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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 January, 1985

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CDP *10/1*

Dear Charles,

Afghan Aid for British Miners

Following my letter of 10 January about the action we proposed to take to prevent the Afghan Charge from personally handing over a cheque to the NUM, you may wish to have an account of what actually happened on 11 January when the Afghan cheque was presented to the NUM. I gave you a preliminary account by telephone that evening.

Reliable press contacts have told us that a cheque for £10,000 (as well as the promise of a gift of a substantial quantity of dried fruit, said to be 10,000 tonnes (sic)) was given to a member of the Yorkshire NUM by a Mr Mohammed Arif, a leading member of the Friends of Afghanistan Association. The donation was purportedly from Afghan Trade Unionists. Mr Ron Brown MP and Mr Bob Parry MP were present at the ceremony. The former complained that "FCO pressure" had prevented the Afghan Charge from attending. None of our press contacts spotted the presence at the ceremony of any member of the Afghan (or any other) Embassy. The tenor of Mr Brown's comment and the fact that no member of the Afghan Embassy seems to have been on the podium suggests that the warning given to the Afghan Charge on 10 January achieved its objective.

I am copying this to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and Michael Reidy (Dept of Energy).

For me,

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

Peter Ricketts

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