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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1366 OF 17 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON NEW YORK MOSCOW KABUL ISLAMABAD PARIS
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THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S CALL ON PRESIDENT ZIA

FOLLOWING FROM WALDEN

1. AFTER A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON RHODESIA (WHICH THE PRESIDENT DESCRIBED AS A POLITICAL MIRACLE), THE PRESIDENT ASKED ABOUT PROGRESS ON OUR PROPOSAL FOR A NEUTRAL AFGHANISTAN. LORD CARRINGTON SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE NOT COMPLETELY NEGATIVE, THOUGH THERE WAS MORE INTEREST IN THE THIRD WORLD. PROGRESS WOULD OBVIOUSLY ONLY COME IN THE LONG-TERM, BUT IT WAS POLITICALLY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A CONSTRUCTIVE AND DEMONSTRABLY FAIR IDEA TO PUT THE SOVIET UNION IN THE WRONG. IT ALSO HELPED TO PREVENT THE OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN FROM BECOMING A TACITLY ACCEPTED FAIT ACCOMPLI. HE ASKED ABOUT THE RECENT VISIT TO ISLAMABAD OF THE CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER.
2. PRESIDENT ZIA SAID THAT MALMIERCA HAD CALLED ON HIM WITH A LETTER FROM CASTRO. THE CUBANS HAD PROPOSED THAT THE PAKISTANIS SHOULD TALK DIRECTLY TO BABRAK KARMAL, AND AVOID CONDEMNING THE RUSSIANS TOO OPENLY WHO HAD BEEN PUT ON THE SPOT BY THE U N RESOLUTION AND BY THE ISLAMIC CONCERENCE. IN GENERAL, THE PAKISTANIS SHOULD BE MORE REALISTIC. CASTRO WOULD BE READY TO MEDIATE, WHETHER FROM CUBA, IN EUROPE OR ELSEWHERE. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE HAD DISPOSED OF MALMIERCA QUICKLY, TELLING HIM THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAD BEEN READY TO TALK TO DAOUD AND TARAKI, BUT NOT TO BABRAK WHO HAD RIDDEN IN ON SOVIET TANKS. THIS WOULD BE AGAINST HIS PERSONAL AND NATIONAL CONSCIENCE, AND AGAINST THE RESOLUTION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. CASTRO, AS CHAIRMAN OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, AND BLUE-EYED BOY OF THE SOVIET UNION, SHOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH THE RUSSIANS TO GET THEM OUT OF AFGHANISTAN. IN REPLY, MALMIERCA HAD SAID THAT THE CUBANS DID NOT APPROVE OF THE SOVIET INVASIONS, AND THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED WHY THEY DID NOT TELL THE RUSSIANS THIS. HE HAD SENT MALMIERCA BACK WITH A LETTER FOR CASTRO. TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAD BEEN NO FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.
3. THE PRESIDENT'S ANALYSIS WAS THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD COME TO STAY IN AFGHANISTAN. HE HAD BEEN SURPRISED THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD NOT QUOTE PUNISHED UNQUOTE THE PAKISTANIS SO FAR, ALTHOUGH HE WAS ONLY HELPING REFUGEES FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS AND NOT INTERFERING IN AFGHANISTAN. THE RUSSIANS COULD FIND EXCUSES IF THEY WANTED. THEY HAD OVERFLOWN PESHAWAR SIX WEEKS AGO, BUT HE HAD RESTRAINED HIS CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE FROM SHOOTING THE RUSSIANS DOWN. THEY WERE STILL SENDING PLANES TO RECONNOITRE PAKISTANI TERRITORY AND LARGE SCALE SOVIET SUBVERSION WAS UNDERWAY IN BALUCHISTAN AND SIND. LARGE SUMS OF MONEY WERE INVOLVED, BUT THE PAKISTANIS HAD TAKEN COUNTER MEASURES. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT, THE RUSSIANS WANTED TO OCCUPY SOUTHERN BALUCHISTAN AND ENCIRCLE IRAN.

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4. THE AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS WERE DOING A GOOD JOB, AND IT WAS A PITY THAT THE PAKISTANIS COULD NOT HELP THEM. HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM WITH BRZEZINSKI. THE MOSLEM COUNTRIES WERE ALL WILLING TO HELP, BUT THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS WANTED WEAPONS NOT MONEY. IT WAS TRAGIC THAT THEY WERE USING ARMS OF 1914 VINTAGE, WHEN EVEN A MODERN MACHINE-GUN COULD BRING DOWN A HELICOPTER GUNSHIP. HE HAD ASKED AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN WHY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WERE NOT DOING MORE, AND HAD REMINDED THEM THAT NO-ONE HAD OBJECTED TO CHINESE AND RUSSIAN HELP FOR VIETNAM. THE AFGHANS NEEDED A SAFE SANCTUARY, SUCH AS THE N. VIETNAMESE HAD ENJOYED IN HANOI: HE IMPLIED THAT THIS COULD ONLY BE ON PAKISTANI SOIL. TIME WAS NOW SHORT: WHEN THE SNOW FINALLY MELTED IN THREE WEEKS, THE RUSSIANS WOULD LAUNCH A BIG OFFENSIVE WHICH COULD DISCOURAGE RESISTANCE AND INCREASE REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN TO A MILLION.

5. THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE MEETING IN MID-MAY WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT THAN LAST TIME. THE RUSSIANS HAD BEEN DOING THEIR HOMEWORK WITH THE PALESTINIANS, LIBYANS, SYRIANS, ALGERIANS AND YEMENIS, WHO MIGHT PROPOSE A RESOLUTION EQUATING SOVIET INTERVENTION WITH INTERFERENCE FROM PAKISTAN, WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF EXCALPATING THE RUSSIANS. MR AGHA SHAHI SAID HE WOULD STRESS AT THE MEETING THAT THE FIRST PRIORITY WAS SOVIET WITHDRAWAL, AND WOULD EXPRESS READINESS TO GIVE GUARANTEES ON NON-INTERFERENCE. HE WOULD ALSO MAKE PLAY WITH THE NEED FOR CONDITIONS TO BE CREATED IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WOULD ALLOW REFUGEES TO RETURN HOME. THIS WAS THE ONLY LEVER TO PROMOTE A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN. IF THERE WERE TO BE A SETTLEMENT A COMPROMISE PERSONALITY ACCEPTABLE TO THE AFGHANS WOULD BE NEEDED. MEANWHILE THE PAKISTANIS DEPENDED ON THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS TO KEEP THE CAMPAIGN GOING.

6. LORD CARRINGTON ASKED ABOUT INDO-PAKISTANI RELATIONS. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE VISIT OF MRS GANDHI'S ENVOY, SWARAN SINGH, HAD BEEN A USEFUL EXERCISE. SINGH HAD TOLD HIM NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THE SECURITY OF HIS EASTERN FRONTIER AND ASSURED HIM THAT THE INDIANS WANTED A STRONG AND STABLE PAKISTAN. THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED WHY MRS GANDHI DID NOT SAY THIS PUBLICLY. BUT HE HAD NOT BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY THE VISIT, AND WAS HOPEFUL OF BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS. ALHA SHAHI SAID THAT MRS GANDHI WANTED TO ELIMINATE AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE AREA, AND OBJECTED TO CLOSER PAKISTANI/US RELATIONS. HE WAS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT A SUGGESTION THAT A CONFERENCE OF THE HELSINKI POWERS SHOULD BE HELD TO DISCUSS

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(THE GULF. THIS WOULD GIVE THE RUSSIANS A LOCUS STANDI IN THE AREA. HE WAS AFRAID OPINION IN EUROPE MIGHT DEVELOP IN FAVOUR OF SUCH A CONFERENCE. LORD CARRINGTON THOUGHT THIS UNLIKELY. IT WAS TRUE THAT SOME MEASURES AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION WHICH THE AMERICANS HAD PROPOSED WERE EMBARRASSING FOR SOME EUROPEANS (EG THE GERMANS BECAUSE OF OSTPOLITIK). BUT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NOT SUCCEED IN DIVIDING THE AMERICANS FROM EUROPE. HE SAW THE TENDENCY TO FORGET WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN AFGHANISTAN AS A GREATER DANGER AND ASKED WHETHER THE PAKISTANIS COULD HELP TO ENSURE THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES WAS REACHING THE WEST. THE PRESIDENT SEEMED TO TAKE THE POINT.

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