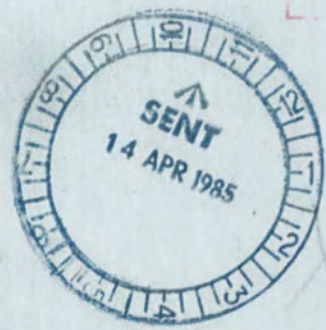


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SECRET

FROM NEW DELHI 140635Z APRIL 1985
TO IMMEDIATE FCO LONDON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 488 OF 14 APRIL 1985

FOLLOWING PERSONAL FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY AND FOR PS/PN

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH GANDHI

1. THE SUBSTANTIAL PART (OVER AN HOUR) OF THE PM'S MEETING WITH MR GANDHI TOOK PLACE WITHOUT NOTETAKERS. THE PM SUBSEQUENTLY GAVE US A SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF THE MATTERS COVERED. THEY WERE AS FOLLOWS:-

(A) WESTLANDS - SEPARATELY REPORTED.

(B) SRI LANKA. THE PM REPORTED HER CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TULF IN COLOMBO. GANDHI IMPLIED THAT HE WAS IN TOUCH WITH THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT PARALLEL MOVES TO DE-ESCALATE THE CRISIS.

THERE APPEARED TO BE SUBSTANCE IN THE RECENT PRESS REPORTS FROM COLOMBO ABOUT SRI LANKAN MOVES TOWARDS A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

14/4/85

(1) BORN EXTREMISTS IN BRITAIN. THE PM UNDERLINED OUR CONCERN ABOUT THIS ISSUE. SHE DEEPLY SYMPATHISED WITH THE STRONG FEELINGS TO WHICH IT HAD GIVEN RISE IN INDIA. SHE EXPLAINED CHAUBHAN'S POSITION UNDER THE 1971 IMMIGRATION ACT. SHE REGRETTED THAT SUCH PEOPLE HAD EVER BEEN ADMITTED TO BRITAIN. WE WERE DOING ALL WE COULD WITHIN THE LAW TO CONTROL THESE ACTIVITIES.

[REDACTED]

GANDHI NOTED THESE POINTS AND MADE NO NEW REQUESTS.

(2) [REDACTED]

(E) KASHMIR. GANDHI RAISED THE INFORMAL COMMITTEE, SET UP BY FOUR MPS ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE PAKISTANI BUSINESSMAN SULTAN MAHMUD TO STUDY THE KASHMIR PROBLEM. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT SHE WOULD MAKE ENQUIRIES ABOUT THIS ON RETURN TO LONDON.

(F) PAKISTAN. GANDHI SAID THAT THE INDIANS HAD NEW INFORMATION ABOUT PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT.

2. THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE THEN COVERED MORE BRIEFLY WITH ADVISERS PRESENT:

(A) INDIA'S ECONOMIC PLANS, GANDHI EXPLAINED THE REVISIONS BEING MADE TO INDIAN INDUSTRIAL, FINANCIAL AND EDUCATION POLICIES TO PREPARE INDIA FOR THE MODERN WORLD, AND TO CONCENTRATE ON SPECIFIC AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND THE STREAMLINING OF LICENSING PROCEDURES. CONTROLS WERE BEING REDUCED TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND MINIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORRUPTION.



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(B) PUNJAB. GANDHI EXPLAINED THE NEW STEPS TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT. THESE COULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN EARLIER. BUT THE AKALIS HAD NEEDED TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WERE ACHIEVING CONCESSIONS RATHER THAN MERELY BEING GRANTED THEM.

(C) OTHER MATTERS TOUCHED UPON WERE THE WORLD ECONOMY, NEW GATT ROUND, US/USSR ARMS NEGOTIATIONS (PARTICULARLY SDI), AFGHANISTAN, AND IRAN/IRAQ.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER AND GANDHI AGREED THAT PRESS SPOKESMEN SHOULD BE AUTHORISED TO SAY THAT THE TALKS HAD COVERED THE SIKH EXTREMISTS IN BRITAIN, SRI LANKA, THE WORLD ECONOMY AND EAST/WEST RELATIONS, INDIAN ECONOMIC POLICY, IRAQ/IRAN AND BILATERAL ISSUES.

4. IN VIEW OF THE SENSITIVITY OF SOME OF THE TOPICS COVERED, THE PM WISHES THE DISTRIBUTION OF THIS TELEGRAM TO BE CAREFULLY RESTRICTED

WADE-GERY

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(5)

From the Private Secretary

14 April, 1985

Dear Len,

INDO/PAKISTAN NUCLEAR

The Prime Minister and Mr Gandhi had a brief discussion of this during the Prime Minister's visit to New Delhi on 14 April.

Mr Gandhi assured the Prime Minister that India did not possess any nuclear weapons. He was convinced, however, that Pakistan was on the verge of developing a nuclear weapon. He referred to press reports - which I think date from last year - that a Pakistani had been detained while trying to smuggle 50 triggering devices which could be used in nuclear weapons out of the United States. Unforgivably the Americans had released the person concerned, detaining only the equipment. The high number of triggering devices was what caused Mr Gandhi particular concern.

I am copying this letter to Sir Percy Cradock.

Yours sincerely
C D Powell

(C D Powell)

L Appleyard Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

SECRET