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TELCON
Helms/Kissinger (secure phone)
6:10 p.m. 12/8/71

K: What we probably want to do and get your advice on. Did you see the message from your Tehran station?

H: Yes.

K: We think we should go with this in the following way. We could never get the bureaucracy here to approve such a step. We want the King to say he is doing it under force majeure.

H: Hussein?

K: And get the Shah to move his planes.

H: Tell Husseig to go ahead.

K: And we will close our eyes and hold you harmless with Israel.

H: Should we tell him about the Shah's offer?

K: Yes. I want you judgment if it's do-able. Not legal, we will take (the heat on that).

-- Wait a minute, I am thinking.
H: I think so. / He is so dependent on us and owes us so much.

K: As an old bureaucrat here in town can we see it through?

HL From the Congressional standpoint?

K: I would go to a meeting tomorrow morning and brow beat them into acceptance but stop short of saying okay.

H: That's do-able. The greatest problem with this thing is the leak problem in my opinion. These foreginers will stand up to it but it will come out in this town. If this fellow goes ahead there will be suspicions at State and other places --

K: I will tell Alex Johnson to get State to keep their mouth shut. (I have bullied them before). They will leak against me but I have had that.

H: I think it will cause a hoo-ha and there will be a lot of cries against it but it seems to be the only thing we can do and I think it's frustrating not to be able to give them some air covdr.

K: Is it right thing to do or should we just stand down?

H: I am thinking -- on balance it's the right thing to do. It will make our problem

with India increasingly difficult but I don't give a damn about that.

K: What more can they do?

H: In frustration of Muslim not being abke to help and with Muslim helping Muslim I would think we should try it.

K: If we do nothing we will surely lose. If we do something and do it daringly enough and do other simultaneous steps, we might get the Russians to call a halt to their games.

H: We might.

K: Might not. If Pakistan looses anyway we will be in a position to show our frien in the area a line that is not meaningless.

H: If not for that, I would advixe against it. It's useful for the longer haul.

K: Can we wait overnight with the King?

H: I sent him a message that we are working on this tonight and can he wait a day. So he will be prepared to wait a day.

K: The President will make his decision around noon tomorrow.

H: We can fight and fall back. One moment longer -- I think if we do it the two fellows we have in mind we should go with. They are the most trustworthy. I think it's most favorable.

K: If you think we can afford the extra 24 hours.

H: If we can't on planes that fly fast then the thing is over any how. I will clear the text with you tomorrow.