



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 January 1980

Dear Michael,

Handwritten: For Paul - 25/1

/ I enclose the revised text of the statement which Lord Carrington intends to make in the House of Lords this afternoon on Afghanistan.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosure to the Private Secretaries of the members of OD and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours etc

(P Lever)

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

HOUSE OF LORDS: STATEMENT ON AFGHANISTAN ON 24 JANUARY 1980

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is an event of the widest significance. For the first time since the Second World War, Soviet combat troops have been used in massive numbers outside Europe to establish a military hold on a sovereign, non-aligned country.

The Soviet action is a breach of all the conventions which have governed East-West relations for the last decade. It is a vivid demonstration of the Soviet drive to gain wider influence wherever possible, by propaganda, by subversion, and where necessary by force.

Together with the arrest of the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Dr Sakharov, it reflects cynical disregard for world opinion. It is bound to affect our attitude in current and future negotiations between East and West, though we naturally want these to continue where they clearly serve our own interests as well as those of the Soviet Union.

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But the present crisis is not in the first instance an East-West confrontation between super powers. Although the significance of the Soviet action is world wide, its immediate impact has been on the region of South West Asia, and on the neighbouring Muslim countries.

Afghanistan is a strategic salient into the region. One is bound to ask oneself where the Russian drive is to stop. If the Russians are to be deterred, a sustained and significant response will be needed, not only from the West, but from the countries which themselves feel threatened.

I discussed these issues with the governments of the region during my tour between 9 and 18 January. This took me to Turkey, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and India, with a brief call at Bahrain.

Despite the obvious differences of perspective, certain important points of agreement emerged. One was that the West and the countries of the area have a common interest in the stability and integrity of the Gulf and the Straits of

/Hormuz.

Hormuz.

Secondly, in the light of the Soviet threat, Pakistan must be able to count on the material and political support of its friends.

Thirdly, the real threat to Iran's recent revolution and to her future security came from the Russians.

And finally, there was of course a general repugnance in the Islamic countries I visited at the Soviet onslaught on another Islamic nation.

An effective response to the Soviet threat in South West Asia and its neighbourhood is above all a matter for the peoples of the region. All the statesmen with whom I spoke recognised the Soviet threat of intervention, by force or subversion, which now extends across the region as far as the Yemen, and they accepted the responsibilities that flowed from this assessment.

In particular, the need for solidarity among like-minded people, and for a fresh effort to overcome the divisions of

/the past

the past was widely recognised.

This will not be easy. Conflicts of local interest have to be overcome, and in some cases the present crisis has sharpened them.

In India, where I was able to meet Mrs Gandhi and some of her Ministers very soon after they took office, I found a deep concern that Western military aid to Pakistan could disturb the delicate political balance in the Sub-Continent. The Indians have no desire to see their part of the world become the arena for a clash between the superpowers.

I pointed out to Mrs Gandhi that Western help for Pakistan was a direct consequence of the incursion of the Soviet superpower, and that Russia is after all the only superpower with a powerful military presence on the Sub-Continent.

Mrs Gandhi made it clear that she wished to continue the process of better understanding with Pakistan which she herself had begun with the Simla Agreement of 1972. President Zia had already assured me in Pakistan that he too

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looked forward to a development of the Simla process.

I found this encouraging. It will be a major contribution to peace of mind in the Sub-Continent if each country's worries about the other can be dissolved.

The response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is not, of course, the exclusive responsibility of the people of the region, even though theirs is the most immediate interest. They need - and they look for - material Western assistance, and a firm Western commitment to their security and independence.

The West itself needs to find ways to make the Russians understand they they cannot break the rules of international behaviour with impunity, either now or in the future. This entails responses by individual countries, and by the West's collective organisations, above all by NATO and the European Community.

In the region itself, the first need is to help Pakistan.

There are already half a million Afghan refugees there. This number could soon double. Many of them bitterly

/oppose

oppose the Soviet invasion of their country, and are determined to return. Their condition is wretched. We have already sent blankets, tents and medicines. The United Nations Commissioner for Refugees is active. Other countries, and especially the United States, are helping too. Pakistan needs further help to tackle her political, economic and military problems. We are discussing with our Allies how best to do this.

We are also considering other measures to help the countries of the region as a whole, both in the short term, and in their struggle against the long-term threat of Soviet disruption and subversion.

We need to develop our cooperation with Turkey both bilaterally and multilaterally.

We need to strengthen our links with the countries of the Arab peninsula.

We look forward to rebuilding a mutually satisfactory relationship with the people and government of Iran once the American hostages in Tehran have been released.

Above all we believe that one of the most important of all possible contributions to the political stability of the area would be a settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict which recognised the rights of the Palestine people as well as Israel.

Immediately after the Russian invasion, the British Government proposed that the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Community should discuss the measures we might take, bilaterally and collectively, to impress on the Russians how seriously we view their actions.

Some of our allies, notably the United States, have already acted. I expect others to follow suit. I shall now announce the measures which the British Government have so far decided to take. These are in addition to the measures related to Afghanistan which my Honourable Friend the Minister of State announced in another place on 14 January.

The British/Soviet credit agreement, concluded by the Labour Government in 1975, expires on the 16th of February. Its terms were too favourable to the Soviet Union,

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since the export credit was subsidised more than that which we extend to other countries.

The Government's view is that all trade should be pursued on a basis of mutual advantage. We shall apply that principle to British/Soviet trade. We do not propose to renew the credit agreement when it expires. Credit in future will have to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Assuming that other Western countries do likewise - which would be very much to our collective advantage - we shall not provide export credit to the Soviet Union at rates more favourable than those set by the international consensus on credit terms.

On technology, we are studying with other countries the tighter application of the COCOM rules for controlling the transfer of sensitive technology to the Soviet Union.

The European Community has decided not to export any food to the Soviet Union which would directly or indirectly replace supplies denied by the United States. The

/Community

Community has therefore decided to curb exports of grain in the future. Britain is also pressing for an end to subsidised sales of butter, meat and sugar to the Soviet Union.

The Government have also decided to avoid high level and Ministerial contacts with the Soviet Union for the time being. They will cancel military exchanges which were under consideration. They will avoid the kind of cultural and other events which would give an impression that nothing has changed and thus appear to condone Soviet aggression.

In accordance with the agreement between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the BBC, I have approved an increase in broadcasts by the External Services of the BBC to listeners in the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.

I now turn to the question of the Olympic Games. Her Majesty's Government sympathise deeply with the Olympic ideal that young people from all over the world should be able to compete freely together with no overtones of

/politics.

politics. But this view has never been shared by authoritarian governments, which exploit such events for their political advantage.

As in 1936 for the Germany of the day, so now for the Soviet Union the Olympic Games are a major political undertaking designed to impress the whole world with the prestige of the system.

For the Games now to be held in Moscow would appear to condone Soviet aggression abroad and repression at home.

But for the Games to be cancelled entirely would be a bitter blow to the dedicated athletes, in Britain and elsewhere, who have trained so hard for so many years.

This is why the British Government believes that the Summer Games should be moved. That will not be easy. But it should not be beyond the capacity of the 104 countries which condemned the Soviet Union in the United Nations.

If necessary the Games could be held in more than one country.

/My Right

My Right Honourable Friend the Prime Minister has accordingly urged the British Olympic Association to approach the International Olympic Committee to propose that the Summer Games be moved from Moscow. The Government are fully prepared to help with arrangements for those parts of the Games which might be held in this country.

I do not conceal from the Noble Lords that recent Soviet actions in Afghanistan and at home are not a happy augury for the future. They undermine much of what has been achieved over the past decade and more to provide the basis for a stable and mutually satisfactory relationship between East and West.

They underline the need, above all, to develop political solidarity among the members of the European Community and between the members of the North Atlantic Alliance. It is from that political solidarity, and from the defensive arrangements which accompany it, that our dealings with the Russians have to start.

But both East and West live on one planet. The consequences of serious miscalculation could be disastrous for very
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many of its inhabitants.

It is right that the Russians should feel the strength of our disapproval. That should help them to avoid miscalculation in future. But it is also right that we should where possible continue the search for arms control agreements, commercially justified trade, and other arrangements of mutual benefit. In the long run both we and the Russians need a sound East-West relationship.

But the Russians must understand that there can be no such relationship so long as they behave as outrageously as they have done in Afghanistan.

END

24 JAN 1960



- ? Based on Smith reports.
- ? No action until CD fails.
- ? bring 'EEL into line'
- ? Sov. overflying rights in S. Arabian.