



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KABUL 7726

EXDIS

E.O. 12065: GDS 10/28/85 (BLOOD, ARCHER K.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR AF US
SUBJ: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AMIN

REF: KABUL 7645

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY. EXCEPT FOR THE EXPRESSION OF A STRONG INTEREST IN U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, I DID NOT SUCCEED IN SOLICITING FROM PRESIDENT AMIN ANY SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS OF STEPS THE DRA OR THE USG MIGHT TAKE IN THE INTEREST OF IMPROVING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. AMIN DID, HOWEVER, EMPHASIZE HIS PERSONAL DESIRE FOR AN IMPROVEMENT OF U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS AND IN THIS CONNECTION REFERRED TO THE DRA'S FOREBEARANCE IN NOT MAKING ANY PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE U.S. HE CLAIMED THE DRA'S FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS, E.G., RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA, HAD BEEN TAKEN COMPLETELY ON ITS OWN, WITHOUT ANY CONSULTATION WITH THE SOVIETS; MAINTAINED THAT AID FROM THE SOVIET UNION WAS GIVEN WITHOUT STRINGS OR PRECONDITIONS; AND DISAVOWED ANY INTENTION OF AGGRESSION AGAINST NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. AMIN DEFENDED THE DRA ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS BY ATTACKING THE RECORD OF THE ZAHIR AND DAUD REGIMES. I LEFT WITH

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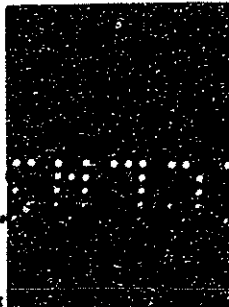
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THE IMPRESSION THAT AMIN WELCOMED THE CURRENT, LESS

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CONFRONTATIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S.; THAT HE WAS NOT SERIOUSLY PRESSING FOR ANY EARLY CONCRETE STEPS BY THE USG, AS IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE; AND THAT HE WOULD BE CONTENT FOR THE TIME BEING WITH A POLITE BUT LIMITED RELATIONSHIP WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD REFRAIN FROM EXACERBATING BY WORD OR ACTION.
END SUMMARY.

3. U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS. I HAD FORTY MINUTES ALONE WITH PRESIDENT HAFIZULLAH AMIN ON THE MORNING OF OCT. 27. AFTER THE PHOTOGRAPHS WERE TAKEN, WE GOT DOWN SPEEDILY TO BUSINESS. FOLLOWING THE TALKING POINTS PROPOSED IN REFTEL, I MENTIONED THOSE RECENT AREAS (ARIANA DC-10, NARCOTICS CONTROL, ETC.) WHERE WE HAD FOUND WE COULD WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE DRA IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST AND WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. AMIN DID NOT COMMENT ON ANY OF THE EXAMPLES I CITED, BUT MERELY NODDED HIS ASSENT. HE THEN WENT ON, WITH CONSIDERABLE ELOQUENCE, TO STRESS HIS PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS, EXPRESSING HIS AFFECTION FOR THE U.S. ACQUIRED DURING HIS RESIDENCE IN OUR COUNTRY. AMIN MADE A PARTICULAR POINT OF DRAWING MY ATTENTION TO THE DRA'S FOREBEARANCE IN REFRAINING FROM PUBLIC ATTACKS ON THE U.S. EVEN WHEN AFGHANISTAN IS ATTACKED BY YOA. HE SAID, WE HAVE DELIBERATELY RESISTED THE TEMPTATION TO RESPOND IN KIND. HE DRA DOES NOT WANT TO DO ANYTHING TO "BLACKEN THE NAME OR FAME OF THE U.S." HE SAID THAT EACH COUNTRY MUST ACT IN IN ITS OWN INTEREST BUT WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE U.S. AND AFGHANISTAN COULD CONTINUE TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS THAT COULD SERVE THEIR OWN INTERESTS BUT BE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT.

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4. THE DRA CUSTOMARILY PUBLICIZES THE COURTESY CALLS OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATS ON AMIN. MY CALL WAS THE FIRST ITEM ON THE ENGLISH AND DARI TV NEWSCASTS OCT. 27.

5. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. AMIN MADE A STRONG PITCH FOR U.S. "MATERIAL ASSISTANCE." AFGHANISTAN, HE SAID, IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF FOREIGN AID. EVEN A SMALL PORTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE WHICH THE U.S. PROVIDES WORLDWIDE WOULD BE OF VERY GREAT HELP TO

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AFGHANISTAN. THE DRA WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY ASSISTANCE, NO MATTER HOW SMALL. AMIN SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO PUBLICIZE U.S. AID TO AFGHANISTAN, ADDING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE BUILDINGS IN AFGHANISTAN WITH PLAQUES DENOTING THAT THEY HAD BEEN BUILT THROUGH U.S. AID. HE ALLOWED AS HOW "YOUR PHILOSOPHY" CAN MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. TO HELP IN SOME AREAS AND "OUR PHILOSOPHY" MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR AFGHANISTAN TO ACCEPT SOME KINDS OF AID. STILL, HE SAID, WE COULD DOUBTLESS FIND AREAS WHERE WE COULD WORK TOGETHER.

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6. AMIN PRETENDED TO EXPRESS BEMILDERMENT AS TO WHY MORE U.S. AID IS NOT FORTHCOMING. REFERRING TO U.S. COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT IN THE SOVIET UNION, HE SAID THAT SURELY THE U.S. HAS MORE PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIET UNION THAN WITH AFGHANISTAN. SOMEWHAT SLYLY HE SAID THE U.S. CONGRESS IS PREPARED TO GIVE TEN MILLION DOLLARS TO SO-CALLED AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN BUT IS NOT WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO ALLEVIATING THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM, POVERTY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN ITSELF.

7. WHEN I NOTED THE PRACTICAL BARRIER POSED BY THE PELL-STONE AMENDMENT TO THE CONTINUATION OF U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, AMIN SAID HE HAD FELT GREAT ANIMOSITY ON THE PART OF THE AMERICANS WITH WHOM HE HAD TALKED IN THE DAYS AFTER AMBASSADOR DUBS' DEATH. IT WAS UNFORTUNATE, HE SAID, HOW MUCH MISUNDERSTANDING HAD ARISEN, IMPLYING THAT THE MISUNDERSTANDING WAS PRIMARILY ON THE U.S. SIDE. NEITHER AMIN'S WORDS NOR DEMEANOR SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO CONSIDER ANY FORMULA WHICH WOULD RECOGNIZE DRA RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S DEATH. AS FOR THE SECURITY OF U.S. PERSONNEL IN AFGHANISTAN, SAID AMIN, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR. "NOBODY IS OUT TO KILL AMERICANS."

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8. NON-ALIGNMENT. AFTER SAYING THAT THE USG HOPED TO BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN A FRANK AND OPEN DIALOGUE ABOUT THE

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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, I NOTED OUR CONCERN THAT AFGHANISTAN'S PREVIOUS GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT NOW APPEARS TO HAVE GONE BY THE BOARD AND MERGED INTO POSITIONS WHICH TO US SEEM VIRTUALLY INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THOSE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA. AS EXAMPLES, I CITED THE DRA'S RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA AND THE DRA POSITION ON PUERTO RICO. IN REPLY, AMIN SAID THAT THE DRA'S DECISIONS WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH KOREA, ITS SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS WITH EGYPT AND ITS RECOGNITION OF THE POLISARIO HAD BEEN TAKEN WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH ANY COUNTRY. IN FACT, AMIN SAID, THE SOVIET UNION HAD BEEN TAKEN UNAWARES BY THESE DECISIONS.

9. FOLLOWING UP ON THE MENTION OF SOUTH KOREA, I ASKED AMIN IF HE HEARD THE NEWS THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAD BEEN KILLED THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. AMIN SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD OF IT. I DESCRIBED THE SHOOTING IN A WAY TO SUGGEST TO HIM A PARALLEL BETWEEN THE SHOOT-OUT IN KABUL ON SEPT. 14 WHICH HAD LEFT HIM THE UNDISPUTED RULER OF THE SAUR REVOLUTION. IF AMIN FELT ANY COLLEGIAL ASSOCIATION WITH PARK, HE DID NOT SHOW IT. HE MERELY SAID THAT "TERRORISM IS TO BE DEPLORED WHEREVER IT OCCURS."

10. AMIN SAID SOVIET AID TO AFGHANISTAN WAS GIVEN WITHOUT STRINGS OR PRECONDITIONS. THE SOVIET UNION HAS NEVER ASKED AFGHANISTAN TO TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT AFGHAN RELATIONS WITH ANY OTHER COUNTRY, WHETHER IT BE THE U.S., INDIA, PAKISTAN, IRAN OR CHINA. IF BREZHNEV HIMSELF SHOULD ASK HIM TO
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TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE, SAID AMIN, HE WOULD NOT HESITATE TO SACRIFICE EVEN ONE SECOND OF HIS LIFE IN OPPOSITION TO SUCH A REQUEST.

11. EXTENT OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN. WHEN I SAID THAT ANOTHER OF OUR CONCERNS WAS THE GROWING SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN, AMIN REPLIED THAT SOVIET AID WAS INCREASING AND NECESSARY BECAUSE THE DRA COULD NOT MAINTAIN ITSELF VERY LONG AGAINST FOREIGN INTERFERENCE WITHOUT THIS SOVIET AID. HE DID NOT CHALLENGE MY ASSERTION THAT THE USG WAS NOT AIDING

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12. HUMAN RIGHTS. IN RESPONSE TO MY CITATION OF THE DRA'S RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS AS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IMPACTING ON U.S.- AFGHAN RELATIONS, AMIN ATTACKED THE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD OF THE PREVIOUS ZAHIR AND DAUD REGIMES. THE SAUR REVOLUTION, HE SAID, HAD OVERTHROWN A REGIME WHICH HAD EXISTED FOR THE PROFIT AND WELL-BEING OF ONE FAMILY. NINETY-EIGHT PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN SACRIFICED FOR THIS ONE FAMILY. UNDER MOHAMMOZAI RULE MANY PEOPLE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED, TORTURED AND EXECUTED, BUT NOT ONCE HAD THE VOA RAISED ITS VOICE IN PROTEST. AMIN SAID HE COULD CATEGORICALLY ASSERT THAT NOT ONE PERSON WOULD BE IMPRISONED OR EXECUTED IF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD CEASE. WITH A TWISTED GRIM, HE SAID HE FOUND IT SURPRISING THAT THE U.S., A STAUNCH BELIEVER IN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, WOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SO-CALLED NON-ISLAMIC NATURE OF THE AFGHAN REGIME WHICH WAS ONLY TRYING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY TO PERMIT ALL AFGHANS TO PRACTICE ANY RELIGION OR NON-RELIGION THEY CHOSE.

13. IMPRESSIONS. THE MAN IS IMPRESSIVE. HIS SURVIVAL TO DATE IS BY ITSELF IMPRESSIVE, AS IS THE AIR OF QUIET SELF-CONFIDENCE HE EXUDES. CLEARLY, HE IS AWARE OF THE MORTALITY RATE OF AFGHAN LEADERS; SEVERAL TIMES HE SAID
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"EVEN IF I AM KILLED TOMORROW." HE MASKS HIS RUTHLESSNESS AND TOUGHNESS QUITE WELL BY HIS SOFT-SPOKEN MANNER. IN

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REMARKABLE CONTRAST TO HIS TURGID PUBLIC SPEECHES, HIS PRIVATE DISCOURSE IS REFRESHINGLY FREE FROM MARXIST CANT AND CLICHES. HIS ENGLISH IS QUITE GOOD AND VERY EASY TO UNDERSTAND. ONLY ONCE DID HE SEEM TO HAVE DIFFICULTY IN EXPRESSING HIMSELF AND THAT WAS WHEN, PERHAPS IN AN ATTEMPT TO CONVEY GREAT SINCERITY, HE WAS DECLAINING HOW HE COULD NEVER SACRIFICE AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE TO ANY FOREIGN DEMANDS, INCLUDING FROM THE SOVIETS.

14. I THINK HE WANTS AN IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS. HIS REASONS COULD BE VARIED: SOVIET COACHING; A LONG-RANGE HEDGE AGAINST OVER-DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVIET UNION; CONCERN OVER THE TROUBLE WHICH OPEN U.S. ANTIHOSITY CAN CREATE FOR HIS REGIME; CONVERSELY, AN INTEREST IN BRINGING ABOUT THE DOUBTS AND CONFUSION WHICH FRIENDLIER U.S. RELATIONS COULD SOW AMONG THE SUPPORTERS OF THE INSURGENCY, THE PAKISTANIS, IRANIANS AND SAUDIS; A GENUINELY FELT NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

15. I DO NOT THINK THAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE AMIN REALISTICALLY EXPECTS ANY SUBSTANTIAL FORWARD MOVEMENT IN U.S.-AFGHAN RELATIONS, SUCH AS THE RESUMPTION OF AID. MY GUESS IS THAT HE WILL BE CONTENT FOR THE TIME BEING WITH THE LESS RANCOROUS DISCOURSE WE ARE HAVING WITH HIS GOVERNMENT, AGREEING TO AVOID CONFRONTATIONAL ACTIONS PROVIDED WE DO THE SAME. IN THIS CONNECTION HE SECONDED WITH SOME ACERTY MY OBSERVATIONS THAT SOMETIMES TWO COUNTRIES CAN WORK TOWARD A BETTER RELATIONSHIP SIMPLY BY REFRAINING FROM DOING EACH OTHER MISCHIEF. PERHAPS, THIS IS ALL WE SHOULD STRIVE FOR, AS WE ASSESS AMIN'S STAYING POWER BOTY VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS AND THE INSURGENTS AND AS WE TRY TO MAINTAIN A

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LIMITED PRESENCE TOWARD THE TIME WHEN THERE MIGHT ONCE AGAIN BE SOME SCOPE FOR A LARGER AND MORE ACTIVE U.S. ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN. BLOOD

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