

GR 600

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

FM KABUL 260435Z

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NO 254 OF 26 AUGUST 80.

INFO ROUTINE ISLAMABAD, NEW DELHI, WASHINGTON, MOSCOW,
UKDEL NATO AND MODUK (DI4).

MR 27/8
[Signature]

INFO SAVING TO UKMIS NEW YORK.

MY TELEGRAM NO 252 : AFGHANISTAN : SITREP.
POLITICAL.

AN ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH BABRAK KARMAL AS CHAIRMAN AND THE MINISTERS OF PLANNING, FINANCE, COMMERCE AND TRANSPORT AND TOURISM AS MEMBERS : BUSINESSMEN WILL ALSO BE ELECTED TO THE COUNCIL.

2. A NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED TO THE SUPREME COURT : ALL BUT THREE ARE SAID TO BE NON-PARTY MEMBERS. SENIOR APPOINTMENTS HAVE ALSO BEEN ANNOUNCED AT SEVERAL MINISTRIES AND AS GOVERNORS OF SEVERAL PROVINCES.

3. AN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED WITH THE SOVIET UNION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO KABUL AIRPORT, INCLUDING THE EXTENSION OF THE RUNWAY AREA BY 1600 METRES, INSTALLATION OF NAVIGATIONAL AIDS AND MODERNIZATION OF THE TERMINAL. THE WORK WILL BE STARTED THIS YEAR, LAST 2 YEARS AND COST FOUR AND A HALF MILLION ROUBLES.

4. PROPAGANDA AGAINST ALL ENEMIES OF THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES BUT PAKISTAN FIGURES NOTICEABLY LESS : SHE IS NOW MAINLY ACCUSED OF ALLOWING HER TERRITORY TO BE USED BY THE ARCH ENEMIES, US AND WORLD IMPERIALISM (OFTEN INCLUDING BRITAIN BY NAME) AND CHINESE HEGEMONISTS.

5. A GIFT OF 10 TONS OF COMMODITIES, INCLUDING MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND PRINTING MATERIALS, HAS ARRIVED FROM THE GDR.
INTERNAL SECURITY.

6. REPORTS CONTINUE TO COME IN OF FIGHTING IN THE AREA BETWEEN SHAKADORA AND CHARIKAR, AND IN PAGHMAN, AND NUMBERS OF REFUGEES FROM THESE VILLAGES ARE COMING TO KABUL. THESE REFUGEES ARE MAINLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND MOST FIND SHELTER WITH PEOPLE OF THEIR OWN TRIBE IN KABUL. THERE ARE INDICATIONS ALSO OF A NUMBER OF BUSINESSMEN MOVING WITH THEIR FAMILIES FROM PROVINCIAL CENTRES, WHICH THEY CONSIDER INCREASINGLY UNSAFE, INTO KABUL. THE SECURITY SITUATION IN KABUL IS UNCHANGED. IF THERE IS ANY PATTERN TO SOVIET MILITARY TACTICS AT PRESENT, IT SEEMS TO BE TO HIT HEAVILY AT AREAS SURROUNDING THE MAJOR TOWNS, PERHAPS TO PRODUCE AND MAINTAIN A SAFE CORDON : SEVERAL REPORTS SAY THAT AFTER AN ATTACK ON A VILLAGE, ALL THE CATTLE ARE TAKEN AWAY, PRESUMABLY TO REMOVE BOTH THE INCENTIVE TO RETURN AND THE FOOD SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR INSURGENTS.

CONFIDENTIAL

17

CONFIDENTIAL

7. THE ROAD TO JALALABAD HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SEVERAL DAYS, CONINCIDING WITH REPORTS OF FIGHTING AROUND THE CITY. THE SCORES OF TRUCKS CARRYING THE MELON CROP TO PAKISTAN HAVE RETURNED TO KABUL AND MELON PRICES HAVE DROPPED BY 30 PERCENT. THERE WAS AN AIR AND GROUND BOMBARDMENT 3 DAYS AGO AT QALAT, ABOUT 150 KMS THIS SIDE OF KANDAHAR.

8. AIR ACTIVITY OVER KABUL IS GENERALLY LIGHT BUT SEVERAL CONVOYS OF MILITARY VEHICLES HAVE MOVED OUT OF THE CITY OVER THE LAST 3/4 DAYS.

9. THERE IS A RENEWED SPATE OF RUMOURS ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN MILITARY ADVISERS WORKING WITH AFGHAN MILITARY UNITS : THEY ARE SAID TO BRING GREATER EXPERIENCE OF GUERILLA TACTICS THAN THE SOVIETS. THERE ARE SOME 35 CUBANS KNOWN TO BE IN KABUL BUT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE STUDYING PERSIAN AT THE UNIVERSITY.

10. A GERMAN TOURIST WAS SHOT AND KILLED A FEW DAYS AGO SOME 5 KMS THIS SIDE OF JALALABAD. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER HE WAS SHOT BY INSURGENTS OR CAUGHT IN THE CROSS-FIRE.

11. PRESS DISTRIBUTION.

PARA 4 IS NOT SUITABLE.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO UKMIS NEW YORK.

HOWELL.

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

AFGHANISTAN

STANDARD

SAD

EESD

NAD

MED

NENAD

FED

SED

SEAD

UND

ERD

ECD (E)

WED

TRED

CABINET OFFICE

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

2
CONFIDENTIAL