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FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

MIPT (NOT TO ALL)

SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH GROMYKO: AFGHANISTAN.

1. LORD CARRINGTON, FOLLOWING UP HIS EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH AGHA SHAHI (MY TELNO 885), ASKED GROMYKO TO EXPLAIN IN MORE DETAIL WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE REFERENCE TO GUARANTEES OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE 24 AUGUST PROPOSALS. GROMYKO INTRODUCED HIS LENGTHY REPLY BY SAYING THAT THE PROPOSALS WHICH LORD CARRINGTON HAD PUT FORWARD IN MOSCOW IN JULY WERE UNREALISTIC AND THEREFORE UNACCEPTABLE AND THAT SOVIET VIEWS ON THIS HAD NOT CHANGED AND COULD NOT CHANGE ONE iota. HE AGREED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND A SOLUTION AND PUT FORWARD FOUR POINTS:

- I. THE SOVIET UNION REGARDED AFGHANISTAN AS A NON-ALIGNED AND INDEPENDENT STATE. IT MUST HAVE THIS STATUS.
- II. THERE MUST BE AN END TO THE INTERVENTION AGAINST AFGHANISTAN FROM PAKISTAN (AND TO A LESSER EXTENT FROM IRAN) WHICH AMOUNTED TO AN UNDECLARED WAR AGAINST AFGHANISTAN.
- III. THE END OF SUCH INTERVENTION MUST BE GUARANTEED AND CERTAIN PARTIES WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE GUARANTEES.
- IV. THE LIMITED CONTINGENT OF SOVIET TROOPS WOULD BE WITHDRAWN AS SOON AS INTERVENTION HAD ENDED AND THE GUARANTEES HAD COME EFFECTIVELY INTO FORCE. BUT THEY WOULD NOT BE WITHDRAWN BEFORE THAT: THE CART COULD NOT BE PUT BEFORE THE HORSE.

GROMYKO ADDED THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD HAVE TO BE REPRESENTED AT ANY DISCUSSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM (THE INTERNAL ASPECTS WERE PURELY A MATTER FOR THE AFGHANS) AND THAT NO-ONE BUT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS IN EFFECTIVE CONTROL COULD REPRESENT AFGHANISTAN. THE BEST PROCEDURE WOULD BE BILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN AND IRAN, THOUGH THE SOVIET UNION WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO TRIPARTITE TALKS IF THE PARTIES THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD BE "JOLLIER". HE CONCLUDED BY REPEATING THAT THE WAY TO GET WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS WAS TO PUT AND GUARANTEE AN END TO INTERVENTION. PARADOXICALLY, THOSE PUTTING FORWARD UNACCEPTABLE PROPOSALS WERE MAKING IT HARDER TO GET SOVIET TROOPS TO WITHDRAW.

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2. LORD CARRINGTON REPLIED THAT HE HAD RAISED THE QUESTION OF AFGHANISTAN BECAUSE HE SAW IT AS THE SINGLE GREATEST FACTOR OF DISTRUST BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. THE LINE PROPOSED BY GROMYKO RAISED TWO DIFFICULT PROBLEMS:

- I. THERE WERE THREE MILLION AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN AND IRAN AND THE BORDER WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTROL. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO GUARANTEE NON-INTERFERENCE WITHOUT FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF AFGHANISTAN.
- II. AT THE MOMENT, IF SOVIET TROOPS WITHDREW, BABRAK KARMAL WOULD GET HIS THROAT CUT AND THE RUSSIANS WOULD BE FACED WITH PRECISELY THE PROBLEM THEY HAD INTERVENED TO PREVENT. IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND A GOVERNMENT ACCEPTABLE BOTH TO THE SOVIET UNION AND TO THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN.

UNLESS THESE TWO PROBLEMS WERE FACED IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO DELIVER WHAT GROMYKO HAD ASKED.

3. GROMYKO RESPONDED WITH A LENGTHY CRITICISM OF WESTERN NON-RECOGNITION OF BABRAK KARMAL AND A THOROUGHLY IMPLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. KARMAL WAS RUNNING AFGHANISTAN (SOVIET TROOPS WERE MERELY DOING WHAT THEY HAD BEEN SENT TO DO AND HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO LOOK FOR WAYS OF SETTLING DOWN IN AFGHANISTAN, GIVEN THE DELAYS IN FINDING A POLITICAL SOLUTION). MANY OTHER GOVERNMENTS WHO HAD COME TO POWER AS A RESULT OF EVENTS AS TEMPESTUOUS AS THOSE IN AFGHANISTAN HAD SURVIVED AND WERE GENERALLY RECOGNISED. "EMIGRATION" WAS ALSO A NATURAL PHENOMENON AFTER SUCH EVENTS (PEOPLE HAD LEFT ENGLAND FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND MANY HAD LEFT RUSSIA AFTER THE REVOLUTION) AND, BESIDES, ONE HAD TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE NOMADIC AND TRIBAL FEATURES OF AFGHAN SOCIETY.

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