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FM WASHINGTON
TO ROUTINE FCO
TELNO 136

OF 240352Z JANUARY 87

INFO ROUTINE ISLAMABAD, KABUL, RIYADH, MOSCOW, NEW DELHI, PEKING

ISLAMABAD TELNO 50 TO FCO: AFGHANISTAN
SUMMARY1. BRIEFING FROM ARMACOST ON HIS VISIT TO ISLAMABAD, AND THE
CURRENT US VIEW.

DETAIL

2. FOLLOWING HIS 18-20 JANUARY VISIT TO ISLAMABAD, AND HIS MEETING WITH CORDOVEZ HERE ON 21 JANUARY, I DISCUSSED AFGHANISTAN WITH ARMACOST ON 22 JANUARY. HE IS EVIDENTLY DEEPLY ENGAGED IN COORDINATING THE US RESPONSE TO THE RECENT SOVIET/REGIME INITIATIVES, AND DEEPLY SCEPTICAL OF SOVIET SINCERITY ABOUT POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL. BUT THE US IS WILLING TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE SOVIET POSITION IS CHANGING AND OPENING UP PROSPECTS FOR REAL PROGRESS. OTHERS IN STATE TELL US THAT THIS WAS ALSO THE POSITION OF HIS PAKISTANI INTERLOCUTORS, THOUGH ZIA HAD EMPHASISED THE DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON HIM TO TRY FOR A SETTLEMENT.

3. ACCORDING TO STATE, YAQUB KHAN (CURRENTLY IN KUWAIT) HAS PLANS TO VISIT RIYADH, MOSCOW, TEHRAN AND POSSIBLY PEKING BEFORE GENEVA B STARTS ON 25 FEBRUARY. THEY BELIEVE THAT IN MOSCOW HE WILL PROBE SOVIET THOUGHTS ABOUT NEUTRALITY, AND IN PARTICULAR VORONSTOV'S TANTALISING REFERENCE TO THE SWISS MODEL. THE RUSSIANS HAD SUGGESTED A WORKING-LEVEL US-SOVIET MEETING BEFORE GENEVA B: THIS IS LIKELY TO BE HELD HERE, WITH MURPHY OR RAPHEL LEADING FOR THE US. ARMACOST ADDED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE SAYING THAT THE GENEVA B ROUND WOULD BE THE LAST, AND THAT THIS WAS WORRYING CORDOVEZ. BUT THE REAL QUESTION WAS WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WOULD SHOW ANY MOVEMENT ON THE NON-GENEVA ITEMS BEFORE 25 FEBRUARY.

4. ARMACOST SAID THAT FOR THE UNITED STATES THE BOTTOM LINE WAS THAT AFGHANISTAN SHOULD HAVE NO MILITARY BASES, NO MILITARY ALLIANCES AND NO FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE. THE AUSTRIAN MODEL PROVIDED A POSSIBLE PATTERN. (STATE HAVE SEPARATELY DRAWN OUR ATTENTION TO THE CLAUSE IN THE AUSTRIAN STATE TREATY FORBIDDING RE-ENTRY OF OCCUPYING FORCES.) IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF ALLIED GOVERNMENTS COULD MAKE A STRONG PITCH IN MOSCOW URGING THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO PRODUCE A DEFINITIVE TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL. THE US POSITION WAS THAT THE RUSSIANS COULD AND SHOULD BE OUT WITHIN 4 MONTHS. THEY SHOULD ALSO BE TOLD THAT FOR THE GENEVA PROCESS TO LEAD TO A SETTLEMENT, THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT IN

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ADDITION.

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ADDITION THAT A SUCCESSOR AFGHANISTAN REGIME WOULD NOT INCLUDE NAJIB AND COULD ONLY EMERGE AS A RESULT OF A PROCESS OF CONSULTATION AND AGREEMENT WITH ALL AFGHAN PARTIES. (ARMACOST ADDED THAT CORDOVEZ BELIEVED THAT NAJIB HAD BEEN CHOSEN PRECISELY BECAUSE HE LACKED ANY STRONG POLITICAL BASE WITHIN THE COUNTRY.)

5. AS FOR THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE, ARMACOST SAID THAT THEIR MAIN CONCERN WAS TO RECEIVE MORE US SUPPORT. THEY ALSO WANTED EARLY RECOGNITION OF A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE. HE HAD SEEN SOME OF THE LEADERSHIP IN ISLAMABAD, AND HAD FOUND THEM A MOTLEY AND - GAILANI APART - UNSOPHISTICATED GROUP. BUT THE AMERICANS HAD BEEN ASTONISHED AT THE SPEED AND FIRMNESS OF THEIR STATEMENT REJECTING THE CEASEFIRE. THE RUSSIANS NO DOUBT ASSUMED THAT WASHINGTON HAD ENGINEERED THIS, BUT IT WAS NOT THE CASE. STATE HAVE COMMENTED SEPARATELY THAT THE RESISTANCE ARE MORE WORRIED THAN EVER THAT A SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE AGREED OVER THEIR HEADS

6. WE HAVE CONFIRMED OUR INTEREST IN A FORMAL US/UK EXCHANGE BEFORE JUNEJO'S VISIT IN APRIL - YOUR TELNO 88. STATE WILL REVERT SOON WITH DATES.

ACLAND

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