

India

*cc India Pakistan - Sept 79
UK/India Relations*

CONFIDENTIAL

FM RIYADH 191532Z APR 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 4 OF 19 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY ISLAMABAD NEW DELHI WASHINGTON BONN (FOR S OF S).

FOLLOWING FROM GRAHAM, PRIME MINISTERS' PARTY.

INDO-PAKISTANI RELATIONS.

1. THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD LIKE THE DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER HOW TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT ZIA THE UPSHOT OF HER DISCUSSION WITH MRS GANDHI ABOUT INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. IF AGHA SHAHI WERE TO BE VISITING LONDON ON HIS WAY TO OR FROM WASHINGTON THAT WOULD PROVIDE AN OCCASION FOR AN ORAL BRIEFING. ALTERNATIVELY THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN ISLAMABAD COULD CONVEY AN ORAL ACCOUNT.
2. IN SPEAKING TO THE PAKISTANIS, WE COULD SAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD GIVEN PRESIDENT ZIA'S MESSAGE TO MRS GANDHI, EMPHASISING HIS AFFIRMATION OF PAKISTAN'S GENUINE DESIRE FOR FRIENDSHIP AND REJECTION OF AN ARMS RACE WITH INDIA. IN DISCUSSION THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO STRESSED PAKISTANS' RIGHT TO ACQUIRE WEAPONS FOR SELF-DEFENCE AND THE PROBLEMS WHICH SHE FACED WITH SOVIET TROOPS ON HER BORDERS AND SOME 2 MILLION REFUGEES.
3. MRS GANDHI HAD REPLIED (BUT WITHOUT ASKING THE PRIME MINISTER TO CONVEY HER RESPONSE) THAT SUPPLY OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN WOULD NOT HELP OVER AFGHANISTAN BUT WOULD MAKE THE RUSSIANS DIG IN THEIR HEELS. NEVERTHELESS, INDIA WAS ANXIOUS FOR FRIENDSHIP WITH PAKISTAN, WHICH WAS A QUOTE NECESSITY UNQUOTE. INDIA FACED HUGE PROBLEMS AND COULD ILL AFFORD CONFRONTATION. THE INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WAS TO VISIT ISLAMABAD NEXT MONTH.

CRAIG