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TELNO 874

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YOUR TELNO 1301 : AFGHANISTAN : CALL BY SAYED GAELANI ON
LORD GLENARTHUR

SUMMARY

1. GAELANI SAID EVENTS UNFOLDING RAPIDLY IN AFGHANISTAN. BUT NO PROGRESS IN PESHAWAR. NO ORGANISATION EXISTED TO SPEAK FOR RESISTANCE AS A WHOLE. HE PROPOSED SUPREME COUNCIL EXERCISING PRESIDENTIAL POWERS OVER GOVERNMENT ELECTED BY LOYA JIRGA. FIRST STEP SHURA (COUNCIL) INCLUDING RESISTANCE COMMANDERS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND INTELLECTUALS. ROOM IN THIS PROCESS FOR REGIME FUNCTIONARIES - BUT NOT FOR PDPA ACTIVISTS.

DETAIL

2. AT HIS OWN REQUEST, GAELANI CALLED ON LORD GLENARTHUR ON 20 OCTOBER. HE SAID THAT EVENTS WERE MOVING QUICKLY INSIDE AFGHANISTAN BUT THAT THIS HAD NOT BEEN MATCHED IN PESHAWAR. THERE WAS A RISK THAT CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE WHO LACKED POPULAR SUPPORT IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD EXPLOIT ANY CHAOS THAT FOLLOWED SOVIET WITHDRAWAL AND SEIZE POWER.
3. LORD GLENARTHUR ASKED ABOUT THE RUMOURS THAT NAJIB WOULD STEP DOWN. GAELANI SAID THAT IF NAJIB DID GO HE WOULD PROBABLY BE REPLACED BY SOMEONE SIMILAR. BUT THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT NAJIB WAS PREPARED TO HANDOVER TO A COUNCIL WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE RESISTANCE AND THE EX-KING, AS WELL AS NAJIB HIMSELF. NEVERTHELESS THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE RESISTANCE. IT WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR THE PDPA TO RETAIN IMPORTANT POSTS: IT WOULD NOT EVEN BE POSSIBLE TO JUSTIFY TO THE PEOPLE WHY THE PDPA SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO KEEP MINOR POSITIONS.
4. LORD GLENARTHUR ASKED IF DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN VORONTOV AND THE RESISTANCE WERE ON THE CARDS. GAELANI SAID THAT THE RESISTANCE HAD ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE RUSSIANS: BUT THERE WAS NO ORGANISATION ABLE TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE RESISTANCE AS A WHOLE. FOR YEARS HE HAD CALLED FOR THE ELECTION

OF A COUNCIL TO REPRESENT THE RESISTANCE. FOR A LONG TIME THE PAKISTANIS HAD IGNORED THIS PROPOSAL BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT A STRONG RESISTANCE LEADERSHIP TO EMERGE: THE FUNDAMENTALISTS HAD OPPOSED IT BECAUSE THEY FEARED REJECTION BY THE AFGHAN PEOPLE. RECENTLY THE PAKISTANIS HAD GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT - BUT IT WAS TOO LATE.

5. GAELANI SAID THAT THE BEST WAY FORWARD WOULD BE THE FORMATION OF A SUPREME COUNCIL (AS IN THE SUDAN) WITH HALF A DOZEN OR SO MEMBERS UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF ZAHIR SHAH. (ZAHIR SHAH WOULD HOWEVER BE NO MORE THAN A FIGUREHEAD.) THE SUPREME COUNCIL WOULD EXERCISE PRESIDENTIAL POWERS OVER A GOVERNMENT WHOSE PRIME MINISTER WOULD HAVE A SEAT ON THE COUNCIL. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE SET UP BY A LOYA JIRGA ORGANISED BY A SHURA WHICH INCLUDED THE PESHAWAR SEVEN,

RESISTANCE INTERNAL COMMANDERS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND INTELLECTUALS. THERE WOULD BE NO ROLE IN THE PROCESS FOR NAJIB OR PDPA ACTIVISTS, ALTHOUGH REGIME FUNCTIONARIES MIGHT BE INVOLVED.

6. LORD GLENARTHUR REFERRED TO THE RECENT VEILED SOVIET THREATS TO DELAY WITHDRAWAL. HE SAID THAT THESE SMACKED OF BRINKMANSHIP. THE AIM WAS TO PUT PRESSURE ON PAKISTAN AND THE RESISTANCE. BUT WE STILL EXPECTED TROOP WITHDRAWAL TO BE COMPLETE BY 15 FEBRUARY.

7. GAELANI REMARKED IN PASSING THAT HE EXPECTED THE ISID TO BE BROUGHT UNDER GREATER PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT CONTROL AFTER 16 NOVEMBER ELECTION.

COMMENT

8. GAELANI WAS NOT ON GOOD FORM. THE HEATHROW INCIDENT HAD UPSET HIM. HE HAD BEEN UNWELL (BLOOD PRESSURE). HIS REMARKS WERE DISJOINTED AND CONFUSED.

9. HIS COMMENTS ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF A SHURA SEEMED TO REFLECT THE ALLIANCE PROPOSALS REPORTED IN PARA 4 OF YOUR TUR.

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