

3. Seyed Zia appears to be very obstinate and to judge by his supporters a poor judge of men. On the other hand he has many qualities which the ordinary Persian lacks, moral courage, financial honesty, and the will to act upon his ideas. He also has a practical acquaintance with agriculture. His greatest liability is hostility to the Russians. Even if they did not consider him to be sponsored by us they would dislike a Persian statesman who was both strong and honest. In the circumstances it is unfortunate that Seyed Zia is on bad terms with the other leading nationalists influential in the country [grp. undec.] the Shah. The Prime Minister is doing his best to bring them together but Seyed Zia distrusts the Shah profoundly, the Shah fears Seyed Zia so that prospects for collaboration are not good.

4. I have hitherto steered clear of Seyed so as not to give colour to the tale that he is a creature of ours and because there is danger of his being driven into anti-labour camp. Nevertheless he is already a power to reckon with and members of the staff of His Majesty's Embassy see him from time to time and give him some sound opinions on affairs and on personalities. He avoids foreign missions both in order to show his independence and because the Russians have ignored him to the extent of refusing to return his card.

[Copies sent to Mr. Wiltshire]

OTP