

Afghanistan
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FM WASHINGTON 272140Z JUN 80

TO PRIORITY F.C.O.

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2385 OF 27 JUNE.

INFO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO,

INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW.

INFO SAVING KABUL.

CUR TELNO 2378 : U.S. POLICY TOWARDS AFGHANISTAN.

1. WE ASKED BOB BARRY (DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EUROPEAN BUREAU, STATE) TO COMMENT ON WHAT THE PRESS HAS BEEN REPORTING AS AN AMERICAN PROPOSAL FOR A "TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT" OVER AFGHANISTAN. BARRY SAID THAT THERE WAS NOTHING REALLY NEW OR DIFFERENT ABOUT AMERICAN THINKING AND THE WHOLE MATTER HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT OVER-WRITTEN PUBLICLY. THE AMERICANS HAD CONSULTED WITH THE UK AND WITH OTHER CLOSE ALLIES IN THE SERIES OF PREPARATORY MEETINGS BEFORE VENICE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE THAT HAS SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN USED. THE IDEA OF A TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT WAS NO MORE AND NO LESS THAN THE RECOGNITION OF SOMETHING WHICH HAD FEATURED IN ALL THE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD SO FAR INCLUDING THOSE BY THE UK AND THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE; NAMELY THAT WHILE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL SOVIET TROOPS REMAINS THE CENTRAL PREMISS OF ANY POLITICAL SOLUTION, THIS WAS NOT SOMETHING THAT COULD BE ACHIEVED OVERNIGHT. A TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT COULD INVOLVE AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE OR THE UNHCR

Why wasn't we told

OR INDEED OTHER VARIANTS, BUT THE AMERICANS WERE ANXIOUS NOT TO BE OVER-PRECISE AT THIS STAGE SINCE THIS WOULD ONLY INVITE A SOVIET BRUSH-OFF.

2. BARRY SAID THAT PRESS REFERENCES TO AMERICAN IDEAS BEING CONVEYED TO THE RUSSIANS THROUGH THIRD PARTY CHANNELS WERE "NOT ACCURATE". HE ADMITTED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY REPORTS IN TODAY'S EAST COAST PRESS TO THE EFFECT THAT GISCARD WAS OPPOSED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S CALL FOR AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT. THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE PUTTING OUT SOME BRIEFING EXPRESSING THIS SURPRISE AND REITERATING THEIR COMMITMENT TO A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, WHILE POINTING OUT THAT SOME INTERIM ARRANGEMENT WOULD INEVITABLY BE REQUIRED TO COVER SUCH ASPECTS AS SECURITY, REFUGEE SETTLEMENT ETC.

FCO PASS SAVING KABUL.

HENDERSON

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THIS MEMORANDUM WAS NOT ADVANCED

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TO PRIORITY F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2378 OF 26 JUNE 1980,
INFO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, ROUTINE MOSCOW.

U S POLICY TOWARD AFGHANISTAN

1. TODAY'S WASHINGTON POST REPORTED PROMINENTLY THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PROPOSING A "DECENT AND CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION" OF THE AFGHANISTAN CRISIS THAT WOULD PROTECT THE SOVIET'S "LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTEREST". A "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL" ABOARD PRESIDENT CARTER'S AIRCRAFT BETWEEN BELGRADE AND MADRID IS QUOTED AS HAVING ELABORATED ON THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE YUGOSLAV STATE DINNER, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE "TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT" TO FACILITATE SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

2. THE PRECISE NATURE OF THIS TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT WAS APPARENTLY NOT SPELT OUT, BUT IS SAID TO INCLUDE THE SUGGESTION OF AN ISLAMIC PEACEKEEPING FORCE. THE IDEA WAS REPORTEDLY FIRST PUT FORWARD BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN A LETTER TO PRESIDENT TITO IN FEBRUARY. ACCORDING TO U S SOURCES IT WAS RAISED AGAIN IN GENERAL TERMS BY SECRETARY MUSKIE AT HIS MAY MEETING WITH GROMYKO. THE PRESS QUOTES U S SOURCES AS SAYING THAT A MORE DETAILED VERSION OF THE PLAN INCLUDING THE IDEA OF TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE WITHDRAWAL PROCESS WAS LATER RELAYED BY MUSKIE TO GROMYKO THROUGH THIRD PARTY CHANNELS. A SEPARATE ARTICLE ON THE N A T O MEETING AT ANKARA STATES THAT DESPITE PRESIDENT CARTER'S REFERENCE TO TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN BELGRADE AND SUBSEQUENT COMMENTS ON THE IDEA BY BRZEZINSKI, SECRETARY MUSKIE "DID NOT BROACH ANY SUCH PLAN TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIES, ACCORDING TO U S AND EUROPEAN OFFICIALS".

3. THE SAME SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL IS QUOTED TO THE EFFECT THAT "WE RECOGNISE THAT THE SOVIET HAS A LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN NOT BEING TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANTI-SOVIET OUTPOST". ACCORDING TO HIM THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL CALLS FOR A GUARANTEE OF AFGHAN NEUTRALITY AND AN IMPLICIT U S RECOGNITION OF THE SOVIET INTEREST IN THAT NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY IN RETURN FOR FULFILMENT OF THE DEMAND FOR A COMPLETE TROOP WITHDRAWAL. "BUT WE ARE NOT IN A NEGOTIATING SITUATION WITH THEM BECAUSE AT THIS STAGE THEY THEMSELVES HAVE TO RETHINK WHAT WENT ON. ... IT COULD TAKE THEM A LONG TIME, IT IS NOT EASY TO CHANGE BASIC DECISIONS".

HENDERSON.

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