

ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 834

OF 230320Z MARCH 89

INFO PRIORITY ISLAMABAD, UKMIS NEW YORK
INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW, NEW DELHI, UKMIS GENEVA, RIYADH, PARIS,
INFO ROUTINE BONN, ROME, BRUSSELS

ISLAMABAD TELNO 399: AFGHANISTAN INTERIM GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY

1. US ADMINISTRATION CLOSE TO APPOINTING A SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE MUJAHIDEEN. OPTIONS FOR SOME SYMBOLIC POLITICAL ACTION AGAINST THE KABUL REGIME ALSO UNDER CONSIDERATION. BUT 'RECOGNITION' OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT NOT A SHORT TERM OPTION. ISSUE OF THE AFGHAN UN SEAT TO BE LOOKED AT LATER IN THE SUMMER.

DETAIL

2. THE US PRESS REPORTED LAST WEEKEND THAT, IN RESPONSE TO CONTINUING CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE, BAKER WAS CLOSE TO A DECISION TO APPOINT A SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE MUJAHIDEEN. SCHAFFER (DAS/NEA) CONFIRMED TO GILLMORE (VISITING WASHINGTON) ON 21 MARCH THAT THIS 'COULD HAPPEN ANY TIME'. HE DESCRIBED IT AS A HALF-WAY HOUSE WHICH FELL SHORT OF RECOGNITION BUT GAVE FURTHER SUBSTANCE TO US SUPPORT FOR THE RESISTANCE. HE DISMISSED THE PRESS LINE, FED BY SOME IN CONGRESS, THAT THE MOVE WOULD REFLECT DISSATISFACTION WITH AMBASSADOR OAKLEY'S PERFORMANCE OR ABILITIES.

3. SCHAFFER ALSO CONFIRMED THAT, SEPARATELY, THE ADMINISTRATION WERE CONSIDERING VARIOUS MOVES TO SIGNAL THE WEAKENING OF THE KABUL REGIME'S CLAIM TO REPRESENT AFGHANISTAN. ONE OPTION WAS TO BREAK RELATIONS COMPLETELY: ANOTHER WAS TO EXPEL THE 3 KABUL DIPLOMATS ACCREDITED TO WASHINGTON BUT NOT BREAK RELATIONS. THE WITHDRAWAL OF US STAFF FROM KABUL HAD BEEN PRESENTED AS A RESPONSE TO SECURITY CONCERNS. THIS HAD DELAYED FOR A TIME ANY POLITICAL MOVE TO 'DERECOGNISE' THE REGIME BUT THIS ISSUE WAS NOW AGAIN TO THE FORE.

4. BUT THE US WERE NOT, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM, CONTEMPLATING 'RECOGNITION' OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAD STILL NOT ESTABLISHED ITSELF WITHIN AFGHANISTAN. THE US WOULD CERTAINLY NOT MOVE ON THIS BEFORE PAKISTAN AND WOULD PREFER THAT THE MAJOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES ALSO

MOVED FIRST. (SCHAFER AGREED THAT THE OIC'S MOVE TO SEAT THE MUJAHIDEEN HAD NOT BEEN FULL RECOGNITION.)

5. SCHAFER SAID THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, THOUGH NOT FULLY REPRESENTATIVE, WAS A BETTER RESULT THAN AT ONE TIME HAD SEEMED LIKELY TO EMERGE FROM THE SHOURA, IE BEFORE ISID LOST CONTROL OF THE SHOURA PROCESS. GAGLANI HAD USED HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON (HE SAW KIMMITT AND GATES) TO EXPRESS STRONG DOUBTS ABOUT THE SHOURA RESULTS AND TO CANVASS HIS OWN ALTERNATIVE. (GILLMORE INDICATED WE HAD HEARD THE SAME FROM GAGLANI). THE DEPTH OF SUPPORT FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AMONG INTERNAL COMMANDERS WAS STILL A GREY AREA. AMBASSADOR OAKLEY WAS PERHAPS DOING MORE THAN HE STRICTLY SHOULD IN PROMOTING SUPPORT FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AMONG RESISTANCE LEADERS WHO WERE STILL WAVERING. BUT THE US WANTED THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP INTO AN EFFECTIVE CHANNEL FOR US AID, BY INTER ALIA INCORPORATING THE PRESENT STRUCTURE OF ALLIANCE COMMITTEES.

6. SCHAFER AGREED THAT THE QUESTION OF A CHALLENGE TO THE KABUL REGIME OVER THE AFGHAN SEAT AT THE UN SHOULD BE LOOKED AT NEARER THE TIME, WHEN THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD BE CLEARER. (HE ADMITTED THAT THE MUJAHIDEEN WOULD HAVE TO SHOW RESULTS AT JALALABAD WITHIN A FEW WEEKS IF DOUBTS WERE NOT TO TAKE ROOT AT POLITICAL LEVELS HERE ABOUT SOME FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS IN US ASSESSMENTS.)

ACLAND

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION 20ADVANCE 20

. AFGHANISTAN	HD/UND
PS	HD/SOVIET
PS/MR EGGAR	HD/NAD
MR BOYD	HD/DEFENCE
PS/SIR J FRETWELL	HD/MED
MR GILLMORE	HD/NEWS
MR MCLAREN	HD/CONSULAR
MR SLATER	NO. 10 DOWNING ST
HD/SAD	ASSESSMENTS STAFF CAB OFF
HD/PUSD	RESIDENT CLERK