



HUE

cc: PC R07

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

11 January, 1985

AFGHAN AID FOR UK MINERS

Thank you for your letter of 10 January about the action taken with the Afghan Charge d'Affaires over his participation or that of his staff in a ceremony to present a cheque to the NUM.

The Prime Minister has noted this.

(C.D. Powell)

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Prime Minister  
CDP 10/11 (2)



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 January 1985

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Dear Charles,

Afghan Aid for UK Miners

As I mentioned on the telephone, the Daily Mail reported on 7 January that the Afghan Charge would present a "substantial cheque" to the NUM, purportedly from the Afghan trade unions.

We therefore summoned the Charge this afternoon. The Head of Protocol Department drew his attention to the Daily Mail report, and said that we assumed there was no foundation in this. If this report was correct, his participation in or presence at any such ceremony would be a clear contravention of Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which states that diplomats have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs of the State in which they are serving. Such participation would therefore be unacceptable to us and could have serious consequences.

The Charge claimed that the press report was misleading, in that the money came from a non-governmental organisation, namely the workers of Afghanistan. The Embassy and its staff were not directly involved in the matter. We expressed gratitude for this assurance but repeated that the participation or presence of any member of the Afghan Embassy would be unacceptable to us. The Charge said that no diplomat would hand over the cheque, nor had the meeting been arranged by the Embassy. But if the organisers were to invite him to attend, he could not refuse either to do so or to send an observer. We therefore repeated that the presence of any member of the Embassy at the ceremony would be unacceptable. We looked to the Charge not to support it by his presence. In response, the Charge repeated that it was not a government matter and that there was "no need" for him to hand over the cheque. He added that he would try not to go.

We understand that a cheque will be handed over at a ceremony at 1530 tomorrow at which Mr Ron Brown MP and others of the Friends of Afghanistan Association will be present. It seems likely from this afternoon's meeting that neither the Charge nor his deputy will now hand over the cheque. But one or the other may still be present.

/Recommendations

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Recommendations for further action, if necessary, will be put to Ministers following tomorrow's ceremony. For the moment our News Department will merely confirm if asked that the issue has been raised and, if asked in what terms, will say no more than that we have made our views clear to the Afghan Charge in London.

*Yours ever,*

*Peter Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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10 JAN 1985

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