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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 1524
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 3415
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 6697
RUSBKB/AMEMBASSY KAFUL PRIORITY 0452
BT

S E C R E T STATE 364282

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, XD, US, UR
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER ON AFGHANISTAN

File

1. ENTIRE TEXT IS SECRET.
2. POST SHOULD IMMEDIATELY CONVEY LETTER IN PARA 3 FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN TO PRIME MINISTER GANDHI. NO SIGNED ORIGINAL WILL FOLLOW.
3. BEGIN TTXT:

DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:

-- WHEN YOU VISITED WASHINGTON IN JUNE 1985, OUR DISCUSSIONS MARKED A NEW STEP FORWARD IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND INDIA. WE BOTH RESOLVED TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK FURTHER PROGRESS. THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO DO SO, AND OUR GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES HAVE BEEN HARD AT WORK TOWARD THIS GOAL. YET, I ALSO THINK THAT REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE ON IMPORTANT ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO OF US IS ESSENTIAL. IT IS WITH THIS THOUGHT IN MIND THAT I AM WRITING TO YOU NOW ON TWO SUBJECTS: AFGHANISTAN AND U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN.

-- YOUR CONTACTS WITH THE SOVIETS ON THE AFGHAN PROBLEM AFTER YOUR VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST YEAR WERE MOST WELCOME. YOUR REMARKS IN HARARE THAT YOU WISHED AN END TO INTERVENTION AND INTERFERENCE IN AFGHANISTAN BY ALL PARTIES INDICATES YOUR CONTINUING CONCERN WITH THIS IMPORTANT PROBLEM. I BELIEVE YOUR UPCOMING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARY COULD HELP TO ADVANCE THE PROCESS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT AND HOPE YOU FIND OCCASION TO RAISE THE ISSUE.

-- IN REPEATED CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS THIS YEAR, WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THEM OUR INTEREST IN A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT OF THE AFGHANISTAN CRISIS. A MILITARY SOLUTION IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE. WE DO NOT SEEK "TO BLEED" THE SOVIETS IN AFGHANISTAN BY PROLONGING THE WAR. WE HAVE NO DESIGNS ON AFGHAN TERRITORY AND RECOGNIZE SOVIET INTERESTS IN A SECURE SOUTHERN BORDER JUST AS WE RECOGNIZE AFGHAN DESIRES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION. WE HAVE INDICATED OUR

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WILLINGNESS TO SERVE AS A GUARANTOR OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. OUR OBJECTIVE IS CLEAR, NAMELY TO RESTORE AFGHANISTAN'S NON-ALIGNMENT, INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY THROUGH THE PROMPT AND COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES.

-- OUR RESUMED ARMS SALES RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN, AS YOU KNOW, IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY ESCALATING SOVIET MILITARY ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN AND A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN MILITARY PRESSURE ON PAKISTAN. SOVIET AND REGIME CROSS-BORDER VIOLATIONS OF PAKISTANI AIRSPACE AND TERRITORY HAVE INCREASED BY 150 PER CENT OVER LAST YEAR, WITH A TOTAL OF 650 INCURSIONS ALREADY THIS YEAR. THIS PROVOCATIVE ACTION HAS IN TURN STIMULATED PAKISTANI INTEREST IN AN ENHANCED EARLY WARNING CAPABILITY ON ITS WESTERN BORDER. NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE AS TO WHAT MIX OF SYSTEMS WOULD BEST SUIT PAKISTAN'S NEEDS, BUT LET ME ASSURE YOU WE WILL KEEP IN MIND YOUR GOVERNMENT'S CONCERNS AS WE MOVE TO A DECISION ON THIS.

-- QUITE OBVIOUSLY, THE PROMPT AND COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE ENTIRE REGION, INCLUDING INDIA -- AN INTEREST STRONGLY SHARED BY THE UNITED STATES. I BELIEVE THAT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IS WITHIN REACH, IF ONLY MOSCOW WILL AGREE TO A REALISTIC TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL. THE CURRENT SOVIET PROPOSAL OF A THREE TO FOUR YEAR TIMEFRAME IS UNTEENABLE AND APPEARS DESIGNED TO LEGITIMIZE A PROLONGED OCCUPATION AND TO ACHIEVE A THINLY-CLOAKED MILITARY SOLUTION. THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET PUT ASIDE PCPES FOR A MILITARY SOLUTION IS SUGGESTED BY THEIR PHONY "WITHDRAWAL" OF LAST MONTH. AS YOU KNOW, SOVIET UNITS WERE INTRODUCED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF WITHDRAWING THEM IN FRONT OF THE CAMERAS.

-- CURRENTLY, THE UN-SPONSORED NEGOTIATIONS ARE STALEMATED OVER THE LENGTH OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL TIMETABLE. THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS IN AUGUST PRODUCED NO FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THIS KEY ISSUE AND NO SUBSEQUENT ROUND HAS BEEN SCHEDULED. I URGE YOU TO USE YOUR TALKS WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARY TO DISCUSS THE NEED TO HASTEN RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE WHICH IS OF SUCH GREAT CONCERN TO PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

WARM REGARDS,

RONALD REAGAN END TEXT.

4. KABUL MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. WHITEHEAD

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