

~~SECRET~~ 161723Z DEC 74 STAFF

CITE DIRECTOR

2999

TO: TEHRAN.

TO AMBASSADOR HELMS FROM COLBY

1. SEYMOUR HERSH, AND PERHAPS OTHERS, ARE APPARENTLY WORKING ON A STORY ALLEGING IMPROPER AGENCY ACTIVITY DOMESTICALLY IN THE PAST. SOURCES ARE ALLEGED TO INCLUDE EX-EMPLOYEES (MARCHETTI ?), WATERGATE DEFENDANTS (HALDEMAN, EHRLICHMAN, MARDIAN, COLSON ?), FBI ALUMNI (SULLIVAN ?), AND POSSIBLY HILL SOURCES. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE MIGHT BE WORKING ON BUT ONE FACET OF THE ACCOUNT WAS THAT WE COLLECTED ALL THESE INSTANCES AND REPORTED THEM TO OUR COMMITTEES. THIS RINGS A BELL IN THAT WE DID COLLECT ON "SKELETONS" HERE A YEAR OR SO AGO AND I BRIEFED NEDZI, STENNIS AND SYMINGTON. THESE SKELETONS WENT BACK 20-ODD YEARS AND INCLUDED A FEW DOMESTIC ITEMS AS WELL AS SEVERAL ACTIVITIES ABROAD OF POSSIBLE SENSATIONAL CHARACTER, UNDERSTANDABLE IN CLIMATE THEN BUT SUBJECT TO ATTACK TODAY. AN ADDITIONAL FEATURE OF HERSH'S APPROACH IS THAT SEVERAL INSTANCES ALLEGEDLY FOLLOWED YOUR BREAK-UP WITH HOOVER AFTER WHICH THE FBI REFUSED TO CONDUCT SUCH OPERATIONS AND WE SET UP A SPECIAL STAFF WITH JIM ANGLETON AND DICK OBER TO DO SO.

2. HERSH HAS TALKED TO KARAMESSINES AND INDICATED HE MAY BE PHONING YOU ON THIS. I SAID I WAS NOT GOING TO TALK ANY SPECIFICS ALTHOUGH I DID SAY THAT SOME TIME AGO WE COLLECTED SKELETONS AND REPORTED THEM BUT THAT THOSE WENT BACK 20-ODD YEARS. SINCE WE REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT HE IS TALKING ABOUT, I HAVE JUST HANDLED IT AS ABOVE AND WILL REFUSE ANY COMMENT UNTIL WE SEE WHAT THE STORY IS, AFTER WHICH WE WILL HAVE THE HARD JOB OF UNTANGLING THE FACTS FROM THE SENSATIONALISM. NOTHING TO DO ABOUT THIS NOW BUT BRACE OURSELVES, BUT I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THERE IS NO BIG OPERATION BEING CONDUCTED BY THE AGENCY AIMED AT YOU.

3. MERRY CHRISTMAS. E2 IMPDET.

~~SECRET~~

HR70-14  
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APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: MAR 2008