

31 December 1979

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Presidential Elections in Iran

We have very little information on the upcoming presidential elections in Iran. Most of our reporting on the subject has come from [redacted]

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[redacted] the Iranian press. S/NFD

[redacted] fifty candidates have been nominated for the position, but that it is unclear how many of these actually intend to run. The deadline for filing nominations passed on 29 December, but there has as yet been no official announcement on who the candidates are. Tehran has said that the election will be held on 25 January and a runoff held if no candidate receives a majority. Under the new constitution, Ayatollah Khomeini has the power to veto candidates.

Among those nominated for president so far are:

-- Navy Commander Admiral Madani [redacted]

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-- Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh

-- Economics Minister Bani-Sadr

-- Former Deputy Prime Minister Tabatabai

-- Former Prime Minister Bazargan (Baghdad Radio reports that he has withdrawn his name)

-- Dariush Foruhar, a member of the Revolutionary Council and longtime leader of the Pan-Iran Party

-- Professor Jalal-ed-Din Farsi, a relatively unknown university professor reported to be the candidate of Khomeini's Islamic Republic Party. If true, Farsi is a likely winner. He has long had very close ties to the PLO and spent some time in Lebanon.

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The Tudeh Party has announced that it will not field its own candidate, but will support Khomeini's nominee. Khomeini has said that the President should not be a clergyman. Ayatollah Beheshti, who was widely expected to run, has said that he will not be a candidate unless asked by Khomeini.

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