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Authority *MD 969031*
By *SW* NARA Date *8/24/06*



Department of State *XR POL 18 PAK*
TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSEE-00 CIAE-00 INR-09
NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 EUR-10 PM-03 DODE-00 RRR-01

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P R 160740Z FEB 73
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2044
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMCONSUL KARACHI

*Refile 1121
2-16-73*

[REDACTED] KABUL 1121

SUBJ: AFGHAN-PAKISTANI RELATIONS - CURRENT PROBLEM IN
BALUCHISTAN AND NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

POL AFG-PAK

REF: KABUL 1118

XR POL PAK

1. MY COMMENTARY ON REFTEL:

XR POL 18 PAK

A. RGA IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER SITUATION IN NEIGHBORING
PAKISTAN FOR DOMESTIC AS WELL AS FOREIGN POLICY REASONS.
LIKE ITS PREDECESSORS, SHAFIQ GOVERNMENT IS NOT REPEAT NOT
COMMITTED TO NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) OR WALI KHAN IN NORTHWEST
FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP) AND EVEN LESS TO VARIOUS BALUCHI
FACTIONS, WHATEVER RGA PUBLIC STANCE. RGA WELL AWARE THAT IF
"PUSHTUNISTAN" EVER EMERGED, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
WEIGHT WOULD BE ON OTHER SIDE OF PRESENT BORDER. BUT AFGHAN
DOMESTIC POLITICS REQUIRES "LOYALTY OATH" TO PUSHTOONS AND TO
BALUCHIS TO LESSER EXTENT BECAUSE CONSERVATIVE AFGHAN ELEMENT,
WHOSE SUPPORT CONSIDERED VITAL BY REGIME, USES IT EFFECTIVELY
TO MAINTAIN HOLD OVER ANY AFGHAN GOVERNMENT. THUS, RGA

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REMAINS PRISONER OF THIS ISSUE.

B. SHAFIQ, WHO HAS MADE FIRST SYSTEMATIC EFFORT TO TACKLE NAGGING ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATION, IS PROBABLY MORE VULNERABLE THAN PREDECESSORS AS ATTEMPTED REFORMS INCREASINGLY THREATEN CERTAIN VESTED INTERESTS AND THOSE AFFECTED WOULD BE ONLY TOO GLAD TO TURN ON SHAFIQ UNDER COVER OF SEEMINGLY "PATRIOTIC" SLOGAN. ON OTHER HAND, IF, IN EVENT ACTUAL FIGHTING BREAKS OUT IN PAKISTAN, SHAFIQ WERE TO GIVE INTO PRESSURES AND WERE TO ACT IN SUPPORT OF DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS IN NWFP AND BALUCHISTAN, HE WOULD DRAIN AFGHAN'S SCARCE RESOURCES AND INCUR DANGER OF CONFRONTATION WITH PAKISTAN WITHOUT MUCH REAL HOPE OF SERIOUSLY AFFECTING SITUATION. IN THAT EXTREME CASE, ONLY TRIBAL GROUPS WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IF DUBIOUS TOOLS OF INTERVENTION AS REGULAR ARMED FORCES ARE HELD BY US IN LOW ESTEEM. FORMAL MILITARY INTERVENTION WOULD THEREFORE COMBINE MINIMUM OF EFFECTIVENESS WITH MAXIMUM OF DANGER TO AFGHANISTAN, BUT LATTER FACT WOULD NOT DIMINISH PRESSURE ON SHAFIQ BECAUSE AFGHAN OPINION CONSIDERS PATHANS (PUSHTOONS) JUST AS SUPERIOR TO PUNJABIS AS PAKISTANIS CONSIDER PUNJABIS - EQUALLY WRONGLY - SUPERIOR TO HINDUS.

C. THEREFORE WHETHER SHAFIQ WERE TO ACT IN SUCH SITUATION OR NOT, SURVIVAL OF HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE SERIOUSLY ENDANGERED AND, WHAT IS PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT TO HIM, ENTIRE REFORM MOVEMENT WHICH AFGHANISTAN NEEDS SO BADLY WOULD GO DOWN DRAIN.

D. FURTHERMORE SHAFIQ AND KING SEE IN EVENT OF SUCH INTERVENTION BEING FORCED UPON AFGHANISTAN, FRIGHTFUL DANGERS OF NUMEROUS CONFLICTING FOREIGN INTERESTS, INTERVENTIONS, FUNDS, AND ARMS TEARING AFGHANISTAN APART. THEY VIEW SOVIET, IRANIAN, AND INDIAN MANIPULATIONS AS PARTICULARLY PROBABLE AND DANGEROUS, AND SEE THEM AS POTENTIAL THREAT TO STABILITY OF ENTIRE REGION.

E. ALTHOUGH DEPTH OF THEIR APPREHENSION MAY WELL BE EXAGGERATED, THEIR FEARS AS SUCH SEEM TO BE WELL FOUNDED.

F. BHUTTO IS WELL KNOWN AND THEREFORE DEEPLY DISTRUSTED HERE AND HIS LATEST MOVES HAVE ONLY INCREASED HIS REPUTATION FOR UNPREDICTABILITY AND FOR PREFERRING SHORT-TERM PERSONAL OR

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POLITICAL GAIN OVER LONG-RANGE CONSOLIDATION. NEVERTHELESS, NOBODY HERE THINKS THAT BETTER ALTERNATIVE EXISTS IN PAKISTAN.

G. SHAFIQ AND UNDOUBTEDLY MONARCH THEREFORE STRONGLY HOPE THAT ALL THOSE COUNTRIES WHO DESIRE STABILITY THROUGHOUT THE REGION, NOTABLY US AND IRAN, MIGHT PREVAIL UPON BHUTTO NOT TO LET SITUATION DETERIORATE ANY FURTHER.

H. PRESENT SITUATION, WHILE CLEARLY UNDESIRABLE AND DANGEROUS, FROM RGA POINT OF VIEW, IS STILL ACCEPTABLE AND CERTAINLY PREFERABLE TO RETURN TO AYUB TYPE OF MILITARY REGIME. RGA BELIEVES THAT, IF SERIOUS CONFLAGRATIONS WERE TO OCCUR, SUCH A MILITARY REGIME WOULD EVENTUALLY PUSH BHUTTO ASIDE. IN TURN, IT WOULD NOT ONLY CAUSE TURMOIL IN AFGHANISTAN BUT WOULD IN OPINION OF AFGHANS SEEK GREATER NATIONAL UNITY IN PAKISTAN UNDER AFGIS NOT ONLY OF CENTRALISM BUT OF RENEWED CONFRONTATION WITH INDIA. AS SHAFIQ POINTED OUT (REFTEL) HE BELIEVES PAKISTAN MILITARY IS AGAIN AT LEAST MENTALLY MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION, HOWEVER UNREALISTIC. PAST INDO-PAK WARS HAVE CREATED MUCH HARDSHIP AND GREAT FEARS IN AFGHANISTAN. MOREOVER IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT AFGHANS, WHO HAVE NO LOVE FOR PAKISTAN, NEVERTHELESS PREFER BAKS AT KHYBER PASS TO INDIANS WHOM THEY WOULD FEAR EVEN MORE AS MORE POWERFUL AND EVEN LESS TRACTABLE.

I. RGA THEREFORE CONCLUDES THAT ENTIRE REGION AND ESPECIALLY AFGHANISTAN FACES GREAT INSTABILITY OR WORSE SHOULD SITUATION IN PAKISTAN FURTHER DETERIORATE AND THEREFORE HOPES THAT INTERESTED POWERS MAY SUCCEED IN ARRESTING SUCH DEVELOPMENT.

2. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THESE AFGHAN ASPIRATIONS FIT WELL USG POLICY IN THIS AREA AND THEREFORE DESERVE DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY AS I DO NOT ENVISAGE EXCESSIVE EXPENDITURE OF OUR PHYSICAL OR DIPLOMATIC CAPITAL. GDS
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