

TOP SECRET

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P E R S I A

Mr. Palmer of the United States Embassy called on me this afternoon, having previously telephoned to say that he had information of some importance to give me.

Emphasising that what he would say was of the greatest delicacy and on the <sup>basis of</sup> strict "need to know", he gave me the following information.

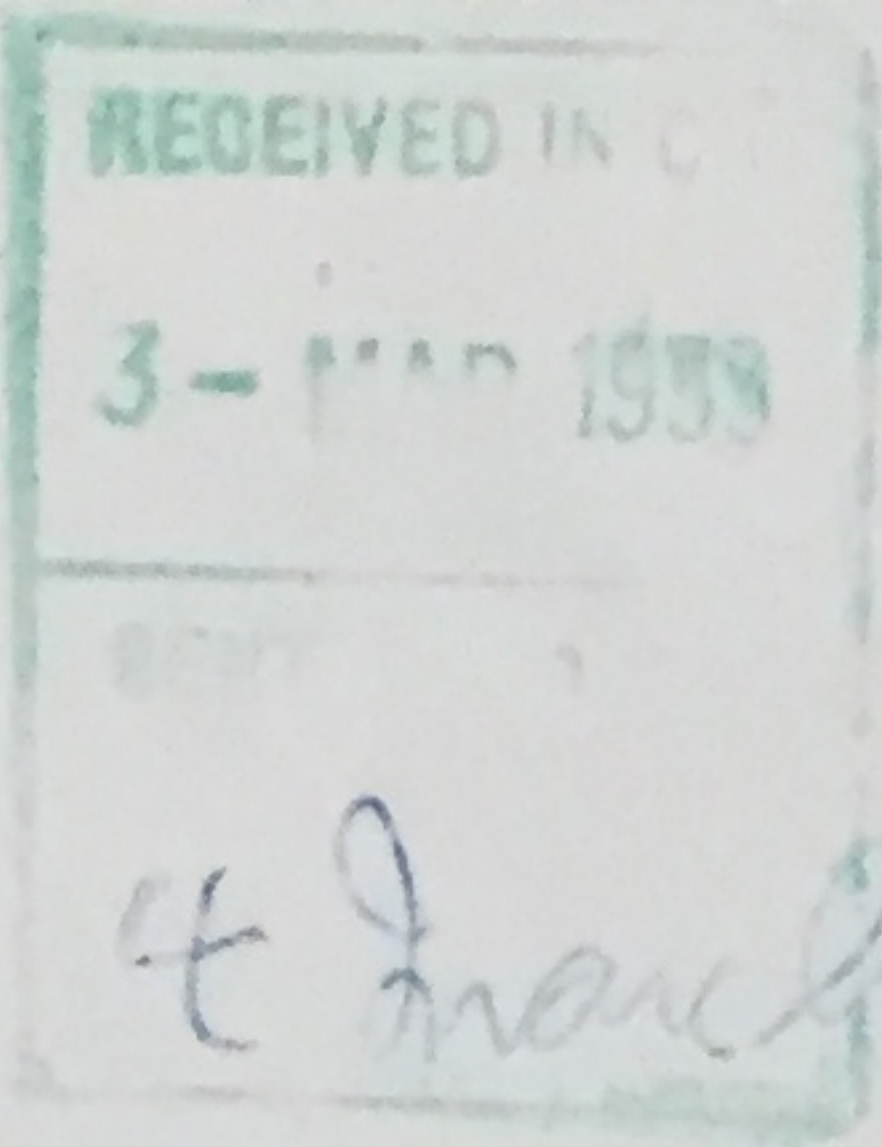
Mr. Henderson had just reported that the last meeting between the Shah and Dr. Musaddiq had not really been concerned with the relatively minor topics which had been advertised in the Press, but that Dr. Musaddiq had, in fact, suggested that the Shah should leave Persia. The Shah had been delighted and had asked how soon he could go. He suggested leaving today for Iraq <sup>from</sup> where, after visiting some of the Holy places, he would proceed to Europe. Later it had been agreed that any definite plan should be postponed until Saturday. In the meantime the Spanish Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran had been asked to inform his Government that an invitation to the Shah to visit Spain would be appreciated.

Mr. Henderson had taken no action. Much as he regretted having to remain a spectator in view of the support which the United States had given the Shah in the past, he felt that there was really nothing he could do, more particularly now that General Zahedi had tamely allowed himself to be arrested.

Mr. Palmer said that the State Department would probably be asking for our views.

I told Mr. Palmer that in my personal opinion it was an illusion to think that we could influence events in Persia. I

/ wondered



wondered what the United States Government thought about it? We had not been favoured with their views, though we had given them our estimate two days ago on the spur of the moment. At that time we thought that the worst of all possibilities would be that the Shah should go and leave Dr. Musaddiq in power. However, if you had a weak Shah and a strong Prime Minister, it was probably inevitable that the strong Prime Minister would win. Mr. Palmer assented and added "particularly as there is no alternative leader."

Mr. Palmer again emphasised that the matter was of great secrecy. The Spanish Chargé d'Affaires did not know any of the background.

He added that so far there had been no mention of abdication.

Mr. Palmer subsequently telephoned to say that he hoped he had made it clear that Dr. Musaddiq had not suggested that the Shah should leave permanently. What he had apparently said was that the Shah should leave until the situation became more settled.

A.D.M. Ross

(A.D.M. Ross.)  
26th February, 1953.

c.c. Sir Pierson Dixon.) On board ship.  
Private Secretary.)

I do not think there is much  
to add to what Mr. Ross said  
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