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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 312301Z MAY 1979

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 544 OF 31 MAY 1979

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS GENEVA

INFO PRIORITY HONG KONG MOSCOW PEKING WASHINGTON CANBERRA
 WELLINGTON KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE BANGKOK JAKARTA MANILA
 TOKYO ROME LUXEMBOURG THE HAGUE PARIS BONN BRUSSELS
 COPENHAGEN UKREP BRUSSELS DUBLIN

Prime Minister

AM
 1/6

YOUR TELS NOS 224 AND 225: INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES

1. ALTHOUGH THE TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTERS REPLY TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE OF 25 MAY REACHED US WHILE THE SECURITY COUNCIL WERE IN FORMAL SESSION ON SOUTH LEBANON, I WAS ABLE TO WARN WALDHEIM SHORTLY BEFORE IT BEGAN THAT THE REPLY WAS ON ITS WAY. I EXPLAINED THE INTENTION TO PUBLISH IT VERY SHORTLY. I PASSED THE TEXT TO WALDHEIM DURING THE SESSION.

2. WHEN THE MEETING ADJOURNED, I HAD A SHORT TALK WITH WALDHEIM: URQUHART AND AHMED HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY WERE ALSO PRESENT. HE SAID THAT HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE WITH MRS THATCHERS PROPOSAL FOR A FURTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE UNDER HIS AUSPICES. HE WELCOMED THE INTENTION TO PUBLISH, BUT HOPED THAT WE COULD ALSO EMPHASISE PUBLICLY THE NEED FOR CAREFUL PREPARATION OF THE CONFERENCE. HE WOULD BE MOST RELUCTANT TO HOLD A CONFERENCE THAT DID NOT TACKLE THE PROBLEM EFFECTIVELY. WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON OUR PROPOSAL, HE WOULD UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATORY WORK.

3. WALDHEIM SAID THAT HE HAD ENCOUNTERED STRONG FEELINGS DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO ASIA, PARTICULARLY IN THAILAND, THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES WERE FACED WITH A SEVERE REFUGEE PROBLEM AND THE WEST WERE NOT HELPING TO SOLVE IT. HE WAS TOLD THAT IDEAS SUCH AS LIMITS ON THE EXODUS FROM VIETNAM TO SAY 10,000 PER MONTH, WERE ALL VERY WELL, BUT IT WAS EVEN MORE URGENT TO MOVE THE REFUGEES ALREADY IN CAMPS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SOUTH EAST ASIA.

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/ 4. WALDHEIM

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4. WALDHEIM SAID HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE VIETNAMESE TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM ALLOWING THE REFUGEES TO LEAVE. WALDHEIM HAD EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO DO THIS SINCE IT WOULD MEAN ARGUING AGAINST THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT FOR A MAN TO LEAVE A COUNTRY FREELY WHEN HE FELT SERIOUSLY OPPRESSED. IN FACT, THE VIETNAMESE CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE ORDERLY WAY IN WHICH THEY WERE ALLOWING PEOPLE TO LEAVE. WALDHEIM HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THEY ESTIMATED THAT THERE MIGHT BE AS MANY AS 1.5 MILLION IN ALL WHO DID NOT WISH TO REMAIN.

5. WALDHEIM REFERRED TO HIS PROPOSED VISIT TO LONDON (MY TEL NO 509). I SAID THAT I WAS SURE THAT MINISTERS WANTED TO SEE HIM, BUT THE DIFFICULTY WAS SIMPLY TIMETABLES. WALDHEIM SAID HE THOUGHT THE VISIT WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES.

6. OTHER MISSIONS HERE ARE BOUND TO ASK US TO ENLARGE ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A CONFERENCE - TIMING, COMPOSITION, ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED ETC. (THE INDONESIANS HAVE ALREADY DONE SO). WALDHEIM OR HIS STAFF MAY ALSO WANT TO DISCUSS WITH US IN MORE DETAIL. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, THEREFORE, TO RECEIVE FURTHER GUIDANCE. COULD WE ALSO HAVE THE TEXT OF WALDHEIM'S MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER?

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