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[CYPHER]

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION

FROM TEHRAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir R. Bullard
No. 462

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9th May, 1944

R. 12.25 p.m. 10th May, 1944

Repeated to Cairo (Minister Resident) Saring,
Bagdad,
Government of India, and
Moscow

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IMPORTANT

My telegram No. 432 paragraph 3.

Seyed Zia has attained central position on the political stage. Everyone is either for or against him. Opponents most in evidence are the Russians who apparently consider him a British tool, the Tudeh party who follow the Russians, the Shah who thinks Seyed Zia wishes to dethrone him, the ruling classes and intellectuals with Left sympathies. Who his supporters are is more difficult to see. In the background there is a secret party formed on the cell principle. He is believed to have won over some officers in the army and Razmara, now Chief of the General Staff, is believed to have suppressed some elements in the army that were hostile to Seyed Zia. He is angling for the support of the tribes and in the long run this may alienate the army. Wealthy friends from Yezd have paid over £30,000 for premises for his political headquarters and rich manufacturers of Isfahan who fear the violence of the Tudeh are looking to him as an ally.

2. It was [grp. undec. ? I learn] Seyed Zia's intention not to announce his disagreement until his party should be firmly established on a basis of personal loyalty. It may be that he has not yet decided upon his platform but some of the planks can be discarded. He favours exact and narrowly defined Shah powers. He is for giving Millspaugh Mission a fair chance. He considers the tribes a good element (which they are at least physically) and says that he does not blame them for keeping their arms until they are assured of fair treatment. He is against the Tudeh party. This was inevitable. They have attacked him ferociously as a tool of foreigners and a would-be dictator and a gang of their supporters smashed his car after he had won the vote in the Majlis. Moreover Seyed Zia is a keen nationalist and therefore could only oppose a party which is notoriously run by Russians. Seyed Zia is accused by many of being a reactionary in the matter of social development, but it is possible that he is merely unwilling to alienate the Mullahs until he is strong enough to dispense with their help or at least their neutrality.

/3. Seyed