WHICH YOU WERE NOT AN ADDRESSEE.

I RECENTLY WROTE A LONG LETTER TO KISSINGER ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF WHERE WE STOOD ON THE GENERAL QUESTION OF MILITARY SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN. THIS WAS DELIVERED TO KISSINGER ON HIS LAST TRIP TO CAIRO BY ALAN WOLFE. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE LETTER, BESIDES LETTING HIM KNOW THAT THE CHIPS ARE REALLY GETTING DOWN ON THIS SUBJECT, WAS TO TELL HIM THAT I THOUGHT I HAD TO SEE HIM PERSONALLY BEFORE VERY LONG. IT ALSO CONVEYED THE THOUGHT THAT THE TIME IS NEAR AT HAND WHERE I WOULD RATHER BE HONEST WITH THE PAKISTANIS AND TELL THEM THAT I DO NOT THINK WE CAN HELP THEM ON ARMS SUPPLY, IF INDEED THAT IS TO BE THE CASE. I HAVE JUST REREAD MY LETTER TO KISSINGER AND HAVE CONFIRMED IN MY OWN MIND THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN THAT LETTER THAT COULD HAVE EVEN REMOTELY SUGGESTED AN APPROACH TO THE SHAH.

AS A CLOSING THOUGHT, AND ALMOST AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT TO THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE LETTER, MY LETTER DID INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH:

"IN THE MEANTIME, THERE IS ONE SPECIFIC THING THAT WE COULD DO IF WE COULD FIND THE MONEY. MORE MODERN TANKS AND AIRCRAFT ARE THE CORE OF THE PROBLEM. THE PAKS HAVE ASKED US TO UP-GRADE AND REBUILD THEIR OLD AMERICAN TANKS, AS THE IRANIANS ARE DOING ON THEIRS WITH THEIR OWN FUNDS, AND INDEED AS WE ARE DOING TO OUR OWN AT HOME. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS APPROVED SUCH AN UP-GRADING IN PRINCIPLE AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY, PROVIDING THE PAKS CAN PAY CASH TO THE AMERICAN INDUSTRY INVOLVED. THE PAKS, OF COURSE, WANT FMS CREDITS, WHICH IS AGAINST OUR POLICY. IF WE COULD ASSIST THEM FINANCIALLY ON THIS ONE TO THE TUNE OF 30 TO 40 MILLION DOLLARS, IT WOULD LET US RIDE THIS ONE OUT FOR QUITE A WHILE. I AM SURE I COULD CONVINCE YOU THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD AND PROPER THING TO DO IF WE JUST HAD THE DOUGH. IF YOU HAVE THE TIME AFTER YOU GET HOME PLEASE ASK BRENT SCOWCROFT TO ASSEMBLE MY CABLES ON THIS SUBJECT FOR YOU OR TO ARRANGE A BRIEFING FOR YOU.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAD A CABLE THAT THE NEW PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON HAD TALKED TO KISSINGER ABOUT RETROFITTING THEIR TANKS, SAYING THAT I HAD TOLD BHUTTO THAT WE COULD NOT HELP THEM WITH FINANCE. ACCORDING TO OUR MESSAGE KISSINGER CONCLUDED THAT HE WOULD HAVE A STUDY MADE TO SEE WHAT WAS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE IN THE WAY OF FUNDS. I CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT KISSINGER THINKS THERE IS NO WAY FOR US TO DO THIS DIRECTLY, AND THAT HE HIT UPON THE IDEA HIMSELF OF TESTING OUT THE SHAH'S GENEROSITY.

AMBASSADOR BYROADE

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