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CONFIDENTIAL

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MR. ALEXANDER, 10, DOWNING STREET.

FM UKREP BRUSSELS 161150Z JAN 82

TO IMMEDIATE BONN

TELEGRAM NUMBER 02 OF 16 JANUARY 1982

INFO PRIORITY FCO

INFO ROUTINE COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE ROME DUBLIN PARIS

LUXEMBOURG ATHENS WARSAW

INFO SAVING BRUSSELS WASHINGTON MOSCOW

FOOD FOR POLAND

1. DURING THE INFORMAL FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN BRUSSELS ON 14/15 JANUARY, THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF FOOD FOR POLAND WITH GENSCHER. HE SUBSEQUENTLY DECIDED THAT HE NEEDED TO SEND A MESSAGE TO GENSCHER, WHO HAD AMONGST OTHER THINGS ARGUED THAT TO CEASE THE COMMUNITY'S 15 PER CENT SUBSIDY ON THE SALE OF FOOD TO POLAND WOULD PUNISH THE POLISH PEOPLE RATHER THAN AFFECT THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

2. IT PROVED IMPOSSIBLE TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO GENSCHER BEFORE HE LEFT BRUSSELS LAST NIGHT. GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD THEREFORE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING TEXT ON MONDAY MORNING (SIGNED COPY FOLLOWS BY BAG).

BEGINS

DEAR HANS DIGTRICH

FOLLOWING OUR DISCUSSION LAST NIGHT ON COMMUNITY SUPPLIES OF FOOD TO POLAND, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF I WERE TO SET OUT MY APPROACH TO THIS IN A LITTLE MORE DETAIL.

FIRST, I AM ENTIRELY AT ONE WITH YOU THAT WE MUST TRY TO ENSURE THAT SOME COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE WITH FOOD GETS THROUGH TO THOSE POLES WHO NEED IT MOST. THE QUESTION IS, WHAT MEANS OF ACHIEVING THIS END ARE THE BEST TO APPLY IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES? IT SEEMS TO ME THAT, IF WE CONTINUE SIMPLY TO SIGN CONTRACTS FOR SUCH SUPPLIES WITH THE POLISH STATE IMPORT AGENCIES, HOWEVER DETAILED THE ASSURANCES WE SEEK AND RECEIVE AT THE TIME, WE HAVE NO EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER THEIR DESTINATION NOR ANY WAY OF ENSURING THAT THE POLISH PEOPLE KNOW THAT THIS MAJOR HUMANITARIAN EFFORT IS BEING MADE BY THE COMMUNITY. FOR ALL WE KNOW THE SUPPLIES WILL GO, IF NOT TO THE ARMY ITSELF, THEN TO THOSE WHOM THE REGIME WISH TO FAVOUR; AND THEY MAY BE REPRESENTED TO THE POLES WHO RECEIVE THEM AS COMING FROM OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES OR FROM WITHIN POLAND.

THE ALTERNATIVE SEEMS TO ME TO TRY TO DEVELOP FURTHER THE OPERATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE RED CROSS, THROUGHWHICH SOME COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN AID IN

FOOD PRODUCTS (EG MILK POWDER) IS ALREADY GOING. THE POLISH REGIME IS PERMITTING THE OPERATIONS OF THESE ORGANISATIONS: FOOD DISTRIBUTED IN THIS WAY IS GETTING TO POLES WHO REALLY NEED IT (FAMILIES OF DETAINEES AND SO ON): AND ITS ORIGIN IS CLEAR AND KNOWN. AN ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF THIS SORT OF OPERATION IS THAT IT UNDERLINES TO POLES THEMSELVES THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE REGIME AND ITS FRIENDS ARE UNABLE TO SUPPLY THE BASIC NEEDS OF THEIR OWN PEOPLE.

I MYSELF STRONGLY FAVOUR THIS SECOND APPROACH WHICH HAS THE ADDITIONAL ATTRACTION OF BEING VERY SIMILAR TO THE WAY THE AMERICANS ARE NOW PROCEEDING. I THINK IT WOULD BE HARD TO JUSTIFY IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE SIMPLE CONTINUATION OF COMMUNITY SUPPLIES OF SPECIAL SUBSIDISED FOOD ON THE PATTERN USED LAST YEAR WHEN ONE OF OUR OBJECTIVES WAS TO ENCOURAGE AND UNDERPIN THE POLISH RENEWAL. IT IS NOT ONLY OUR OWN PEOPLE AND PARLIAMENTS WHO ARE LIKELY TO FIND THIS HARD TO UNDERSTAND. HOW ARE WE TO GO ON RESISTING THE PRESSURE OF OTHER THIRD COUNTRIES OR OUR ACP PARTNERS, WHO ARE ALREADY URGING US TO MAKE SIMILAR SALES TO THEM? SO, INSTEAD OF GOING AHEAD NOW WITH WHAT IS CALLED TRANCHE 3(B), I SUGGEST WE SHOULD EXPLORE URGENTLY MAKING MORE SUBSTANTIAL SUPPLIES OF FOOD AVAILABLE THROUGH VOLUNTARY AND CHURCH ORGANISATIONS.

NATURALLY THE FINANCING OF SUCH SUPPLIES WOULD NEED TO BE CONSIDERED. ONE POSSIBILITY WOULD BE TO USE THE 35M ECU IN THE 1982 FEOGA BUDGET INTENDED FOR FINANCING TRANCHE 3(B). I UNDERSTAND THAT AT FRIDAY'S INFORMAL COUNCIL WORKING GROUP MEETING THE COMMISSION SERVICES MADE A PROPOSAL ALONG THESE LINES WHICH THEY INTEND RECOMMENDING TO THE COMMISSION, AND THAT IT RECIEVED A FAVOURABLE RESPONSE FROM A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS.

CARRINGTON

ENDS.

FCO ADVANCE TO:
FCO - LAMBERT ECD(E)

FCO PASS SAVING TO WASHINGTON MOSCOW

BUTLER [ADVANCED AND REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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Please reply to :-

Universal House
60 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 0RR

Tel: 01-730 0032/3/4

Ref:

7 January 1982

From: The Lord Erskine of Rerrick

John Coles, Esq.
Personal Private Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1.

John Mc Coles

AID FOR POLAND

I refer to our telephone conversation yesterday in connection with aid for Poland.

Like many of us, I am extremely perturbed by the situation in Poland and I have had it in mind for some days now that there is a strong possibility that the people of Scotland would contribute meat to be sent out to Poland as aid under the present circumstances.

As you know, most of the Polish Army was stationed in Scotland during the first half of the last War - the associations are strong and, in fact, I myself am married to a daughter of one of their Senior Officers.

In principle, it is considered feasible that each of the market towns might contribute one whole animal towards the shipment and, later, individual farmers and others in the trade could also contribute.

This Company is associated with large organisations such as Unigate and others in the meat processing business and I consider that we are able to mount such an organisation.

.../2

VAT No. 340 5763 65

Directors: The Lord Erskine of Rerrick, J. B. Pryor

Registered in England at 58 Houndsditch London EC3A 7EU No. 1388603

However, it is imperative:

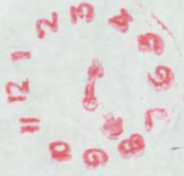
1. That the Red Cross or some other organisation will receive and distribute the produce and, indeed, find sufficient cold storage at distribution points.
2. That the shipping of the consignments would be a gift from one of the major transport companies - I think this is possible; and,
3. That this is a one-off situation and there will be no further requests from Poland for further supplies on the same basis.

Naturally, I do not wish to embarrass either the Prime Minister or her Government in this. I have already spoken to the Red Cross who are investigating the possibility through Geneva and this should take two days to confirm. However, I must mention that the Norwegians who have tried to do the same project finished up by delivering meat which was, of course, useless due to the fact that there was no proper distribution point arranged.

I will confirm to you in more detail in the next few days the proposal, should the Red Cross be in a position to help.

And Samuel
Blakely of Rennie

10 FEB 1982





CF
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 January 1982

Dear John,

Type please
102 13/1

Lord Erskine of Rerrick: Poland

/ I attach a draft reply to Lord Erskine of Rerrick, as requested in your letter of 8 January.

Yours ever,

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing St

DSR 71 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

PS/No 10

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SUBJECT:

AID FOR POLAND

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your letter of 7 January.

We have now had ~~considered~~ considered the

We find it

The ~~scheme~~ ^{believe} you outline is, in our view, entirely laudable and we do not ~~see how~~ ^{see} any embarrassment ~~could~~ ^{possibly} ~~attach~~ ^{attach}, provided, as I said when we first discussed this on the telephone, that the meat reaches the Polish people, who need it, and is not diverted to the military authorities. Your ~~intention~~ ^{plan to make} of making the necessary arrangements through the Red Cross is the best way of ensuring this.

well

Good luck. I should be glad to know, in due course, how things go.

13. / 1

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Sub

BF

8 January 1982

LORD ERSKINE OF RERRICK: POLAND

Would you please refer to my letter of 6 January.

I now enclose a letter from Lord Erskine which sets out his proposal in rather more detail. Should you wish me to make any comment to him, I should be grateful for advice early next week.

A. J. COLES

F.N. Richards, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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8 January 1982

AID FOR POLAND

Thank you so much for your letter of 7 January. I look forward to hearing from you again when the Red Cross have completed their investigations of the scheme. Meanwhile, I have asked our experts to take a look at it and will let you know if we have any comments or suggestions to make.

A. J. COLES

The Lord Erskine of Rerrick, GBE, DL, JP



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 January 1982

Poland

I had a telephone call this morning from Lord Erskine of Rerrick.

Lord Erskine is much interested in the Scotland/Poland connection (I believe his wife was originally Polish) and he is also involved in the meat trade. He said that he and others were considering sending supplies of meat by truck free of charge to Poland and asked whether this would embarrass HMG in any way. I said that I thought the answer would depend on the arrangements he would make to ensure that the meat reached the Polish people and did not end up in the hands of the regime or the Polish Army. Lord Erskine said that the intention was to use the Red Cross. I commented that in that case I did not believe that what he was proposing could embarrass the Government but it would be helpful if we could be in touch again when he had worked out the details of his proposals. He has promised to write in due course. I shall keep you informed.

JC

Francis Richards, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

✓/b