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FM KABUL 191000Z OCT 81

TO ROUTINE FCO TELNO 236 OF 19 OCT 81

RPTD FOR INFO TO ISLAMABAD , NEW DELHI, MOSCOW, WASHINGTON
UKDEL NATO AND MODUK (DI4)

SAVING TO UKMIS NEW YORK (FCO PSE PASS)

MY TELNO 228: AFGHANISTAN: SITREP.

POLITICAL

1. LOCAL PRESS HAVE CONTINUED TO CRITICIZE IN STRONG AND DENIGRATORY TERMS MRS THATCHER'S VISIT TO PAKISTAN/AFGHAN BORDER. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN FURTHER GOVERNMENT AND PARTY COMMENT ON THE VISIT. IN A SPEECH AT JALALABAD ON 14 OCTOBER, ABDUL MAJID SARBULAND, MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, SAID " BRITAIN IS THE NUMBER ONE ENEMY OF OUR BELOVED COUNTRY". THE WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATION OF AFGHANISTAN (WDOA) ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT ON 15 OCTOBER IN WHICH IT SAID, INTER ALIA, " BY COMMITTING THIS ACTION (SUPPORTING THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES) MRS THATCHER HAS DEPRIVED MANY BRITISHERS OF FOOD, SHELTER AND MEDICAL CARE. IN TODAY'S BRITAIN THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE LIVING IN POVERTY, HUNGER, DISEASE AND HOMELESSNESS. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE POLICIES PURSUED BY THIS STUBBORN WOMAN HAVE MEANT FOR THOUSANDS OF IRISH MOTHERS MISERY, AND MOURNING FOR THE DEATH OF THEIR CHILDREN, WHILE SHE SHEDS CROCODILE TEARS FOR THE CONDITIONS OF AFGHAN EMIGRES. THE WDOA, ON BEHALF OF THE WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN, CALL UPON MRS THATCHER TO PONDER THE INHUMAN AND MISANTHROPIC NATURE OF HER REACTIONARY AND IMPERIALIST POLICIES IN THE FACE OF HUNGRY AND AILING BRITISH CHILDREN AND WEEPING ENGLISH WOMEN". THE WDOA ALSO SENT A MESSAGE TO THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FOUNDATION, CONDEMNING MRS THATCHER'S VISIT AND HER PROMISE OF 'ENORMOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PROFESSIONAL MURDERERS AND CRIMINALS' AND ASKED FO SUPPORT IN THEIR JUST STRUGGLE AGAINST REACTION AND IMPERIALISM.

2. PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION GULDAD LEFT FOR SOFIA ON 18 OCTOBER FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO BULGARIA. SARWAR MANGAL, DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, LEFT KABUL ON 12 OCTOBER FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

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3. A GDR DELEGATION LED BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH SPITZ VISITED KABUL FROM 13 TO 18 OCTOBER AND SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH. A GROUP OF GDR EDUCATIONALISTS IS NOW VISITING KABUL FOR WHAT IS DESCRIBED AS A STUDY TOUR.
4. A CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED FOR THE EXPORT TO THE USSR OF 6000 TONS OF CITRUS FRUIT AND 1700 TONS OF CONSERVED OLIVES. THE VALUE OF THE CONTRACT IS REPORTED TO BE 3.84 MILLION DOLLARS.

SECURITY

5. ACCORDING TO INDIAN CONSUL IN KHANDAHAR THE CITY IS NOW VIRTUALLY UNDER MUJAHIDEEN CONTROL. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS COME INTO TOWN DURING DAY BUT WITHDRAW TO SAFETY OF SOVIET BARRACKS NEAR AIRPORT BY LATE AFTERNOON. THERE ARE SIMILAR REPORTS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN HERAT. THE TOWN IS SAID TO BE UNDER MUJAHIDEEN CONTROL DURING HOURS OF DARKNESS. WE HAVE RECEIVED UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT WHEN PM KESHTMAND PAID A ONE-DAY VISIT TO HERAT ON 1 OCTOBER HIS CAR AND THAT CONTAINING BAREQ SHAFIEE, CC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF NW ZONE, CAME UNDER FIRE BUT NEITHER WAS INJURED. NIGHT LETTERS HAD BEEN DISTRIBUTED IN ADVANCE OF THE VISIT TELLING PEOPLE TO STAY AWAY FROM MEETINGS ADDRESSED BY KESHTMAND.
6. RECENT TASS REPORTS OF DEFEAT OF LARGE NUMBERS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES IN HERAT PROVINCE, ADDS WEIGHT TO OTHER REPORTS WE HAVE RECEIVED OF RECENT EXTENSIVE FIGHTING IN THAT PROVINCE. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED REPORTS OF HEAVY FIGHTING IN LOGAR PROVINCE.
7. HELICOPTER ACTIVITY OUT OF KABUL AIRPORT, MOSTLY IN A SOUTHERN OR SOUTH-WESTERLY DIRECTION, HAS BEEN ABOVE NORMAL IN PAST WEEK.

PRESS DISTRIBUTION

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

8. NO RESTRICTION EXCEPT FOR ATTRIBUTION IN PARA 5.

GARNER

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