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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3726

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INFO RUSBKB/AMEMBASSY KABUL 6183

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 4830

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3386

BT

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MILITARY HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, MARR, PK, AF, US

SUBJ: USCINCCENT VISIT TO PAKISTAN : THE PAK

-- MILITARY ON AFGHANISTAN (C)

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT

2. SUMMARY: IN SEPARATE MAY 29 MEETINGS WITH USCINCCENT GEN GEORGE B. CRIST AND AMB RAPHEL, PAK CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF GEN AKHTAR ABDUL RAHMAN KHAN AND VICE CHIEF OF THE ARMY STAFF GEN ASLAM BEG, EXPRESSED SIMILAR CONCERNS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE SHIFTING THE FOCUS OF THEIR STRUGGLE FOR AFGHANISTAN. THE TWO GENERALS EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO FOSTER CONTENTION AMONG THE MUJAHEDDIN IN HOPES OF STRENGTHENING NAJIB'S POSITION IN KABUL. THERE ARE ALSO SIGNS THAT, AS A FALLBACK POSITION, THE SOVIETS ARE PLANNING TO SEPARATE AND CONTROL AFGHANISTAN NORTH OF THE HINDU KUSH. AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN KABUL WOULD BE THE BEST ASSURANCE AGAINST BIFURCATION. INDIA, WHICH HAS A COMMON INTEREST WITH THE USSR IN PRESENTING AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN AFGHANISTAN, WILL WORK TO INFLUENCE EVENTS THERE BUT IS NOT EXPECTED TO ENJOY MUCH SUCCESS. IRAN IS ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE AFGHAN SHIAS. AN ISLAMIC AFGHAN REPUBLIC COULD BE EXPECTED TO JOIN WITH PAKISTAN, TURKEY AND "AN IRAN COME TO ITS SENSES" IN AN ISLAMIC LEAGUE TO OPPOSE SOUTHWARD SOVIET EXPANSION. END SUMMARY.

3. THE FOLLOWING IS AN AMALGAM OF VIEWS TAKEN FROM SEPARATE MEETINGS BUT IN WHICH THE TWO PAKISTANI GENERALS WERE IN SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT: WESTERN FOREIGN POLICY IN GENERAL IS HISTORICALLY REACTIVE. THAT IS AGAIN THE CASE IN AFGHANISTAN WHERE MOST DID NOT EXPECT THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL, MOST NOW UNIVERSALLY ACCEPT IT AND NO ONE IS PLANNING FOR WHAT THE NEXT SOVIET MOVE MIGHT BE. THE SOVIETS WERE

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UNABLE TO RESIST THE PRESSURES TO QUIT AFGHANISTAN BUT THEY WILL NOW SEEK OTHER WAYS TO CONTROL SOME OR ALL OF THAT COUNTRY. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH RUSSIA'S WELL-KNOWN PERSISTENCE AND ITS HISTORIC DESIRE TO EXPAND TOWARD THE WARM WATERS OF THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE ARABIAN SEA.

*/ Nonesense  
Durrani/Feeer Fendone/Kalton*

4. AFTER OCCUPATION, MOSCOW'S PREFERRED OPTION IS FOR NAJIB AND THE PDPA TO RETAIN POWER IN KABUL. THE SOVIETS RECOGNIZE THAT NAJIB WOULD NOT RULE MUCH MORE THAN THE CAPITAL AND PERHAPS ONE OR TWO OTHER LARGE CITIES AND THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO KEEP HIM SUPPLIED PRINCIPALLY OVER THE SALANG PASS OR VIA HERAT-KANDAHAR-GHAZNI, IF NAJIB RETAINS CONTROL OF THOSE CITIES. RECOGNIZING THAT THE MUJAHEDDIN MUST REMAIN UNITED IF THEY HOPE TO UNSEAT NAJIB, THE SOVIETS ARE ALREADY WORKING TO SOW DISSENSION AND CONFLICT AMONG THE MUJ FACTIONS. THEY HAVE ALSO BEGUN TO PRESSURE PAKISTAN TO CUT OFF THE AID PIPELINE TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS. THE GENERALS FEEL THAT ASSAULTS AT THIS TIME ON LARGE AFGHAN CITIES AND PROBABLE MUJAHEDDIN DISAGREEMENTS OVER THEIR CONTROL COULD PROVOKE PRECISELY THE SORT OF STRAINS WHICH THE SOVIETS ARE SEEKING. THEREFORE THE MUJAHEDDIN WOULD DO BETTER TO CONSERVE THEIR STRENGTH UNTIL AFTER THE SOVIETS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR WITHDRAWAL. THEN THEY COULD ENVELOP KABUL, CUT NAJIB'S SUPPLY LINES TO RUSSIA AND PRESSURE NAJIB TO NEGOTIATE HIS OWN DEPARTURE. (COMMENT: WE DOUBT THAT THE PAKS REALLY BELIEVE THAT NAJIB CAN BE UNDONE PEACEFULLY OR THAT THE MUJAHEDDIN WILL AVOID INTERNAL CONFLICT. THEIR ADHERENCE TO THIS PARTY LINE SUGGESTS A DEEP-SEATED CONCERN THAT PROLONGED POST-WITHDRAWAL VIOLENCE COULD LEAD TO THE SPLITS AMONG THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS WHICH THE SOVIETS SEEM TO BE COUNTING ON. END COMMENT.)

5. REFUGEES SHOULD DELAY THEIR RETURN AT LEAST UNTIL NAJIB'S POWER HAS BEEN RESTRICTED TO KABUL. EVERY ADULT MALE REFUGEE IN PAKISTAN IS A POTENTIAL FIGHTER BUT, ONCE BACK IN AFGHANISTAN, HE COULD BE PLACED IN CAMPS BY THE PDPA. THERE HE WOULD BE DEPENDENT UPON NAJIB'S GOVERNMENT, SUBJECT TO HIS INFLUENCE AND POTENTIALLY RECRUITABLE FOR RESISTANCE AGAINST THE MUJAHEDDIN.

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6. IF, AS EXPECTED, NAJIB CANNOT HOLD OUT IN KABUL THE SOVIETS MAY TURN TO A SCHEME TO SEPARATE THE NORTHERN PORTIONS OF AFGHANISTAN ABOVE THE HINDU KUSH AS SOME KIND OF AUTONOMOUS OR INDEPENDENT ENTITY CLOSELY TIED TO THE SOVIET UNION. THIS REGION HAS ALWAYS BEEN SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF AFGHANISTAN PHYSICALLY AND BY CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES. SINCE THEIR INVASION THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN WORKING TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC TIES TO THE USSR. THE GAS PIPELINES RUN NORTH, AS DOES THE FLOW OF TRADE. MOST OF THE INHABITANTS ARE ETHNICALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY CLOSER TO THE MUSLIM AREAS OF THE SOVIET UNION THAN TO THE PATHANS OF AFGHANISTAN SOUTH OF THE HINDU KUSH. THIS LATTER POINT ALSO WORKS AGAINST THE SOVIETS AS MANY AFGHAN UZBEKS ARE THE SONS AND GRANDSONS OF MEN WHO FLED THEIR HOMELANDS DECADES AGO TO ESCAPE THE EXPANSION OF SOVIET POWER. THESE UZBEKS WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO RISE AGAINST THE INVADERS. THE GENERALS BELIEVE THAT ONLY AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC IN KABUL WOULD HAVE THE APPEAL NECESSARY TO FOIL SOVIET PLANS FOR THE NORTH.

7. OF ALL THE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES IN KABUL THE ONE WHICH THE SOVIETS FEAR MOST IS AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC. INDIA FEELS THE SAME WAY AND, THOUGH FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, MOSCOW AND DELHI HAVE A COMMON INTEREST IN PREVENTING ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT, EVEN A MODERATE ONE, IN AFGHANISTAN. DELHI IS EXPECTED, THROUGH ITS LARGE INDIAN MINORITY WHICH IS VERY INFLUENTIAL IN COMMERCIAL AREAS, TO SUPPORT NAJIB OR SOME OTHER NON-ISLAMIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, INDIA IS COMING LATE TO THE GAME AND THE PAK GENERALS DO NOT EXPECT INDIA'S EFFORTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL AS THEY ARE SEEN BY THE MUJAHEDDIN AS PRO-SOVIET. WHATEVER INDIA'S MOTIVATIONS, THE GENERALS BELIEVE THAT THEIR LONG-TERM FRIENDSHIPS WITH MOSCOW AND THEIR RELIANCE ON THE SOVIETS FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEIR WEAPONRY AND SPARES MAKE INDIA ESPECIALLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET PRESSURES TO ACT AGAINST PAKISTAN OVER AFGHANISTAN. AS INDIA'S ANTIPATHY TOWARD PAKISTAN IS A MATTER OF RECORD THE GENERALS FELT THAT ONLY MINIMAL SOVIET PRESSURE WOULD BE REQUIRED .

8. IRAN IS ALSO ACTIVE AMONG ITS SHIA PARTISANS IN AFGHANISTAN, PARTICULARLY IN THE PREDOMINANTLY SHIA HAZARAJAT REGION. TEHRAN HAS SENT AT LEAST TWO DELEGATIONS TO MEET WITH HAZARA LEADERS. BOTH TIMES THE SOVIETS ISSUED PROTESTS TO THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT. THE PAKS DO NOT EXPECT THE IRANIANS TO ESTABLISH MUCH INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN, IF ONLY BECAUSE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION IS SUNNI AND WOULD RESIST THE INFLUENCE OF IRAN'S SHIA AYATOLLAHS.

9. PAKISTAN EXPECTS THAT AN AFGHAN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC WOULD JOIN WITH PAKISTAN, TURKEY AND IRAN, ONCE THE

LATTER "COMES TO ITS SENSES" IN AN ISLAMIC ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BLOC WHICH COULD SERVE AS A BARRIER TO REGIONAL SOVIET AMBITIONS. IT ALSO COULD ACT AS A RIVAL TO INDIAN PLANS FOR REGIONAL SUPREMACY.

10. COMMENT: CLEARLY THE PAKS FEEL THAT A NEW PHASE HAS STARTED IN THE PERENNIAL GREAT GAME. THEY EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO PURSUE THEIR CENTURIES-OLD GOALS BY OTHER MEANS. THE GENERALS ARE CONCERNED THAT THE US BE AWARE THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR AFGHANISTAN IS NOT OVER AND WILL REQUIRE CONTINUED AMERICAN VIGILANCE AND SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT RETAIN DOMINANT INFLUENCE OVER AFGHANISTAN OR ITS NORTHERN PROVINCES DESPITE THEIR MILITARY WITHDRAWAL.

11. KABUL AND MOSCOW MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. RAPHEL.

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