



JD

CP

cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 March, 1982

A

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your letter of 25 February.

I shall be delighted to receive a deputation on the occasion of Afghanistan Day. A suitable time would be 1800 on 18 March. Perhaps you could be in touch with my office about the details. I had heard earlier from Lord Cranborne that it might be useful if I issued a message to your Committee on 21 March. I am happy to do this and enclose one now. Please feel free to publish this in connection with your activities.

Yours
Peter

Peter Temple-Morris, Esq., M.P.

PM



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 March 1982

Prime Minister

Agree

Yes (1) To send message ?

(2) To receive later Temple-Morris's
delegation for 15 minutes at

Yes 10-30 on 19 March?

Dear John,

A.J.C. $\frac{5}{3}$ Afghanistan Support Committee

Thank you for your letters of 19 and 26 February.

Lord Bethell has been the driving force behind the idea of nominating 21 March (the Afghan New Year, Nowruz) as Afghanistan Day. A resolution which he tabled has been adopted by the European Parliament, and the MPs in the Afghanistan Support Committee now appear to have secured some 100 signatures for an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons. A resolution has also been tabled before Congress, which, we have been told by the US Embassy, President Reagan will sign at a ceremony on 10 March.

The Afghanistan Day initiative was discussed at Brussels by Foreign Ministers on 23 February. It was decided that the Presidency should make a statement on behalf of the Ten on 21 March, and should in the meanwhile approach friendly countries to make clear the Ten's support for the initiative.

Lord Cranborne's enquiry

A message from the Prime Minister to the Afghanistan Support Committee would help to encourage public interest in Afghanistan Day. The Committee (on which there is some background below) is having an uphill struggle in the face of a certain amount of public apathy. It would be an opportunity to reaffirm internationally the Government's concern over Afghanistan. We recommend that the Prime Minister should send a message. I enclose a draft.

Mr Temple-Morris's Proposal

The proposal by Mr Temple-Morris that an all-party Parliamentary delegation accompanied by some Afghans should call on No 10 would also be a very useful way of creating publicity. Afghanistan Day

/itself falls



itself falls on a Sunday but Mr Temple-Morris explains that the call need not be on that day and indeed that there could be some publicity advantage in doing it in advance. If the Prime Minister could fit this in we think it would be worthwhile.

The Afghanistan Support Committee has approached a number of Afghans resident in this country to suggest that they should take part in whatever sort of event is arranged to mark Afghanistan Day. The Committee does not at present know who will be willing to participate. Many of the Afghans in this country have affiliations with one or other of the resistance groups based in Peshawar, but if a delegation were arranged to call on the Prime Minister they could probably be relied upon to present a united front and not to raise their political differences.

If a call is made on No 10, it would be sensible to give prominence to the Afghans in the delegation rather than to the MPs. We expect the Afghanistan Support Committee would be willing to fit in with any guidance you wish to give them on this point. We should also be able to ensure that the party includes a reasonably presentable set of Afghans.

The Prime Minister will also of course be meeting Mrs Gandhi on Afghanistan Day. Indian policy is different from our own - they consider any public pressure on the Russians to withdraw their troops to be counter productive - and the co-incidence of the two events could be considered, by some Indian commentators, to be embarrassing to Mrs Gandhi. We do not however consider this rather remote possibility to be a serious impediment to the course proposed. The date of Afghanistan Day is not of our choosing. Indeed the Prime Minister could turn her reception of the delegation to advantage in her talks with Mrs Gandhi the following day by pointing to it as evidence of the genuineness of the Government's concern over the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan Support Committee

The Afghanistan Support Committee was formed in late 1980 as an all party group whose aims were:

- a) to gain publicity for the people of Afghanistan;
 - b) to raise funds to help the Afghan refugees in Pakistan.
- Ministers have given the Committee a great deal of encouragement, and in March 1981 the FCO provided a grant in aid of £20,000 towards administrative expenses. The Committee's one full time employee is Mr Peers Carter, a former Ambassador in Kabul, who

/has put



has put a great deal of effort into establishing links with various Afghan emigre groups. He also visited Pakistan last autumn to examine the work of the voluntary aid giving agencies on the ground. The Committee decided on his recommendation to support the work of a team sponsored by the Austrian Relief Committee, which runs a dispensary in a number of refugee camps and also finances the supply of some medical assistance which is taken into Afghanistan itself.

The Committee has not however been particularly successful in generating public interest in the UK, and has not yet mounted any national fund raising campaign. A fund raising sub-committee has now been formed, chaired by Sir Ian Gilmour. Their first step has been to mount a fund-raising campaign directed at major companies. In the longer term they would like to advertise more widely, but before doing so they hope to build up the funds which would be needed.

The prospects for raising money do not seem good at the moment, but a message from the Prime Minister and a call on No 10 as proposed by Mr Temple-Morris would certainly help to boost their fund raising activities.

Yours ever

J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Lord Cranborne

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

It is now more than two years since the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in violation of the UN Charter and Afghanistan's independent and non-aligned status. During that time the Afghan people have waged a brave struggle against an occupying force of over 90,000 Soviet troops. Many have sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, and many civilians, including women and children, have been killed and injured by attacks on their villages. We must not forget them; nor must we forget the three million refugees who have fled from their homes to Pakistan and Iran. The human suffering has been colossal, as I saw for myself when I visited Afghan refugees in Pakistan last year.

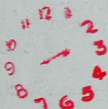
Enclosures—flag(s).....

21 March is Afghanistan Day. For Afghans it is the start of the traditional New Year. For us it is the beginning of Spring. I hope that the long winter of Soviet occupation will soon end and that the Afghan people will take heart from today's associations with rebirth and renewal.

On this day the British Government renews its calls on the Russians to withdraw from Afghanistan, and to allow the Afghan people to choose their own future free from outside interference.

M

- 4 MAR 1982



file BK
9 March 1982

I did ring you yesterday but I am afraid you had already left for Washington. You might well ring, but in case you don't I thought you would like to know that the Prime Minister has agreed to see Peter Temple-Morris and a delegation from the Afghanistan Support Committee on Thursday, 18 March at 1800 hours.

It will be quite in order for you to come along if Peter Temple-Morris has no objection.

CAROLINE STEPHENS

The Lord Bethell

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cc CS
IG

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 March 1982

Afghanistan Support
Committee

Thank you for your letter of 4 March.

The Prime Minister agrees:

- (a) to send a message to the Committee on the lines of the draft you enclosed;
- (b) to receive a delegation led by Mr. Peter Temple-Morris, M.P. for 15 minutes at 1030 on 19 March.

Now 1800 on 18 March.

We shall now be writing to Peter Temple-Morris about both matters.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

EH



2/ps

FROM
**NICHOLAS
BETHELL**

TELEPHONE
01-402-6877

73 SUSSEX SQUARE
LONDON W2 2SS

John Coles Esq.,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON S.W.1.

4th March 1982

Dear Mr Coles,

MR 9/3
f.a.

I know that, as former head of the Foreign Office's South Asia desk, you will have taken on board the proposal that the Prime Minister should receive a group of Afghans, either from the London community or from the resistance groups in Pakistan, to mark the designation of March 21st as Afghanistan Day.

I just thought that I would let you know in this connection that, as the original mover of the Afghanistan Day resolution in the European Parliament, I have today received an invitation to attend a ceremony in Washington next Wednesday, when President Reagan will sign the United States Congress resolution on this matter.

I shall be flying to Washington on Monday with my colleagues Mr Egon Klepsch (Germany, Christian Democrat), Mr Gerard Israel (France, RPR) and Mr Carlo Ripa di Meana (Italy, Socialist).

It would be very nice indeed if I could take with me to Washington the news that the Prime Minister will in fact be receiving the Afghans to mark Afghanistan Day. I am sure that I shall be asked in Washington what the British Government is doing to mark this occasion.

Telehand.
MR 8/3

With all best wishes,

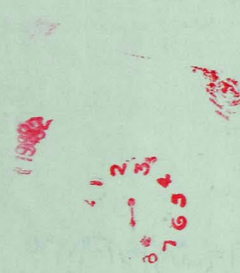
Yours sincerely

Nicholas Bethell





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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 February 1982

Afghanistan Support Committee

In my letter of 19 February I reported an approach from Lord Cranborne seeking a message from the Prime Minister on the occasion of Afghanistan Day (21 March).

I now enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr. Peter Temple-Morris MP, Chairman of the Afghanistan Support Committee. You will see from this that the earlier idea of a march or rally appears to have been abandoned and that the Committee are now requesting that the Prime Minister should receive an All Party Parliamentary deputation, together with some Afghan representatives.

I should be grateful for advice by 3 March. It would be helpful if this could include a brief account of the activities of the Afghanistan Support Committee to date and, if possible, some indication of who the Afghan representatives in any deputation to the Prime Minister might be.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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25 February 1982

Home: House of Commons.

Dear Prime Minister,



Afghanistan Day - Sunday 21st March

R262
h-m 15/3

I am writing as Chairman of the Afghanistan Support Committee which as you can see has wide all Party Support both within and outside Parliament as well as the full blessing of the Foreign Office. An Early Day Motion is on the Order Paper calling for the 21st March to be celebrated as Afghanistan Day and the idea is to arrange activities throughout the Western Alliance to keep the plight of Afghanistan alive.

As far as the USA is concerned, both Houses of Congress have passed a Resolution in similar terms of the Early Day Motion and on, or before, the 22nd March, I understand President Reagan will be having some sort of major publicised function to draw attention to the matter generally and the Resolution of Congress.

Incidentally, similar Resolutions have gone through the European Parliament with an overwhelming majority as well as I believe the Bundestag and possibly other European Parliaments.

We were wondering whether you might be prepared to briefly receive some sort of All Party Parliamentary deputation for a few minutes perhaps together with some Afghan representatives. We would naturally not wish to take up your time as we feel you are in complete agreement with us on this matter but if you were able to pose with us for a Press photograph it would be a marvellous boost for the cause. It will also coincide with at least what President Reagan is doing.

It doesn't have to be on the 21st March and in a way it would have been nice to have done it before then to have the chance of a photograph in the Sunday newspapers.

AFGHANISTAN SUPPORT COMMITTEE. 18 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON WC2N 0HR, 01-379 7218.

PRESIDENT: THE RT. HON. THE LORD GLADWYN GCMG GCVO CB. **VICE PRESIDENTS:** THE RT. HON. ROLAND MOYLE M.P. THE RT. HON. GEOFFREY RIPPON M.P. THE RT. HON. WILLIAM RODGERS M.P. **DIRECTOR:** PEERS CARTER CMG. **CHAIRMAN:** PETER TEMPLE-MORRIS M.P. **PATRONS:** THE REVEREND ALAN BOOTH OBE. THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT BOYD OF MERTON CH PC. SIR RICHARD CAVE. FRANK J. CHAPPLE ESQ. THE RT. HON. JO GRIMOND M.P. THE REVEREND LESLIE H. HARDMAN. THE RT. HON. THE LORD HOME OF THE HIRSEL KT PC. THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF INCHCAPE. THE RT. REVEREND GRAHAM LEONARD, BISHOP OF LONDON. SHAIKH MUBARAK AHMAD. THE RT. HON. DAVID OWEN M.P. THE RT. HON. LORD RAWLINSON OF EWELL QC. THE RT. HON. LORD STEWART OF FULHAM CH PC. DR. M.A. ZAKI BADAWI. **TRUSTEES:** HAMBROS BANK TRUSTEES DEPARTMENT. REGISTERED CHARITY No 282353.

The Early Day Motion has already been signed by around 100 MPs without trying too hard and by the 21st March will be signed by many more.

I do hope you might be able to manage this for us.

With all good wishes

*Am ready,
Peter.*

PETER TEMPLE-MORRIS
Chairman
Afghanistan Support Committee

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

*Afghanistan**file*

19 February 1982

Afghan Support Committee

Lord Cranborne, who I believe has a connection with the above organisation, has enquired whether the Prime Minister would be willing to send a message of goodwill to the committee on 21 March when, I understand, it is organising a march.

I should be grateful for advice and, on the assumption that it is in the affirmative, for a draft of a possible message.

AJC

John Holmes Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.