

GR 320
ECLIPSE

CONFIDENTIAL-ECLIPSE

Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

FM KABUL 120435Z
TO ROUTINE FCO
TELEGRAM NO 199 OF 12 JUNE 80.
AND TO ROUTINE NEW DELHI.

MS. *MP*
13/VI

DELHI TELEGRAM NO 449 : AFGHANISTAN.

1. THIS TELEGRAM SHOULD NOT BE PASSED TO THE AMERICANS. NOR SHOULD ITS CONTENTS BE DISCUSSED WITH THEM.
2. ALL SUBSTANTIVE REPORTS FROM HERE ARE COPIED TO DELHI.
3. AMERICAN REPORTING FROM KABUL HAS CONTAINED EXAGGERATION AND FABRICATION OF WHICH I HAVE SPECIFIC AND PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE. AMERICAN AND OTHER WESTERN JOURNALISTS WHO CAME TO KABUL IN JANUARY, SEVERAL OF WHOM ARE NOW IN DELHI, WERE OUTSPOKEN IN THEIR CRITICISM THEN OF AMERICAN EMBASSY BRIEFING WHICH THEY CONSIDERED AN ATTEMPT TO USE THEM IN A PROPAGANDA EXERCISE. THAT SAID, THE AMERICANS GET MORE INFORMATION FROM MORE SOURCES THAN ANY OTHER WESTERN MISSION : BUT THE ACCURACY OF IT IS ANOTHER MATTER.
4. I REPORTED HELICOPTER SORTIES INTO THE HILLS BEHIND PAGHMAN AND THE PRESENCE OF INSURGENTS THERE IN MY TELEGRAM NO 189 OF 2 JUNE. THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING VISIBLE OR AUDIBLE FROM KABUL TO SUBSTANTIATE REPORTS OF HEAVY CLASHES THERE. I WAS WITHIN 3/4 MILES OF PAGHAMAN ON 10 JUNE AND SAW AND HEARD NOTHING TO INDICATE FIGHTING.
5. IN KABUL IT IS THE INDIAN EMBASSY WHO HAVE, IN MY VIEW, THE BEST NETWORK OF RELIABLE SOURCES, INCLUDING CONSULATES IN KANDAHAR AND JALALABAD. IF BRITISH JOURNALISTS CAN FIND A WAY IN TO INDIAN REPORTING, THIS MIGHT BE MORE REWARDING.

HOWELL.

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST.]

FILES

SAD
EESD
NAD
OID
NEWS D
PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR BLAKER
PS/MR RIDLEY
PS/PUS

SIR D MAITLAND
SIR A ACLAND
LORD N G-LENNOX
MR DONALD
MR BULLARD
MR FERGUSSON
CABINET OFFICE

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

CONFIDENTIAL-ECLIPSE