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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

August 1, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Warren Christopher, Acting *W.C.*

1. Iran's F-14s. In response to Iranian interest in our repurchase of their 78 F-14 aircraft, we have indicated willingness to discuss it and told them it would be necessary to see the aircraft to get an idea of their condition. The Foreign Minister has agreed to provide security for a DOD team, and to establish a working group in Tehran for more detailed talks. It is now up to them to propose a date.

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2. Nicaragua. The Sandinist radio today broadcast an interview with Nicaraguan Red Cross chief Reyes, who identified the US as the single major donor to the Red Cross food relief operation and gave full credit to the US for its response to the food emergency. Another Sandinista broadcast announced Larry Pezzullo's presentation of credentials today and said relations with the US would proceed on a basis of cordiality and mutual respect. We have been in close touch with VOA to insure that our continuing humanitarian assistance has been fully covered in VOA Spanish-language news broadcasts and commentary to Nicaragua.

3. Panama Legislation. We have just learned that the Conference Committee met today and exchanged views but reached no conclusions. The Committee staffs have been instructed to try to narrow the issues over the recess.

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4. Commonwealth Conference. Mrs. Thatcher's reception at the conference opening today in Lusaka has been chilly, and the media vituperative. Many African leaders believe she has already decided to drop sanctions and recognize Muzorewa. Kaunda contributed to the hostile environment by sharply criticizing British intentions in a press interview. Malcolm Fraser will try to play a conciliatory role at the conference by encouraging the British to advance ideas sufficiently plausible to gain at least some acceptance by Africans.

5. Afghanistan. Our evacuation is proceeding according to plan, with 64 of the 106 Americans affected by our decision already out of Afghanistan. Since our primary objective is to retain an effective presence in Kabul, our Charge will reply to the Afghan request that we reduce our staff with a non-confrontational note, referring to our continuing staff reduction.

6. Non-Aligned Communique. Our discussions with non-aligned and allied governments confirm broad dissatisfaction with the Cuban draft. Almost all of the 60-odd non-aligned countries from whom we have responses have expressed significant problems with the text, principally its pro-Soviet bias. Even initial reactions from Libya and Iraq were critical, and only Ethiopia supported the Cuban text. Informal working groups of 30 or 40 moderate countries are being formed to prepare revisions or substitute texts, and the prospects are for intense negotiations over the language in the five weeks remaining. We are continuing to work with our allies and the moderate non-aligned states, especially Yugoslavia.

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