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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 016 OF 7TH JANUARY

FOR INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON AND UKMIS NEW YORK

PRIORITY KABUL, BONN, PARS, UKDEL NATO, ISLAMABAD, DELHI
PEKING AND TEHERAN.

AFGHANISTAN: SOVIET REACTION TO US POLICIES

1. A TASS STATEMENT, ISSUED YESTERDAY AND PRINTED IN TODAY'S PRAVDA PROVIDED AN AUTHORITATIVE RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S TELEVISED STATEMENT OF 4 JANUARY.

THE MAIN POINTS WERE:

- A. CARTER'S SPEECH SMACKED OF THE COLD WAR, NEGLECTED SUCH VITAL LONG TERM INTERESTS AS PEACE AND DETENTE, AND WAS INCONSISTENT WITH US RESPONSIBILITIES AS A LARGE POWER. IT DID NOT LOOK LIKE THE STATEMENT OF A PERSON WHO HELD THE HIGHEST GOVERNMENT POST, BUT RATHER OF A CANDIDATE TO THAT POSITION, AND APPEARED INFLUENCED BY ELECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS. IT WAS HOSTILE THE THE INTERESTS OF PEACE. THE USE OF AFGHANISTAN AS THE PRETEXT FOR SUCH A SPEECH WAS REMARKABLE. THE AFGHAN PEOPLE HAD THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN ROAD OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT, AND IT WAS GROSS INTERFERENCE FOR THE US TO DENY THIS RIGHT:
- B. SIMILARLY, CARTER WAS USING THE "DETAINMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE STAFF OF THE US EMBASSY IN TEHRAN" FOR BLACKMAIL AND THREATS AGAINST IRAN. AS WAS WELL KNOWN, THE SOVIET UNION SUPPORTED THE OBSERVANCE OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION, AND THE RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE BY PEACEFUL MEANS. THE US PREFERRED DIFFERENT MEANS E.G. ECONOMIC BLOCKADE. WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A BLOCKADE REALISED IN WASHINGTON?
- C. CARTER HAD NOT MENTIONED EUROPE, WHERE THE US HAD JUST IMPOSED ON A NUMBER OF WEST EUROPEAN STATES, THROUGH THE NATO BLOC, A DECISION TO DEPLOY US MEDIUM RANGE MISSILES:

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- D. IN THE BILATERAL FIELD, CARTER HAD ANNOUNCED THE CURTAILMENT OF ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL TIES. THESE WERE ALREADY LIMITED, BECAUSE THE US HAD OBSTRUCTED THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF GRAIN CONTRACTS. THE SOVIET UNION HAD NOT SOUGHT SUCH TIES AS FAVOURS, AND REGARDED THEM AS BEING OF MUTUAL BENEFIT. SIMILAR MEASURES HAD FAILED BEFORE AND WOULD FAIL NOW. THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT LACKED POLITICAL BALANCE, OVER-ESTIMATING THE POTENTIALITIES OF THE US AND UNDER-ESTIMATING THE POTENTIALITIES OF OTHERS: AND
- E. THE SOVIET UNION WOULD UPHOLD ITS LAWFUL INTERESTS AND THOSE OF ITS ALLIES. THOSE WHO LIKED TO IGNORE THIS RISKED BLUNDERING AND CAUSING MORE HARM TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY THAN TO OTHERS. THE SOVIET UNION LIKED TO HOPE THAT A SANE AND FARSIGHTED APPROACH TO BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD PREVAIL IN THE US.
2. THE TASS STATEMENT IS HOSTILE AND NOTABLY CONTEMPTUOUS IN TONE. EVEN THE PIOUS SENTIMENT AT THE END, WHICH PAYS LIP SERVICE TO THE HOPE OF IMPROVED RELATIONS, IS COUCHED IN INSULTING TERMS. THE MAIN POINT OF THE STATEMENT IS TO CLAIM THAT THE MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE US WILL BE INEFFECTIVE AND WILL HARM AMERICAN RATHER THAN SOVIET INTERESTS. THIS REFLECTS THE CONCLUSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW COLUMN IN YESTERDAY'S PRAVDA (MY TELNO 15) WHICH REFERRED TO A SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN THE CORRELATION OF FORCES IN THE WORLD SINCE THE 1950S AND CAUTIONED AGAINST REVIVING "OLD FORMULAS".
3. THE VARIOUS ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST THE US ADMINISTRATION IN THE TASS STATEMENT HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED IN OTHER ARTICLES IN THE SOVIET PRESS OVER THE WEEKEND. THE LINE HAS BEEN TO PLAY UP ACCUSATIONS OF US INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN AND MILITARY PRESSURE DIRECTED AGAINST IRAN, TO LINK THESE WITH THE FIVE-YEAR DEFENCE PROGRAMME, THE BARTHOLOMEW MISSION, THE TNF DECISION AND THE POSTPONEMENT OF SALT RATIFICATION, AND TO CLAIM THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW WAVE OF US ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE ITS MILITARY HEGEMONISM. THIS MORNING'S PRAVDA ALSO

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BLAMES THE US FOR MASTERMINDING THE ATTEMPT TO DEPRIVE CUBA OF HER RIGHTFUL PLACE ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL: AND TO WARN THAT THE "UNUSUAL SITUATION" OF A 14-MAN COUNCIL COULD ONLY HAVE BEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ITS WORK AND FOR ITS DECISIONS.

4. A NOTABLE OMISSION FROM SOVIET COMMENT ABOUT CARTER'S SPEECH IS ANY REFERENCE TO WHAT HE SAID ABOUT THE OLYMPICS.

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