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Prime Minister. ①

World you like to arrange a short meeting with David Meller

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delete Home Secretary, for a personal 'report-back' after the

PRIME MINISTER

25 October 1985

Pakistan visit?

We can discuss at

Monday's diary meeting.

MEA 25/10

Yes - but you -
will recall that
I saw Sir Kenneth
in August
mt

DRUGS/PAKISTAN

Personal

President Zia and General Fazle (Governor of NWFP) send warm greetings to you. Because of your personal interest, the trip was accorded considerable special assistance.

Result of Trip

The Home Office and FCO agree that the trip was a success (telegram attached). The Pakistan Government were stimulated to do more to stop drugs being produced and being transmitted in and through Pakistan. President Zia announced a holy war on drugs, and his words were matched by good evidence that Pakistan heroin production has been brought down from 600 tonnes per year in 1979 to 40-60 tonnes last year. The memorandum of agreement, which included an intention to join with Britain in an international convention on extradition, was signed.

Situation in Afghanistan

In 12 out of 24 provinces of Afghanistan, opium and, in most cases, heroin is produced. Last year, 400-600 tonnes were produced. It is inconceivable that the Russian authorities are not aware. There is no evidence that they are

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preventing poppy growing and President Zia claims that the Russians are assisting the production. A number of sources, including President Zia, say the Russian troops have an addiction problem. The case of a young Russian soldier who had sold his boots for a "fix" had been reported to President Zia.

The Situation in Pakistan

The drug production is down and Karachi airport is well controlled. But:

- a. There is a major epidemic of drug abuse - 300,000 heroin addicts and 1.3 drug users in all (population 80 million).
- b. The drug traffic has spread eastwards and much of the surplus production is travelling to India.

The Latest British Situation

Drugs are now the top crime priority in the eyes of the public (Gallup Poll report attached). Most Fleet Street editors rate drug addiction as one of a handful of major news topics. The British action in Pakistan was well received. We have promised £2.4 million next year for a new development project in a poppy-growing area, second customs officer and £50,000 for x-ray equipment. Heroin from Pakistan and

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Afghanistan is still the main hard drug used in the British Isles.

Conclusion

This topic continues to have major public and political importance. We believe that the Government is perceived by many to be doing its best to tackle a very worrying problem for all parents. However, today Sir Kenneth Newman told me privately he believes the Government is only seen to be window dressing - (he has his own camp to watch!) We believe a short meeting with you would be very valuable. Would you like to see David Mellor with Douglas Hurd on this issue. As Geoffrey Howe is going to Pakistan in the Spring, you may also want to invite him.

Hartley Booth

HARTLEY BOOTH

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