

## ADVANCE COPY

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MY TELNO 205: AFGHANISTAN: MR EGGAR'S CALL ON PRESIDENT ZIA

## SUMMARY

1. ZIA VERY OPTIMISTIC THAT PROGRESS CAN NOW BE MADE TO CONCLUDE A SETTLEMENT ON AFGHANISTAN. WITH FIRST TRACK NEGOTIATIONS VIRTUALLY COMPLETE AND WITH THE RUSSIANS ABOUT TO DITCH NAJIB HE BELIEVES THE AFGHANS CAN RAPIDLY COMPLETE THE FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OVER IN KABUL.

## DETAIL

2. I ACCOMPANIED MR EGGAR TODAY FOR HIS CALL ON PRESIDENT ZIA. AFTER DISCUSSING DRUGS AND PAKISTANI SACRIFICES FOR THE AFGHAN REFUGEES, ZIA MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE THOUGHT A SETTLEMENT ON AFGHANISTAN WAS NOW IN SIGHT. HIS FORMER CAUTIOUS ATTITUDE IN DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITIES OF SOVIET WITHDRAWAL HAD EVAPORATED AND HE EXUDED OPTIMISM. HE DESCRIBED CURRENT PROGRESS AS INCREDIBLE. IT WAS AN EXCITING TIME. PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF GORBACHEV'S LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT, OF ZIA'S TALKS WITH CORDOVEZ AND WITH THE PROSPECT OF VORONTSOV'S ARRIVAL TOMORROW, ZIA SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NOW WITHDRAW. THEY HAD MADE A COMMITMENT TO THIS EFFECT TO THE AMERICANS AT THE REAGAN/GORBACHEV SUMMIT. THIS WAS PART OF A WIDER GAME PLAN WHICH THEY WOULD NOT WISH TO PREJUDICE.

3. ZIA SAID THAT AGREEMENT ON CORDOVEZ'S FIRST TRACK NEGOTIATIONS WAS VIRTUALLY IN PLACE, FOR EXAMPLE ON WITHDRAWAL TIME AND FRONTLOADING ETC. THE DOCUMENTS COULD BE FINALISED AT THE NEXT GENEVA MEETING AND PUT ON ONE SIDE WHILE THE NECESSARY PROGRESS WAS MADE ON THE SECOND TRACK: THE CREATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THIS WAS ESSENTIAL SINCE THE PAKISTANIS COULD NOT SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NAJIB REGIME. THE PAKISTANIS WANTED A FREE AND INDEPENDENT AFGHANISTAN, BUT THEIR MAJOR PRIORITY WAS FOR THE REFUGEES TO RETURN. THEY WOULD NOT GO BACK TO LIVE UNDER THE NAJIB REGIME FROM WHICH THEY HAD FLED.

4. THE RUSSIANS UNDERSTOOD THIS POSITION AND REALISED THAT NAJIB

HAD TO GO. BUT THEY WOULD LEAVE IT TO CORDOVEZ TO MAKE THE RUNNING AND THEN APPEAR TO ACQUIESCE IN A CONSENSUS VIEW, SUPPORTED BY THE UN, THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE REMOVAL OF NAJIB.

5. THE VARIOUS GROUPS OF AFGHANS - THE MUJAHIDEEN, THE REFUGEES, THE EXILES - WOULD GET GOING AND AGREE ON THE SHAPE OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO INCLUD ALSO A REPRESENTATIVE PROPORTION OF THE SMALL COMMUNIST ELEMENT IN KABUL. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THIS WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT FOR THE MUJAHIDEEN TO ACCEPT AND WHETHER THE PROCESS WOULD NOT TAKE TIME, ZIA EXPLAINED THAT CORDOVEZ WOULD ALSO ACT AS A CATALYST FOR THE CREATION OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT. RESISTANCE LEADERS WERE PRAGMATIC PEOPLE AND NOT THEMSELVES AMBITIOUS FOR POLITICAL POWER. WITH CORDOVEZ'S ENCOURAGEMENT THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO WORK RAPIDLY WITH EXPERIENCED POLITICIANS AMONG THE EMIGRES TO CREATE A REPRESENTATIVE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

6. ASKED ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP OF SUCH A PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ZIA SUGGESTED THAT THE KING MIGHT IN THE END BE THE LEAST CONTROVERSIAL CANDIDATE. BUT HE HAD ENEMIES AMONG SOME GROUPS. THE DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO EMERGE FROM TRADITIONAL TRIBAL CONSULTATIONS AND COULD NOT BE IMPOSED FROM OUTSIDE. THERE WERE PLENTY OF ABLE FORMER AFGHAN POLITICIANS SUCH AS YOUSUF, ABDUS SAMMAD, TABIBI ETC WHO COULD PERFORM THE TASK OF RUNNING THE EXECUTIVE.

7. AT THE END OF THE DISCUSSIONS MR EGGAR RAISED THE SKRZYPKOWIAK CASE WHICH ZIA SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO PERSONALLY.

## COMMENT

8. ZIA'S OPTIMISM WAS A COMPLETE TURNABOUT. HE CAN SURELY BE UNDER FEW ILLUSIONS THAT IT IS GOING TO BE A HARD TUSSLE TO PERSUADE THE MUJAHIDEEN TO COOPERATE IN CREATING AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. BUT THE CONFIDENCE WITH WHICH HE SPOKE ABOUT MUJAHIDEEN ABILITY TO GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER IN A MATTER OF THREE OR FOUR WEEKS SUGGESTS THAT AT LEAST HE WILL BE PREPARED TO PUT HIS OWN PRESSURE ON THEM TO PLAY BALL.

BARRINGTON

ADVANCE 20

AFGHANISTAN  
PS ~~REDACTED~~  
PS/MR EGGAR  
MR BOYD  
SIR J FRETWELL  
MR GILLMORE  
MR MCLAREN  
MR SLATER  
HD/SAD  
HD/PUSD

DEP HD/PUSD  
HD/UND  
HD/SOVIET  
HD/NAD  
HD/DEFENCE  
HD/MED  
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NO. 10 DOWNING ST  
ASSESSMENTS STAFF CAB OFF

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