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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D. C.

March 20, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. JAMES S. LAY, JR.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: First Progress Report on Paragraph 5-a of
NSC 136/1, "U.S. Policy Regarding the Present
Situation in Iran"

NSC 136/1 was approved as governmental policy on
November 20, 1952. It is requested that this progress report
as of March 11, 1953, be circulated to the members of the
Council for their information.

Introduction

1. Paragraph 5-a of NSC 136/1 reads as follows:

"In the event of either an attempted or an actual
communist seizure of power in one or more of the provinces
of Iran or in Tehran, the United States should support a
non-communist Iranian Government, including participation
in the military support of such a government if necessary
and useful.* Preparations for such an eventuality should
include:

"a. Plans for the specific military, economic,
diplomatic, and psychological measures which should
be taken to support a non-communist Iranian Govern-
ment or to prevent all or part of Iran or adjacent
areas from falling under communist domination.

* * * * *

"*If it is found necessary for the United States to
provide military forces in this area, implementation will
require either a substantial augmentation of over-all
United States forces or a reduction of present United
States military commitments elsewhere."

2. In accordance with the foregoing, a Working Group
consisting of representatives from the Departments of State
and Defense, CIA and the JCS was formed to develop plans for
the specific measures indicated.

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3. Although many of the specific plans required are still in the process of preparation, the Working Group submits herewith a Progress Report as of March 11, 1953, for the information of the members of the Council.

4. The Working Group desires to point out that in addition to the two conditions envisioned in paragraph 5-a of NSC 136/1, there is also the possibility that a communist seizure of power in Iran may take place imperceptibly over a considerable period of time. Under this contingency, it would be extremely difficult to identify and demonstrate to our allies that specific countermeasures were required to prevent communist infiltration from reaching the point where it would be able to significantly influence the policies of the Iranian Government. In such circumstances, it might be desirable to implement certain of the plans discussed in the attached Report, prior to an identifiable attempted or actual communist seizure of power.

5. Because of the sensitive nature of the information contained in this Progress Report, it is requested that special security precautions be taken in its handling and that access be limited strictly to individuals requiring this information in the performance of their official duties.

Measures Being Taken to Implement Paragraph 5-a of NSC 136/1

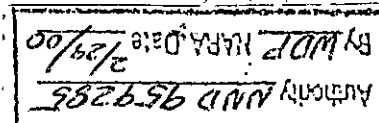
CONDITION I

1. Measures to be taken to support a non-communist Iranian Government in the event of an attempted communist seizure of power:

a. Military: Predicated on the assumption that the Iranian Government makes an appeal to the U.S. for direct military assistance, the JCS have recognized three feasible U.S. military courses of action, namely:

(1) To conduct a show of force by periodic flights of carrier aircraft, or aircraft from land bases outside of Iran, over key centers. Recommendations concerning possible employment of U.S. naval and SAC units have been requested from CINCNELM and CGSAC, respectively. To date these recommendations have not been received.

(2) To assist the legal Iranian Army with logistic support by augmenting the present policy of arms aid. Since there is no way of foretelling what assistance might be needed or requested by the Iranians, meaningful plans cannot be prepared in advance. However, the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, could draw up the necessary plans very quickly when the necessary specific information became available.



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(3) Furnish additional arms aid to appropriate Middle East countries so as to eventually enable them to possess the strength to secure their frontiers against effective communist infiltration. The Joint Chiefs of Staff keep this matter under continuous review.

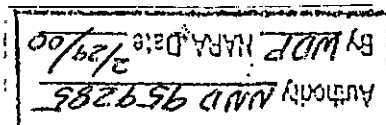
b. Economic: It is doubtful that any increase in the present level of MDAP and Point Four programs (\$66.6 and \$20.8 millions, respectively) would be justified if the Iranian situation became more unstable. If economic conditions in Iran continue to deteriorate as a result of the continued instability of the government and its inability to market oil, it is possible that a situation might arise where it would be in the U.S. interest to give the National Front Government direct financial assistance should such a request be received. The Department of State has recommended that a contingency fund of \$45 million be set aside for this purpose, and the matter is currently under consideration by the Bureau of the Budget. This action would be consistent with NSC 136/1, but would have to be justified in the light of the situation existing at the time the request is made.

c. Diplomatic: An attempted communist seizure of power would probably be designed to exploit the increasing economic and political difficulties facing Iran. Thus U.S. diplomatic planning in such a situation requires continued efforts on the part of our Ambassador in Tehran to negotiate a settlement of the oil controversy between Mosadeq and the U.K. and in the event of an attempted coup, to urge positive action, including the prompt use of security forces, upon such Iranian authorities as may be capable of such action with a view to preventing a communist seizure of power.

d. Psychological: The PSB on January 15, 1953, approved a "Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East" (D-22) which includes within this broader framework guidance for psychological operations in Iran. When prepared, plans for specific psychological measures in the event of an attempted communist coup in Iran will be consistent with this program and with the approved PSB policies contained in "A Strategic Concept for a National Psychological Program with Particular Reference to 'Cold War' Operations under NSC 10/5" (D-31).

e. Special Political Operations: Current special political operations in Iran, which are directed toward counteracting and reducing Tudeh influence, would be continued and, if circumstances permit, intensified in the event of an attempted communist coup. These operations are designed to:

(1) Influence specific political, military and religious leaders to speak out strongly against the Tudeh threat.



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- (2) Induce certain political and military leaders to institute administrative and security actions to curb Tudeh activities (demonstrations, strikes, etc.).
- (3) Maintain anti-Tudeh propaganda.
- (4) Instigate physical attacks upon Tudeh facilities and demonstrations.
- (5) Obtain the publication of anti-Tudeh material in the press, and in pamphlets, books, posters, etc.
- (6) Influence the choice of a successor to Mosadeq in the event of his resignation or death.
- (7) Maintain liaison with potential resistance groups, in particular elements of certain strong tribal elements in southern Iran.

(It should be noted that: (a) CIA's detailed plan for covert operations in Iran during 1953 was approved by the PSB on January 8, 1953, and (b) certain of the special political operations listed under Condition II, below, could, if circumstances warranted, be implemented under Condition I.)

CONDITION II

2. Measures to be taken to prevent all or a part of Iran or adjacent areas from falling under communist domination in the event of an actual communist seizure of power in one or more of the provinces of Iran or in Tehran:

a. Military: In the event of a Tudeh coup in Iran, the JCS have recognized three feasible U.S. military courses of action, namely:

- (1) Furnish additional arms aid to appropriate Middle East countries so as to eventually enable them to possess the strength to secure their frontiers against effective communist infiltration. The Joint Chiefs of Staff keep this matter under continuous review.
- (2) Deploy appropriate Air Force units, on the order of 1-1/2 wings plus support units, to southern Turkey with a mission of assisting Middle East governments in preventing the spread of communist power to their countries. The Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force, has been requested to recommend the composition of the Air Force organization to be deployed to southern Turkey under this contingency.
- (3) Deploy U.S. ground

Division, reinforced, and need of one and

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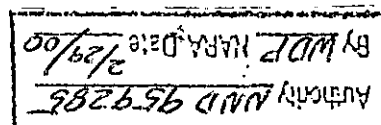
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naval forces to the vicinity of Basra with a mission of assisting Middle East governments in preventing the spread of communist power to their countries. This would be accomplished by the physical presence of U.S. military power, demonstrations of strength and as a last resort, when authorized by proper authority, combat operations. CINCNELM has been requested to make appropriate recommendation with regard to this course of action but his reply has not yet been received. Our present state of preparedness is such that the 82nd Airborne Division, the 2nd Marine Division or an infantry division in Europe could be moved on short notice provided the necessary shipping were made available. The movement of any one of these divisions would take approximately 60 days. The logistic support required to maintain the deployment of these forces could be accomplished only at the expense of critical supplies now destined for Korea. Similarly, any force deployments to the Middle East would necessitate a substantial upward revision of U.S. force ceilings or a reduction of our commitments elsewhere.

b. Economic: The U.S. Government would provide such economic assistance as required to sustain and strengthen whatever non-communist Iranian Government remained after the communist coup. Specific plans for this eventuality cannot be prepared in advance, but it is likely that requirements for such aid would follow the general pattern, though on a reduced scale, of the economic assistance being given the ROK Government. The early appointment of an over-all coordinator for economic aid would, on the basis of Korean experience, greatly increase the effectiveness of any specific economic measures which might be undertaken in such a contingency.

c. Diplomatic: (1) The United States Government will not recognize a communist government of Iran and will publicly support anti-communist Iranian elements in Iran or abroad. Such support might involve the recognition of an Iranian Government in exile. Since the Shah might be a useful rallying point for such a Government, arrangements to facilitate his escape from Tehran in an emergency are under consideration. In addition, there will probably always be some prominent Iranian public figures outside Iran (such as the Iranian Ambassador to the United States) who could participate in such a movement. For political and security reasons, no advance planning in this regard can be attempted with any Iranian leaders, including the Shah.

(2) Any anti-communist Iranian Government will under such circumstances undoubtedly appeal to the United Nations for



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diplomatic and military support. This appeal should be exploited in the United Nations to demonstrate the aggressive character of Soviet communism. However, major policy decisions would be required before active military support could be given by the United Nations.

(3) Unless compelling circumstances prevent it, or other satisfactory arrangements can be made, the Saudi Arabian Government will be asked for permission to use Dhahran as a transit point in connection with contemplated U.S. covert operations.

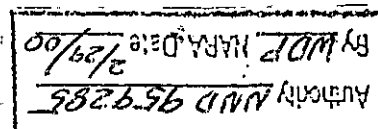
(4) It is assumed that Turkey, Iraq and Pakistan would each feel threatened by a communist government in Iran and could, therefore, be expected to show sympathy for anti-communist Iranian elements. Diplomatic planning is directed toward insuring the greatest possible measure of cooperation of these countries in support of the non-communist Iranian Government. It should be recognized that the extent of cooperation provided by those countries would, of course, be influenced by their appreciation of Soviet reactions to any measures which they might initiate.

(5) The active cooperation of the British Government is of major importance in any plans which may be developed to meet this contingency. Every effort will be made through diplomatic means to secure this cooperation, but the failure to secure U.K. support will not in itself prevent the U.S. from taking such measures as are possible to achieve our national objectives.

d. Psychological: No specific psychological measures have yet been planned for implementation in Iran in the event of an actual communist seizure of power.

e. Special Political Operations: (1) At the present time CIA has a stockpile of small arms, ammunition and demolition materiel under USAF cover, Wheelus Field, Tripoli. The stockpile is in quantity designed to supply a 10,000-man guerrilla force for six months without re-supply. In other increments there is sufficient materiel to equip basically a 4000-man guerrilla force. (Locales of storage are New Jersey, Ismailia Suez Canal Zone, and Tripoli.) CIA is now considering the feasibility of adding essential food stuffs and clothing to existing or other stockpiles. An estimate of such requirements is in the process of preparation.

(2) These supplies could, within 3 to 4 weeks, be transported by air and sea to certain strong tribal



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elements in southern Iran (in particular the Qashqai tribe) who might, in the event of a Tudeh coup, be prepared to conduct resistance activity against such a Communist government. However, for political and security reasons, no attempt has been made to conduct advanced planning of this sort with Iranian officials.

(3) CIA has an agreement with the Qashqai tribal leaders in southern Iran to establish a clandestine safe haven base from which guerrilla and intelligence operations could be conducted utilizing the manpower of these elements (estimated 20,000). Four members of one group have been given radio communications training by CIA. Conditions in South Iran, attitude of the Iranian Army and neighboring tribes, status of an Iranian rump government or government in exile, the political attitudes of the tribe in question, and degree of our support in time of Tudeh control have a bearing, however, on the tribal will and ability to conduct resistance activity. To date CIA has trained and equipped a total of approximately 10 indigenous clandestine radio operators to be located throughout Iran and who can be called upon to maintain communications with CIA when desired. Others are being trained.

(4) Reception points in the Tehran and Tabriz area and in South Iran where supplies and personnel can be clandestinely introduced into Iran are in the process of being established. A certain quantity of communications equipment, cash and gold has been cached within Iran, and a considerable amount of cash is available in Tehran.

(5) CIA planning includes the creation of eight 3-men teams to assist in supply, training and operation of Iranian resistance elements.

(6) Representatives of CIA and the British Intelligence Service met during the latter part of February to consider joint activities in Iran in the event of a Tudeh coup. The report of this meeting has not yet been received, but the discussions included the following topics:

- (a) Potential resistance groups.
- (b) Conditions under which assistance will be offered.
- (c) Extent and nature of assistance.
- (d) Supply channels to resistance groups.

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- (e) Maintenance and establishment of liaison and communications.
- (f) Establishment of advance supply bases outside of Iran.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE PLANNING

3. In the preparation of the plans for specific military, economic, diplomatic and psychological measures required by paragraph 5-a of NSC 136/1, the working Group has agreed that responsibilities for future action in this regard will be as follows:

a. State: (1) Recommendations as to possible levels of direct financial assistance to Iran under Conditions I and II.

(2) Plans for the Shah's escape from Tehran in an emergency.

(3) Plans for the handling and exploitation in U.N. of an Iranian appeal for diplomatic and military support.

(4) Negotiations with the Saudi Arabian Government for the use of Dhahran as a transit point for U.S. supplies to Iran.

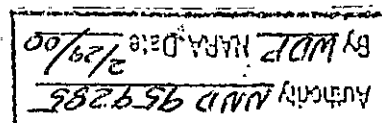
(5) Plans for discussions at the appropriate time with Turkey, Iraq, and Pakistan re joint action in support of the Iranian Government under Conditions I and II.

(6) In coordination with the JCS, plans for early political-military discussions with the British Government re joint action in support of the Iranian Government under Conditions I and II.

b. Defense (assisted by the JCS): (1) Plans for a show of force by periodic flights of carrier or land-based aircraft over key centers in Iran, under Condition I.

(2) Recommendations as to possible levels of increased logistic support through augmentation of arms aid to Iran under Conditions I and II.

(3) Recommendations as to the possible levels of additional arms aid to appropriate Middle East countries under Conditions I and II.



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(4) Plans for the deployment of 1-1/2 Air Force wings to southern Turkey with the mission of assisting Middle East governments in preventing the spread of communist power to their countries, under Condition II.

(5) Plans for the deployment of one Division (reinforced) with necessary supporting air and naval forces to the vicinity of Basra with the mission of assisting Middle East governments in preventing the spread of communist power to their countries.

(6) In coordination with State, plans for early military discussions with the British military authorities re joint action in support of the Iranian Government under Conditions I and II.

c. CIA: (1) Intensify, and if possible expand, their current special political operations, directed toward counteracting and reducing Tudeh influence in Iran.

(2) Take steps to move appropriate quantities of para-military equipment to bases as close to Iran as possible.

(3) Continue to increase its capability to conduct para-military operations in Iran under Condition II.

(4) Conduct joint planning with the MAAG mission in Iran for para-military operations in Iran under Condition II.

(5) As considered desirable in the light of U.S. national objectives in Iran, continue joint planning with the British clandestine services for coordinated action under Condition II.

(6) Plans for transporting arms and materiel to Iran under Conditions I and II.

d. PSB: PSB will be requested to supervise the preparation of plans for specific psychological measures in Iran and in the Middle East under Conditions I and II.

/s/ Walter B. Smith
Under Secretary

