

PRIME MINISTER 3²

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Mr Hurd's report on
yesterday's meeting.

Secretary of State

AFGHANISTAN

As already reported by telephone, the Allied meeting today was disappointing. US ideas were not clear, and the French (de Leusse) were determined to block any action today - even an agreement that the West take the Soviet Union to the Security Council. As regards both the UN and possible restriction of bilateral relations with the USSR our own position was well ahead of the field - but no harm in that.

2. Interesting ideas were produced over a wide range:

- (a) The UN. We all agreed that it would be best if the non-aligned took the lead. All except the French agreed that if this was not quickly feasible, the West should take the initiative. I argued for action this week before anxiety died away, and before the second stage on Iran. According to Sir A Parsons the prospects for this are not too bad, and (though he did not tell the meeting) Warren Christopher was telephoned this afternoon by President Carter, who wanted immediate action in the Security Council.
- (b) Kabul. Everyone has different procedures. It was agreed that no one should have political contacts with the new régime for the time being.
- (c) Détente and contacts with the Soviet Union. Noone spoke in favour of upsetting the framework of détente (European Security Conference, MBFR, Salt II and III etc). There was agreement that we needed to look restrictively at our bilateral contacts and concert a response. I mentioned visits and credit. Noone else was specific, except Christopher who said the US would look at a range of things including grain sales.
- (d) Iran. Christopher made the point that there was just a chance of getting the Iranians now to think straight about the world. The EEC Ambassadors in Tehran will be encouraged to speak accordingly.
- (e) Pakistan. The need for encouragement was strongly stressed by the US, eg on debts and Afghan refugees. The Canadian suggested she should rejoin the Commonwealth.

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(f) China. To be kept in touch, but handled with care.

(g) Christopher told me privately that the US would now step up covert help to the Afghan rebels, which up to now has been food and medicine only.

3. There were thus several loose ends, and our proposal for working groups to tackle specific areas of action was not taken up. A lot of hard work and clear thinking is required if this US initiative is to bear any fruit.

Douglas Hurd.

Douglas Hurd

31 December 1979

Copies to:

Lord Privy Seal

Mr Blaker

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