

15 July 1953

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FROM: Mr. Roosevelt

1. Mossadeq's reason for resignation of National Movement fraction from Majlis:

Felt he could not control Majlis much longer and felt it focal point mounting criticism his government.

2. Opposition reaction must be:

Stress every way point that what is left of Majlis is legal government of country, its democratic center as opposed Mossadeq's illegal dictatorship.

3. All points which follow should have some bearing on Item 2 above.

4. What is present status of Majlis?

We think a fairly good case can be made out for considering remaining members to be a Majlis in fact, or at least in legal theory.

The Majlis should have 136 members. This time Mossadeq stopped the elections when only 80 had been elected. When 2/3 of 80 assembled in Tehran had session opened by Shah, named temporary officers and started approving credentials of each other. When 3/4 of deputies credentials approved then permanent officers (for one year) elected and committees chosen. At that time no one challenged legality of session on basis that it did not have 136 members or any proportion of 136. Since that time it has been meeting on the 80 basis as follows:

2/3 of 80, or 52, must be present to begin debates

3/4 of 80, or 60, must be present to take a vote on a motion or a bill

A majority (1/2 plus 1), or 41, may pass bills or motions.

5. Mossadeq and his supporters will probably say that the Majlis is finished because it does not have enough members for a quorum.

6. Mossadeq may want to legally dissolve the Majlis to support Item 5 above. According to Article 48 (as amended) only the Shah has authority to dissolve the Majlis. Mossadeq may claim that his full powers bill gives him this authority, but if he does so he is sure to lose many supporters.

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