

GR 295

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FM BRIT INT SECT TEHRAN 171200Z JUN
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 243 OF 17 JUNE 81
AND TO IMMEDIATE CABINET OFFICE
INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON AND BAGHDAD.

MY TELNO 238 : IRAN INTERNAL.

1. THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISERS ARRESTED INCLUDE BANI SADR'S TWO MAIN AIDES, FARHANG AND SANJABI. THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE IS SAID NOW TO BE OCCUPIED. AN EYE-WITNESS HAS TOLD US THAT THERE ARE POLICE OUTSIDE IT INSTEAD OF THE USUAL PRESIDENTIAL GUARDS; OTHERWISE EVERYTHING SEEMS NORMAL OUTSIDE THE BUILDING. BANI SADR'S WHEREABOUTS ARE NOT KNOWN. ONE RUMOUR HAS IT THAT HE IS IN HAMADAN.
2. THE MAJLES IS DISCUSSING PROCEDURES FOR A DEBATE CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S "LACK OF POLITICAL COMPETENCE", WHICH IS UNLIKELY TO BEGIN UNTIL SATURDAY AT THE EARLIEST. IN AN OMINOUS STATEMENT TO A CROWD OUTSIDE THE JUSTICE BUILDING ON 16 JUNE THE PROSECUTOR-GENERAL, ARDEBILI, TOLD A CROWD OF A FEW HUNDRED THAT HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO SATISFY THEIR REQUEST THAT BANI SADR SHOULD BE PUT ON TRIAL.
3. ASSUMING THAT BANI SADR IS DISMISSED, ARRANGEMENTS WILL THEN BE AS LAID DOWN IN ARTICLE 131 OF THE CONSTITUTION. POWER WILL PASS TEMPORARILY TO A PROVISIONAL PRESIDENCY COUNCIL CONSISTING OF RAFSANJANI (SPEAKER OF THE MAJLES), BEHESHTI (PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT) AND RAJAI (PRIME MINISTER), IE THE LEADING IRP TRIUMVIRATE. ELECTIONS FOR A NEW PRESIDENT WILL HAVE TO BE HELD WITHIN 50 DAYS. THE IRP WILL NO DOUBT OBTAIN THE ELECTION OF A CANDIDATE OF IT CHOICE.
4. SCATTERED DEMONSTRATIONS BY BANI SADR SUPPORTERS CAN BE EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS, AND THE IRP WILL NO DOUBT ARRANGE FOR A LARGE CROWD AT TEHRAN'S FRIDAY PRAYERS. BUT AT PRESENT TEHRAN HAS AN APPEARANCE OF NORMALITY.

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