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E.O. 12958, as amended
October 11, 2007



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TELEGRAM



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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3422

NEW DELHI 0787

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TAGS: PFOR, IN, US
SUBJ: MRS. GANDHI'S ATTACKS ON THE US

SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR LODGED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN A FORMAL PROTEST OVER CONTINUED UNJUSTIFIED INDIAN ATTACKS ON THE US. HE TOLD CHAVAN THAT THE INDIAN LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE US MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO PROCEED IN ANY COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE AMBASSADOR TOLD CHAVAN ON JANUARY 15 THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD ASKED HIM TO MAKE A FORMAL PROTEST. THE AMBASSADOR RECALLED THAT INDIAN ALLEGATIONS HAD BEGUN LONG AGO AND HE HAD RAISED THEM WITH CHAVAN BEFORE. THEN THERE WERE THE ANTI-FASCIST CONFERENCES FOLLOWED BY THE CONGRESS PARTY MEETINGS AT CHANDIGARH AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS IN MADRAS ONLY YESTERDAY. THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT THE US PROTEST WAS NOT SOMETHING QUICKLY CONSIDERED. WASHINGTON MULLED IT OVER FOR SOME TEN DAYS AND THEN ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO COME BACK FROM BOMBAY TO SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER. THE OUTCOME OF THESE ALLEGATIONS IS A GENERAL ATTITUDE IN WHICH THE LACK OF CONFIDENCE MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR THE US TO PROCEED ON ANY PROGRAMS IN INDIA. COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REQUIRES MUTUAL TRUST AND THAT IS SIMPLY NOT PRESENT. MRS GANDHI SPOKE OF FOREIGN SCIENTISTS USING INDIANS AS GUINEA PIGS. THIS

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IS UNJUSTIFIED; THE EMBASSY HAS SUBMITTED THE LIST OF JOINT SCIENTIFIC PROJECTS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, ASKING IF ANY SHOULD BE DELETED. WE WILL DO AWAY WITH ALL OF THEM IF THEY ARE A CAUSE OF CONTROVERSY.

2. THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD BEEN PRESENT WHEN CHAVAN MET THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON AND CHAVAN HAD SAID NOTHING ABOUT THESE ALLEGATIONS. P.N. DHAR HAD SAID THAT WHEN HE AND CHAVAN MET THE SECRETARY IN PARIS IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THERE WERE NO DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN US. BUT THESE PUBLIC ALLEGATIONS CONTINUE NONE- THELESS. WE REACH A POINT AT WHICH WE DON'T FEEL WE CAN CONTINUE TO COOPERATE IF ATTACKS CONTINUE. WE HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT IF THE GOI HAS ANY EVIDENCE OF US INTERFERENCE WE WILL ACT TO ELIMINATE IT. I WOULD RESIGN.

3. THE AMBASSADOR SPOKE OF HIS SENSE OF FUTILITY IN INDIA. NO ONE CAME OUT WITH A GREATER DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. WE HAVE COMMON INTERESTS. INDIA WISHES TO BUILD ITS INDUSTRY AND WORK WITH US BUSINESS TO OBTAIN TECHNOLOGY AND GREATER PRODUCTION. INDIAN EXPORT MARKETS ARE IN THE US AND THE GRAIN TRADE WHICH GOES ON AND WHICH WILL CONTINUE MAKES GOOD RELATIONS IMPORTANT. THE AMBASSADOR SAID FRANKLY HE BELIEVED THAT ATTITUDE IN WASHINGTON AND ON THE HILL WAS THAT THE BOOK WASN'T WORTH THE CANDLE. WHY SHOULD WE KEEP STICKING OUR NECKS OUT TO TAKE SUCH LUMPS? THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS NOT HERE TO MAKE THREATS. WE MUST ACCEPT A GENERAL FALLING APART. HE HAD MADE EFFORTS TO ATTRACT CONGRESSMEN TO INDIA AND A NUMBER HAD COME. INVARIABLY WHEN THEY ARRIVED SOMETHING HAPPENED TO MAKE HIM WISH THEY HAD NOT COME. SENATOR MCGOVERN WAS A REAL FRIEND AND WHEN INDIA LOSES THAT FRIEND IT MAKES LIFE MORE DIFFICULT IN THE CONGRESS.

4. CHAVAN REPLIED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN ADDRESSING THE CONGRESS PARTY AT CHANDIGARH. HER POINT WAS THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO BE AWARE "OF THE SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY" AND OF "WHAT HAPPENS IN THE WORLD". SHE MENTIONED CHINA AND OF COURSE SHE MENTIONED WHAT WAS SAID IN THE SENATE. THE AMBASSADOR INTERRUPTED TO SAY

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THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF WHOM SHE MEANT AND CITED THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT THE SAME COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN VIETNAM AND CHILE WERE TRYING IN INDIA. CHAVAN INSISTED THAT SHE SPOKE ONLY OF GENERAL EXTERNAL FORCES; THE AMBASSADOR AGAIN INTERRUPTED TO SAY HER REFERENCE TO ANGOLA MADE IT CLEAR WHOM SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT. CHAVAN REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT IN PARLIAMENT THAT INDIA WANTED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US, SAYING "THINGS READ WHERE THEY DON'T EXIST." HE SAID THAT MRS GANDHI CONSIDERS SHE MUST WARN PEOPLE, MAKE THEM AWARE OF WHAT POSSIBLE DANGERS THERE MIGHT BE. THE AMBASSADOR INTERRUPTED ONCE AGAIN TO SAY THAT WE WOULD DOCUMENT HER STATEMENTS (CHAVAN SHOWED NO INTEREST); SHE MADE NO EFFORT TO SPARE OUR FEELINGS. HER PUGHASH STATEMENT RECALLS THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE MOSQUITO PROJECT. FOR OUR PART WE HAVE BEEN VERY CAREFUL ABOUT INDIA'S SENSIBILITIES.

5. CHAVAN CHANGED THE SUBJECT, SAYING HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE S&T SUBCOMMISSION AND THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL, RECALLING THE SECRETARY'S VIEW THAT THESE INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE INSULATED FROM DAY-TO-DAY PROBLEMS. THE AMBASSADOR ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MRS GANDHI WAS DISTURBED ABOUT REPORTS IN US NEWSPAPERS AND IN SOME CASES SHE WAS JUSTIFIED. BUT THE US COULD NOT CONTROL THE POST AND THE TIMES. CHAVAN AT FIRST EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE USG CAN PERHAPS CONTROL THE NEWSPAPERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT THEN SAID HE WAS NOT COMPLAINING AND HE CERTAINLY WOULD NOT TELL THE US HOW TO DO THIS. THE AMBASSADOR SAID IF US PRESS REPORTING WAS THE CAUSE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S PROBLEM AND SHE HOPED TO BUILD A COUNTERWEIGHT, THIS WOULD NOT WORK; IT WOULD ONLY UNDERMINE THE INDO-US RELATIONSHIP.
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