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FM WASHINGTON 291731Z DEC 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 4401 OF 29 DECEMBER 1979

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS BONN ROME OTTAWA UKMIS NEW YORK MOSCOW KABUL  
AND UKDEL NATO.

YOUR TELNO 799 TO MOSCOW (NOT TO OTTAWA): AFGHANISTAN

1. BRZEZINSKI ASKED TO SEE ME TODAY TO SHOW ME THE TEXT OF THE  
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO BREZHNEV. HE ASKED THAT I SHOULD NOT TAKE  
NOTES OF IT. THE MAIN POINTS IN THE MESSAGE, APART FROM PREDICTABLY  
STRONG STATEMENTS OF CONDEMNATION, WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE SOVIET ACTION COULD BE A LONG-LASTING TURNING POINT IN  
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE USA AND THE USSR:

B. SOVIET ACTION WAS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE TERMS OF THE 1972  
TREATY:

C. THE PRESIDENT CALLED UPON THE SOVIET UNION TO TAKE PROMPT ACTION  
TO END THEIR INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN: AND

D. THE SITUATION WAS REVERSIBLE BUT ONLY IF THIS ACTION WAS  
TAKEN SOON.

2. IN SHOWING ME THE MESSAGE BRZEZINSKI SAID THAT THE US GOVERNMENT  
WANTED THERE TO BE NO DOUBT ABOUT HOW GRAVE A VIEW THEY TOOK OF  
WHAT THE RUSSIANS WERE UP TO.

3. I SHOWED HIM THE TEXT OF THE PM'S MESSAGE TO BRZHNEV.

4. IN DISCUSSION WITH BRZEZINSKI AND SUBSEQUENTLY WITH WARREN  
CHRISTOPHER, THE FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED REGARDING MONDAY'S MEETING  
IN LONDON:

CHRISTOPHER WILL BE PROVIDING IDEAS FOR AN AGENDA. THIS WILL  
INCORPORATE THE POINTS ALREADY CONVEYED TO YOU IN MY TELNO 4394  
(NOW BEING REPEATED TO KABUL, MOSCOW AND UKMIS NEW YORK) AS WELL  
AS THE FOLLOWING: THE WIDER IMPACT OF SOVIET ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN  
ON DETENTE, CHINA AND ARMS CONTROL: AND  
THE HANDLING OF THE ISSUE IN THE UN.

THE US THINK IT BEST TO LET TWO OR THREE DAYS ELAPSE BEFORE  
DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT IN THE UN FORUM. THIS COULD ENABLE THE  
ISLAMIC AND NON-ALIGNED REACTION TO BUILD UP. THE IDEA IS THERE-  
FORE THAT A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE TABLED BETWEEN THE FIRST AND THE  
SECOND IRANIAN RESOLUTIONS. THEY APPEAR TO BE THINKING, FOLLOWING  
THE PM'S TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT, THAT THE UK AND OTHER WESTERN  
ALLIES WILL TABLE IT. BRZEZINSKI IS ENLIVENED BY THE IDEA THAT THE  
CHINESE MIGHT JOIN US IN DOING SO.

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5. IN RESPONSE TO THE SUGGESTION I PUT TO CHRISTOPHER AT BULLARD'S REQUEST HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE THE CHAIR AT THE LONDON MEETING IF THAT WAS WHAT THE OTHER REPRESENTATIVES WOULD LIKE. HE THOUGHT THAT ONE DAY SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT BUT IN ORDER NOT TO UNDERMINE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MEETING PERHAPS THE IMPRESSION COULD BE GIVEN THAT THE PARTIES WOULD BE READY TO GO ON LONGER IF NECESSARY. CHRISTOPHER WOULD BE PREPARED TO FALL IN WITH THE WISHES OF OTHERS ABOUT THE SIZE OF DELEGATIONS, THOUGH HE WOULD WANT TO HAVE THE CHANCE TO SAY ONE OR TWO THINGS INRESTRICTED SESSIONS, PERHAPS LIMITED TO US AND ONE OR TWO OTHER DELEGATIONS.
6. AS REGARDS INFORMING NATO, CHRISTOPHER THOUGHT THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL IF THIS WAS DONE. HE HIMSELF MIGHT NOT BE AVAILABLE, BUT VEST COULD TAKE IT ON.

HENDERSON

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