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MIPT: US/IRAN

JOINT REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S AMBASSADORS IN TEHRAN

1. THE HEADS OF MISSION OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IN TEHRAN MET ON 28TH OF JANUARY TO CONSIDER A DRAFT LETTER TO AHMAD KHOMEINI, AN IDEA WHICH THEY DISCUSSED AT A PREVIOUS MEETING, THE PURPOSE OF WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN TO PRESS ONCE MORE FOR REGULAR VISITS TO THE AMERICAN HOSTAGES. THEY DECIDED HOWEVER THAT SUCH A LETTER, WHETHER TO AHMAD KHOMEINI OR TO ANOTHER PERSON WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME SINCE, WITH THE VICTORY OF BANI SADR, THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN IRAN HAS ENTERED AN ENTIRELY NEW PHASE.
2. THE AMBASSADORS AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS:
 - A) BANI SADR HAS BEEN ELECTED BY A LARGE MAJORITY (ABOUT 65%) OF THE IRANIAN ELECTORATE, IN AN ELECTION IN WHICH HE WAS NOT THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE AND IN WHICH INDEED HE WAS THE OBJECT OF MUCH CRITICISM FROM THE MOSLEM QUARTERS, WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF KHOMEINI HIMSELF WHO REFUSED TO ENDORSE ANY CANDIDATE.
 - B) THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE ELECTION WAS HELD, AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF REVOLUTION, WERE NOT IDEAL. NEVERTHELESS THE FACT THAT KHOMEINI DID NOT ENDORSE ANY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, HAS RESULTED IN A PROCEDURE THAT WAS BY AND LARGE FAIR AND DEMOCRATIC.
 - C) AS A RESULT BANI SADR COMES TO OFFICE WITH A MASSIVE POPULAR MANDATE, WHICH MAKES HIM, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE REVOLUTION, A POLITICAL PERSONALITY IN HIS OWN RIGHT.

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/ D) BOTH

D) BOTH PRIVATELY, BUT OFFICIALLY, TO THE AMBASSADORS IN NOVEMBER AND PUBLICLY SINCE THEN, BOTH IN THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND SINCE HIS ELECTION, BANI SADR HAS MADE CLEAR HIS VIEW THAT THE OCCUPATION OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND THE HOLDING HOSTAGE OF THE AMERICAN STAFF WERE MISGUIDED AND HAS INDICATED HIS DESIRE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM WITH THE LEAST POSSIBLE DELAY.

E) ON THE OTHER HAND IN POLITICAL TERMS INSIDE IRAN, IT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR HIM SIMPLY TO ORDER THE STUDENTS TO RELEASE THE HOSTAGES. SUCH AN ORDER WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE OBEYED AND WOULD RUN SO COUNTER TO THE POPULAR FEELING THAT HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO DEVELOP IN IRAN, THAT IT WOULD TEND TO UNDERMINE HIS POSITION.

F) HE NEEDS THEREFORE TO PRESENT THE HOLDING OF THE HOSTAGES AS CONTRARY TO IRANIAN INTERESTS (A PROCESS THAT HE HAS ALREADY STARTED IN A STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ACTUALLY WELCOMES THE CONTINUED HOLDING OF THE HOSTAGES IN ORDER THE BETTER TO OPPOSE THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION AND DAMAGE ITS IMAGE) AND TO HAVE SOMETHING TO WHICH HE CAN POINT AS A VINDICATION OF IRAN AND AN ACCEPTANCE OF ITS TOTAL INDEPENDENCE FROM IMPERIALIST INFLUENCE.

G) HIS WISH TO DISEMBARRASS HIMSELF OF THE HOSTAGE ISSUE DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY PROCEED TO THE NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. RATHER, AS HE HAS PUT IT, HE DOES NOT WISH TO START THE IRANIAN REPUBLIC WITH THIS ISSUE "ON HIS BACK".

H) BANI SADR HAS A DIFFICULT HAND TO PLAY. IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH CONFIDENTIAL CONTACT WITH HIM EITHER THROUGH IRANIAN REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD OR THROUGH TRUSTED EMISSARIES IN IRAN. BUT IT WILL BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT NOT TO COMPLICATE HIS TASK BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS WHICH COULD EMBARRASS HIM IN IRANIAN PUBLIC OPINION AND MIGHT APPEAR DESIGNED TO MAKE HIM MOVE FASTER THAN HE JUDGES WISE. HIS IMMEDIATE PREOCCUPATION WILL BE THE ELECTION FOR THE ASSEMBLY AND HIS NEED TO ORGANIZE A MAJORITY IN IT. DIFFICULT THEREFORE AS IT MAY BE, IT SEEMS BEST TO THE AMBASSADORS TO CONTINUE TO EXERCISE PATIENCE AND TO REFRAIN FROM ACTIONS THAT WILL MAKE BANI SADR'S TASK MORE DIFFICULT. AT THE SAME TIME, THROUGH PRIVATE CONTACTS, IT WILL BE NECESSARY, TO HOLD OUT TO THE IRANIANS THE

POSSIBILITY OF SOME FORM OF INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION OR ENQUIRY INTO THE GRIEVANCES OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLE AGAINST THE SHAH.

3. THE AMBASSADORS CONCLUDED THAT, ONCE BANI SADR HAS BEEN FORMALLY CONFIRMED AS PRESIDENT, THEY SHOULD ADDRESS HIM, EITHER AT A MEETING OR BY LETTER, WITH A RENEWED REQUEST FOR REGULAR VISITS TO THE HOSTAGES, PENDING THEIR RELEASE, WHICH REMAINS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE.

GRAHAM

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