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Planning for the Shah to Come to the United States

This paper outlines some concepts we should address in considering the Shah's desire to come to the United States. We believe there are three broad questions:

- What new circumstances could justify a change in the USG position?
- What conditions should we seek from the Shah or state prior to his arrival here?
- What arrangements should we make for Embassy personnel to provide protection?

1. New Circumstances

The PGOI has laid out a plan for the adoption of a new constitution and election of a new government. If the plan is followed -- and that seems unlikely -- elections for an assembly of experts will be held on August 3. The assembly will conclude its work in one month; the draft constitution, which the experts will have reviewed, will be submitted to a popular referendum probably in September; and elections for a president and Majlis could take place as early as October. Because the Iranian government has placed a high priority on establishing a stronger and legitimate single authority for the country, we believe the PGOI and Khomeini will make every effort to meet this schedule. Even with the inevitable delays, there is a good chance that the process will be completed by the end of 1979.

Once it is completed, we should inform the new government that we wish to clear our decks of old issues on the agenda. One of those old issues will be the status of the Shah. We could inform the government that we have resisted intense pressures to allow him to come to the U.S. because we did not wish to complicate the PGOI's problems or our efforts to construct a new relationship. Now with the new government firmly established and accepted, it seems appropriate to admit the Shah to the U.S. The new government may not like it, but it is best to get the issue out of the way. This discussion with the new GOI should take place after it is in place some 2-3 weeks and some few days before the Shah would come here. In the meantime,

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~~we should begin to prepare the Iranians by telling them of the intense pressures for the Shah to come here -- pressures which we are resisting despite our traditional open-door policy.~~

If the constitutional process does not proceed and Iranian instability seriously increases, and if there is no prospect for Iran to settle down, there may be an argument for going ahead and admitting the Shah anyway to get that inevitable step behind us, but it will be necessary first to review how dangerous the situation is.

~~In either of these scenarios we should aim for a positive change in our position on the Shah by January 1980.~~ If this plan is adopted it probably would not be advisable to disseminate it beyond a close circle in the Executive Branch; perhaps a few key individuals outside might be informed so as to reduce pressures for a change. We would also have to discuss the issue with Members of Congress to indicate that we were addressing the issue and hope to resolve it successfully. This would reduce pressures which could lead, for example, to a Congressional resolution calling on the Administration to admit the Shah. However, this would increase the likelihood of leaks and our having to deal with the PGOI before we are ready.

## 2. Conditions

It would help substantially in explaining our position to the Iranians if the Shah were to renounce his family's claim to the throne. We believe the likelihood of his doing so is extremely remote, but the idea could be explored privately by trusted intermediaries so that if the Shah refused he would have no possibility of blaming the USG for a course he rejected.

Should the Shah refuse to renounce his claim, we should leave no doubt in the Iranian mind as to our attitude. We should make it quite clear publicly that we consider any claim to the throne by his family rendered invalid by the Iranian constitutional process, and we should make it clear privately to the Shah and his friends that we would not tolerate any counter-revolutionary acts here which might violate U.S. law, or our customary policies regarding political activities of persons admitted for temporary visits.

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3. Security

We have the impression that the threat to U.S. Embassy personnel is less now than it was in the spring; presumably the threat will diminish somewhat further by the end of this year. Nevertheless, the danger of hostages being taken in Iran will persist.

We should make no move towards admitting the Shah until we have obtained and tested a new and substantially more effective guard force for the Embassy. Secondly, when the decision is made to admit the Shah, we should quietly assign additional American security guards to the Embassy to provide protection for key personnel until the danger period is considered over.

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Before proceeding further we should have more detailed work on the legal, security and Congressional relations issues.

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