

South Asia Crisis, 1971

1. Editorial Note

According to Henry Kissinger, "When the Nixon administration took office, our policy objective on the subcontinent was, quite simply, to avoid adding another complication to our agenda." (Kissinger, *White House Years*, page 848) As events developed in South Asia, that proved to be an increasingly difficult objective to achieve. A political crisis developed in Pakistan out of Bengali demands for autonomy for East Pakistan, demands which were highlighted by the results of a general election in December 1970. The subsequent crisis, which roiled the subcontinent in conflict from March to December 1971, led to warfare between India and Pakistan, and eventuated in the transition of the east wing of Pakistan into the new nation of Bangladesh. The United States, which was using Pakistan at the time as a conduit in conducting secret negotiations with China, intervened in the crisis to try to prevent fighting between India and Pakistan. When fighting developed, the Nixon administration "tilted" toward Pakistan.

The background to the crisis in Pakistan, and the developing tensions between the United States and India are documented in a companion Internet publication, *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972. This publication also documents such bilateral issues as economic and military assistance as well as the aftermath of the crisis. In 1972 the Nixon administration had to weigh the timing of recognition of the new government in Dacca, a decision that bore on relations with Pakistan, and reestablish a working relationship with India, as the dominant power on the subcontinent. Separate internet publications document relations with Afghanistan and with Bangladesh.

2. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 1, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

Events in Pakistan today took a major step toward a possible early move by East Pakistan for independence. The following are a brief situation report and some policy considerations flowing from it.

The Situation

President Yahya Khan has announced the postponement until "a later date" of the National Assembly, which was to have begun drafting a new constitution in Dacca on Wednesday,² so the political leaders of East and West Pakistan can settle their differences. Yahya characterized the situation as Pakistan's "gravest political crisis."

The future course of events now depends largely on the decision of Mujibur Rahman and the other leaders of the dominant Awami League party in East Pakistan. A general atmosphere of tension prevails throughout Dacca, and numerous spontaneous processions and demonstrations calling for the independence of East Pakistan are reported to be underway.³ So far violence reportedly has been limited, but the potential for major destructive outbursts would seem to be great, especially if the West Pakistani-controlled provincial regime takes any heavy-handed actions against the demonstrators.

It is impossible to predict what Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League will do at this point. They are most unlikely, however, to back down from their six-point program calling for virtual autonomy. It has the strong emotional and popular backing in East Pakistan and is

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret. Sent for information.

² March 3.

³ The Consulate General in Dacca reported on March 2 on the popular reaction in East Pakistan to the announcement that the meeting of the General Assembly would be postponed indefinitely: "It would be impossible to over-estimate sense of anger, shock and frustration which has gripped people of east wing. They cannot but interpret postponement as act of collusion between Yahya and Bhutto to deny fruit of electoral victory to Bengali majority." (Telegram 567 from Dacca; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK) In response to the postponement, the Awami League on March 2 called for a hartal, or general strike in Dacca. (Telegram 564 from Dacca, March 2; *ibid.*, POL 15–2 PAK)

adamantly opposed by West Pakistani leader Z.A. Bhutto, important elements of the military and many politically aware West Pakistanis.

Rahman's six points are:

—The constitution should provide a federal and parliamentary form of government based on direct elections and universal suffrage.

—The central government would have authority only for defense and foreign affairs with all residual and other powers residing in the federating states.

—Two separate currencies which would be freely convertible should be created, although one currency would be acceptable provided that there would be adequate protection against the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan.

—Responsibility for fiscal policy should rest with the federating units and taxes would be collected by the states rather than by the central government.

—The states should maintain separate accounts for foreign exchange and would be free to conduct their own trade and aid negotiations.

—The federating units would be empowered to raise and maintain their own militia and paramilitary forces.

In terms of substantive issues, the differences between Rahman and Bhutto seem to have largely narrowed to those of foreign trade and aid. Bhutto in a speech February 28 said he felt the central government would have to retain control in these fields if its control of foreign affairs was to be realistic.

The constellation of political forces and interests in Pakistan is such that any compromise is most difficult at this point. Yahya and Bhutto are both opposed to Rahman's plan for decentralized government but they both have different and conflicting bases of support:

—Yahya's base of support is the army and economic elite. They do not want to compromise with Bhutto because they fear his platform of "equitable distribution of the wealth." They figure that the weak central government the East wants would loosen their grip on West Pakistan. The Army feels it would jeopardize security.

—Bhutto's base is the masses. He does not want to compromise with the East because he wants to control a strong central government.

The two men have different ideological outlooks—Yahya a fairly conservative approach and Bhutto a leftist and populist approach. So while they both oppose Rahman, they are also committed to not seeing each other gain a predominant position in any ensuing government.

Rahman is almost solely concerned about East Pakistan and is unwilling to compromise on the autonomy issue. Because he favors normalization of relations with India, he is in further conflict with Yahya and Bhutto who are both fairly hard-line toward India. The scope for compromise is probably minimal and Rahman could well decide that now is the best time to opt out of the Pakistani union. He clearly had

this on his mind when he talked with Ambassador Farland on Sunday⁴ and asked about U.S. aid to an independent East Pakistan and as a lever to prevent West Pakistan from intervening militarily against a succession [*secession*] movement.

President Yahya is well aware that he is risking a strong East Pakistani reaction, but presumably decided that the alternative to postponement would be even worse. He may have seen two principal alternatives: (1) postpone the session and—although he left some room for maneuver—risk an immediate confrontation with East Pakistan; or (2) hold the session, risk an immediate confrontation with his army, the West Pakistani political/economic establishment, or both, and, because he would in the end have to reject an East Pakistan autonomy constitution, a confrontation with the East Pakistanis in a few months.

Thus, Yahya is unable to compromise with Rahman or move closer to Bhutto without jeopardizing his own base of power and risking his ouster by hardline military elements who would end the move toward representative government and most likely precipitate widespread and perhaps uncontrollable disorders in West Pakistan. In short, Yahya may only feel that his only course is to cut his and Pakistan's losses.

In short, Yahya appears to have decided to risk a confrontation with East Pakistan now in the slight hope that, if he pushed all the parties to the brink, a compromise might evolve from their coming to grips with the consequences of a split-up of Pakistan. Given the sentiment within the West Pakistani political-military establishment, he may have seen no other realistic choice.

U.S. Policy

As you know, we have so far attempted to remain neutral and uninvolved. Our line has been that we favor the unity of Pakistan and that it is up to the Pakistanis to determine the future of their country. There is at least a theoretical alternative (which one part of CIA holds out) of urging Yahya to take the third of the West Pakistanis opposed to Bhutto and try to reach accommodation with Rahman, but that would provoke a sharp reaction in the West, even perhaps in the army. State is not inclined to become involved in this way. This issue is still open, however.

Beyond that, we have these questions:

—Should the U.S. be hedging its bets with East Pakistan against the possibility that East secedes?

⁴ February 28. Farland's conversation with Mujibur Rahman was reported in telegram 540 from Dacca, February 28; published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 121.

—If there is secession, how active should the U.S. be in trying to avoid bloodshed?

The contingency plan ordered in NSSM 118⁵ should be finished in the next twenty-four hours. I will send that to you as soon as it arrives with a recommendation on handling. We are after all witnessing the possible birth of a new nation of over 70 million people in an unstable area of Asia and, while not the controlling factor, we could have something to do with how this comes about—peacefully or by bloody civil war.

⁵ National Security Study Memorandum 118, directed by Kissinger on February 16 to the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, called for a contingency study to be prepared outlining the possible range of U.S. reactions to movement in East Pakistan toward secession. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 115.

3. National Security Decision Memorandum 101¹

Washington, March 2, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Agriculture
The Secretary of the Treasury
The Administrator, Agency for International Development

SUBJECT

FY 1971 Economic Assistance Program for India

The President has considered the recommendations for FY 1971 economic assistance for India, contained in the memorandum of February 2, 1971, from the Secretary of State.² The President has approved

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 365, Subject Files, National Security Decision Memoranda, Nos. 97–144. Secret. A copy was sent to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

² The Department of State recommendations, detailed in a February 2 memorandum from Secretary Rogers to President Nixon, were sent to the White House under cover of another February 2 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon which provided a brief rationale for the recommendations; published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 110.

the approximately \$150 million Title I PL 480³ program of concessional sales of surplus agricultural commodities and \$10.8 million in technical assistance. The President also has approved a grant of \$15–20 million for family planning subject to the review of progress under last year's program as proposed by the Secretary of State.

With reference to the development loans, the President has authorized an initial loan of \$170 million on the assumption that India's needs will have a high priority claim on additional funds that might become available later this fiscal year. After reviewing competing requirements for such funds, the Secretary of State at that time should seek the President's authorization before providing such additional funds.

Henry A. Kissinger

³ The Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954. (68 Stat 454, as amended)

4. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) and the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Green) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson)

Washington, March 2, 1971.

[Source: Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 40 Committee Files, 1971. Secret. 3 pages of source text not declassified.]

5. **Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**¹

Washington, March 4, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

Overnight reports from Pakistan indicate that the situation in East Pakistan is deteriorating. The following are the new developments:

—Mujibur Rahman seems to have virtually slammed the door on the possibility of East-West accommodation by categorically rejecting President Yahya's plan to hold a conference of the major political leaders on March 10.

—Mujib has admitted to several foreign correspondents "off the record" that he will announce the equivalent to independence for East Pakistan on Sunday.² He did, however, go on to say that the East and West wings should write their respective constitutions and thereafter discussions over the form of linkage could take place. [This leaves the door open to some sort of confederal relationship and is the reason we advocate—via your talking points³—not jumping too soon to recognition of East Pakistani independence.]⁴

—At least one Pakistani air force C-130 has been seen flying into Dacca and there are recurrent reports of forces being flown into Dacca via the Pakistani commercial airline and of the movement of troops from the West via ship. These reports can not be confirmed but it is known that there is pressure from some elements in the military to make a quick repressive strike against the East Pakistani leaders in hopes of cowing them and the rest of the province. [The contingency

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret. Sent for information.

² March 7.

³ Reference is to talking points developed for Kissinger in a March 6 memorandum from Saunders, Hoskinson, and Richard Kennedy to prepare Kissinger for a meeting of the Senior Review Group that day. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-052, SRG Meeting, Pakistan, 3/6/71)

⁴ All brackets in the source text.

paper⁵ says intervention is “very unlikely”. This seems less and less true. CIA working level judges that the East would respond with further violence rather than surrender.]

—The East Pakistanis in the embassy here have approached State concerning their relations with the Department following a “declaration of independence.” They expect to be expelled from the chancery and the current DCM, who is an East Pakistani, would then become the Chargé of a new embassy.

These developments just heighten my concern—which I know you fully share—of postponement of discussion of this issue. Regrettably, State just has not given this issue the attention it deserves. That is why we wrote the NSSM three weeks ago. Only because of our prodding is there a contingency paper today. As for the notion that this is not a policy issue, I can not believe that the repartition of South Asia after twenty-three years is not a policy issue of major proportions. State has not objected to dealing with this in the NSC framework so far.

⁵ Reference is to the response to NSSM 118 prepared by the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Near East and South Asia. The contingency study on Pakistan was sent to Kissinger on March 2 by Joseph Sisco as chairman of the interdepartmental group. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 1 PAK-US) It was circulated to members of the Senior Review Group on March 3 (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-052, SRG Meeting, 3/6/71) Regarding NSSM 118, see footnote 5, Document 2.

6. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, March 6, 1971, 11:40 a.m.–12:20 p.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. A briefer record of the meeting, prepared by Brigadier General Devol Brett of OSD, is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 092 (Jan–Jul) 1971.

State
 U. Alexis Johnson
 Christopher Van Hollen
 William Spengler
 Thomas Thornton
 Defense
 James S. Noyes
 Brig. Gen. Devol Brett
 CIA
 Richard Helms
 David H. Blee

JCS
 Vice Adm. John Weinel
 Col. James Connell
 NSC Staff
 Col. Richard Kennedy
 Harold Saunders
 Samuel Hoskinson
 Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

It was agreed to:

—discuss the situation with the British to see if they would take the lead in an approach to West Pakistan to discourage the use of force, if it should become necessary;

—advise our missions at Dacca and Islamabad of our thinking and instruct Dacca, if they receive an approach from Mujib on recognition of a separate East Pakistan regime, to say nothing and refer it to Washington;

—consult by telephone on Sunday, March 7 following word on Mujib's speech.²

Mr. Kissinger: I thought we might have a brief discussion of what may be ahead and what our basic choices may be. I assume we will know something tomorrow.

Mr. Johnson: We have a good interagency contingency paper.³

Mr. Kissinger: Yes, it's a very good paper.

Mr. Johnson: We're already on page 7 of that paper⁴ so far as events go. I would like to make two points. First, this is not an East-West, or a US-Soviet, or a US-Indian confrontation. The US, USSR and India all have an interest in the continued unity of Pakistan and have nothing to gain from a break-up. Second, we have no control over the events which will determine the outcome, and very little influence. We will

² Reference is to a speech Mujibur Rahman was scheduled to deliver in Dacca on March 7.

³ See footnote 5, Document 5.

⁴ Page 7 of the contingency study introduced the question of what the U.S. posture would be if the secession of East Pakistan appeared to be imminent.

know better what the issues are tomorrow after Mujibur Rahman's speech. Yahya's speech⁵ today was described by our Embassy as a mixture of sugar and bile. If the issue is postponed for a few days, we don't face any immediate problem. If Mujib should come to us and tell us he plans to make a unilateral declaration of independence and ask what our attitude would be, we would then face the issue of what to say. If Yahya carries out his declaration on the use of force against East Pakistan, we would have to decide what attitude to adopt. The judgement of all of us is that with the number of troops available to Yahya (a total of 20,000, with 12,000 combat troops) and a hostile East Pakistan population of 75 million, the result would be a blood-bath with no hope of West Pakistan reestablishing control over East Pakistan. In this event, we would be interested in bringing about a cessation of hostilities, but the question of whether we or others should take the lead remains to be seen. We are talking with the British this afternoon about the situation. Mujib has unparalleled political control, capturing 160 of the 162 seats up for grabs in the last election. And he is friendly toward the US. In West Pakistan, Bhutto is almost unparalleledly unfriendly to the US. While we have maintained a posture of hoping the country can be brought together and its unity preserved, the chances of doing so now are extremely slight. It is only a question of time and circumstances as to how they will split, and to what degree the split is complete or may be papered over in some vague confederal scheme. I plan to send something out today to give our people in Dacca and Islamabad the flavor of our thinking in terms of the pros and cons, and to instruct Dacca, if they are approached by Mujib, to stall and refer to Washington.⁶ We can then make a decision on our reply in the light of the circumstances at the time. In general, we would like to see unity preserved. If it cannot be, we would like to see the split take place with the least possible bloodshed or disorder. If Mujib approaches us, we will have to walk a tightrope between making him think we are giving him the cold shoulder and not encouraging him to move toward a split if any hope remains for a compromise.

Mr. Van Hollen: There are three possibilities for Mujib tomorrow: a unilateral declaration of independence; something just short of that—possibly a suggestion for two separate constitutions; or acceptance of Yahya's proposal that the National Assembly meet on March 25.

⁵ In a radio address on March 6, Yahya announced that he had decided to convene the National Assembly on March 25. He concluded the speech by warning that as long as he was in charge of the armed forces he would defend the integrity of Pakistan. (Telegram 1957 from Islamabad, March 6; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK) The Embassy's comments on the speech were reported in telegram 1963 from Islamabad, March 6. (Ibid.)

⁶ Telegram 38122 to Islamabad and Dacca, March 6. (Ibid.)

Mr. Kissinger: But doesn't Mujib control the Assembly?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes, but Yahya controls its convening.

Mr. Kissinger: Why wouldn't the convening of the National Assembly on March 25 be acceptable to East Pakistan? They control the Assembly and nothing can pass without them.

Mr. Van Hollen: They may interpret it as another stalling tactic by Yahya.

Mr. Kissinger: If they accept the proposal for an Assembly meeting, we have no foreign policy problem.

Mr. Johnson: I agree; the temperature drops.

Mr. Kissinger: What would be the motive for a declaration of independence?

Mr. Van Hollen: There has been movement in East Pakistan in that direction which was intensified by Yahya's postponement of the National Assembly meeting that was scheduled for last Wednesday.⁷ Also, they have interpreted Yahya's speech yesterday as being particularly hardline, blaming Mujib for the situation and threatening the use of force.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree that force won't work.

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes, but they might try.

Mr. Helms: To coin a phrase, Yahya's attitude is that he did not become President of Pakistan to preside over the dissolution of the Pakistan state.

Mr. Kissinger: What force do they have?

Mr. Helms: 20,000 troops.

Mr. Kissinger: Would East Pakistan resist? What is their population?

Mr. Johnson: 75 million, and they would resist. Also, West Pakistan would not be allowed to overfly India.

Mr. Kissinger: It would be impossible. They would have to reinforce by ship.

Mr. Johnson: They have some C-130's which could fly around India by refueling in Ceylon.

Mr. Kissinger: Ceylon wouldn't let them, would they?

Mr. Van Hollen: They do it now, but they might not if circumstances should change.

Mr. Noyes: India would put pressure on Ceylon to refuse.

Mr. Johnson: They could use their jet transports.

⁷ March 3.

Mr. Noyes: They only have 11 of limited capacity.

Mr. Kissinger: They would have to have some logistics back-up.

Mr. Noyes: They have three ships which could move 8000 men in a week's time.

Mr. Van Hollen: Despite all the problems, our mission in Islamabad estimates that Yahya is prepared to use force.

Mr. Noyes: They have 15,000 troops in Dacca.

Mr. Kissinger: You mean 15,000 of their 20,000 troops are in Dacca? They might just want to hold Dacca.

Mr. Johnson: This is not a situation which would be resolved by the use of force.

Mr. Kissinger: Doesn't contingency 3⁸ get us three weeks, if not more. If the matter goes to the National Assembly we should have several months to study it.

Mr. Johnson: In those circumstances we would have no immediate foreign policy problem.

Mr. Kissinger: If an autonomous situation develops—possibly two constitutions with some vague confederal links—would we be required to make some immediate decisions?

Mr. Van Hollen: It would depend on the West Pakistan reaction. It would probably buy us time. Something short of a unilateral declaration of independence might be accepted by West Pakistan. In that event, they would not use force.

Mr. Kissinger: How would two separate constitutions work? The National Assembly wouldn't meet? Or would meet and draft two separate constitutions?

Mr. Van Hollen: It wouldn't have to be done by the National Assemblies; the country could be operated by the provincial assemblies. The Provincial Assembly in East Pakistan could draft their constitution. Mujib in the East and Bhutto in the West would wield effective power.

Mr. Kissinger: Would East Pakistan conduct its own foreign policy?

Mr. Van Hollen: That's a moot point.

Mr. Kissinger: In any event, that's not our problem. If West Pakistan accepts a solution in which each part conducts its own foreign relations, we would go along. If West Pakistan doesn't accept such a solution, we will have to decide whether to go along and grant recognition to East Pakistan. There would be no need for us to take a

⁸ Contingency 3 of the contingency study cited in footnote 3 above outlined a U.S. response to a situation in which Pakistan rejected a unilateral declaration of independence and attempted to put down the secession by force.

stand on autonomy. If they declare independence, we face the recognition question. If autonomy is rejected, we face the problem of our positions on the use of force. In other words, we have to face the question on the use of force in independence and autonomy. We face the problem of recognition only if they declare independence. Is that a fair statement? What are your views on this?

Mr. Johnson: On autonomy, if West Pakistan does not accept that solution and seeks to use force, I think we would want to discourage the use of force. We would do the same in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence.

Mr. Kissinger: If I may be the devil's advocate, why should we say anything?

Mr. Johnson: If the West Pakistanis use force, there will be a blood-bath or, at least, a situation of great turmoil in East Pakistan. If it is quickly over, there would be no problem. But if it continues, there would be problems. The Indians, and possibly others, might feel impelled to intervene if it continued. In the short run, probably not.

Mr. Kissinger: What would we do to discourage the use of force? Tell Yahya we don't favor it?

Mr. Johnson: We would first go to the British to try to get them to take the lead. We shouldn't take the lead.

Mr. Helms: Amen!

Mr. Kissinger: Intervention would almost certainly be self-defeating.

Mr. Johnson: We have no control over developments and very little influence.

Mr. Kissinger: When is Mujib's statement?

Mr. Helms: Tomorrow at 1600 GMT.

Mr. Van Hollen: Another reason for our not taking the lead is that West Pakistan is very suspicious that we are supporting a separate East Pakistan state. If we tell Yahya to call off the use of force, it will merely fuel this suspicion.

Mr. Kissinger: The President will be very reluctant to do anything that Yahya could interpret as a personal affront. When we talk about trying to discourage West Pakistan intervention, we mean try to get another country with a history of concern in the area to do it. Would they do it in both our names?

Mr. Johnson: We're not at that point yet. We've just begun to look for someone to do it, if necessary. How it is done and the degree of our association will be decided at the time. Our objective is to discourage the use of force.

Mr. Kissinger: Will this mean that Yahya is through anyway?

Mr. Van Hollen: Not necessarily. He could still remain as President with Bhutto wielding all effective political power.

Mr. Kissinger: Yahya had counted on being in control because of the divisions in the National Assembly.

Mr. Van Hollen: Of course, the elections seriously eroded his position.

Mr. Kissinger: He had been able to play off Bhutto against East Pakistan. If East Pakistan becomes an independent state, Bhutto is in effective control in the West.

Mr. Van Hollen: Yahya will continue to represent the military establishment which is a significant political force in West Pakistan. He may retain some limited residual power.

Mr. Kissinger: In any event, we can't neglect him.

Mr. Johnson: No.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's keep that in mind.

Mr. Johnson: It would be most unwise to do anything to prejudice our relations with Yahya. To whatever degree he remains and has power, we should do what we can to help him.

Mr. Kissinger: Would it make any difference if we suggested to West Pakistan that the use of force would be unwise? You understand I don't mind having another country taking the rap.

Mr. Johnson: When we say "discourage" or "participate in discouraging" we don't mean pound the table and tell them they can't do it. We mean discuss it with them.

Mr. Helms: We don't want to get into a family fight.

Mr. Kissinger: If we could go in mildly as a friend to say we think it's a bad idea, it wouldn't be so bad. But if the country is breaking up, they won't be likely to receive such a message calmly. If we can get the British to do it, I wish them well!

Mr. Johnson: There has been no decision on our part to do anything. This is the purpose of our talks with the British.

Mr. Kissinger: If we should make an approach, we might give them an alibi, so that Bhutto could say that the Americans, by warning them against the use of force, kept West Pakistan from restoring the unity of the country.

Mr. Johnson: That's right.

Mr. Kissinger: It is essential that we discuss this with the British.

Mr. Johnson: We can't reach a decision now on how to proceed. If we can get someone else to take the lead, okay. If not, we will have to decide whether we want to do anything. I am not proposing we do anything, but it is a course of action we may have to consider.

Mr. Kissinger: I think we all see the pros and cons clearly. Alex (Johnson) and I will talk after his talks with the British. Every department will be consulted before we make any move. We will also have a chance to take the issue before the President if necessary.

Mr. Van Hollen: The British may be very reluctant to do anything. It does have some advantages, though, because the Pakistanis are not as suspicious of the British as they are of us and the British odor in Pakistan is not bad now because of their attitude toward the recent hijacking.

Mr. Kissinger: In the highly emotional atmosphere of West Pakistan under the circumstances, I wonder whether sending the American Ambassador in to argue against moving doesn't buy us the worst of everything. Will our doing so make the slightest difference? I can't imagine that they give a damn what we think.

Mr. Helms: I agree. My visceral reaction is to keep our distance as long as we can.

Mr. Kissinger: Alex (Johnson) will talk to the British and we will all consult tomorrow—unless, of course, Mujib's speech is conciliatory. What if they declare their independence? Will we get an immediate recognition request?

Mr. Johnson: Probably, but we don't have to rush. We can see what Mujib says in his approach to us. We shouldn't be the first to recognize. We will want to consult with the British first since they have interests in both East and West Pakistan.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Japanese do too; also, possibly the West Germans and the French.

Mr. Johnson: We will want to recognize eventually but not be the first.

Mr. Van Hollen: Of course, if the parting is amicable and we get a request for recognition, it would be okay.

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose the request for recognition comes to our Consul General in Dacca. What will he say?

Mr. Van Hollen: He will refer to Washington.

Mr. Johnson: I'll tell them so this afternoon, not that I think he would do anything else.

Mr. Kissinger: Option 3⁹ suggests we consult with the Indians in case a military situation develops. I wonder whether we should do that. I can see that, if there is a threat of Indian military intervention, we might wish to advise them that we think it unwise.

Mr. Van Hollen: The prospect of Indian intervention is very slim in the early stages.

Mr. Kissinger: I question too great activity on our part. We can't win anything from it, and some Pakistani leaders would be delighted

⁹ Of the contingency study.

to stick us with it. I wonder whether we should intervene with them or with the Indians.

Mr. Johnson: There is a case to be made for massive inaction.

Mr. Helms: Absolutely.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm just going through the options. The possibility of Chinese military intervention seems so unlikely.

Mr. Johnson: The paper dismisses it.

Mr. Kissinger: I assume the mention of international diplomatic intervention was put in for intellectual symmetry.

Mr. Van Hollen: That is far down the road. If a real blood-bath develops, comparable to the Biafra situation, we may want to review the picture. In such case, international attention could be focussed on the problem, but this is a long way ahead.

Mr. Johnson: In any event, we wouldn't threaten West Pakistan with any sanctions.

Mr. Kissinger: Or call our Ambassador home for consultation.

Mr. Johnson: Our Ambassador is in Bangkok for some medical problem.

Mr. Kissinger: Who is our Chargé?

Mr. Saunders: Sid Sober. He's a good man.

Mr. Johnson: Yes. We don't need to rush the Ambassador back.

Mr. Kissinger: I was really only joking. We'll be in touch tomorrow.

Mr. Johnson: I'll get something out to our people today giving them our thinking. When will we know about the speech tomorrow?

Mr. Noyes: About 5:00 a.m.

Mr. Saunders: There is a ten-hour time difference. We should know fairly early in the morning. Yahya's speech of yesterday was on the CBS 8:00 a.m. news today.

Mr. Johnson: Our Operations Center will be on the alert for the speech.

Mr. Kissinger: We'll check with each other as soon as we know about the speech—with a view to taking no action!

Mr. Helms: What's the situation at the Technical University (in Ankara) today?

Mr. Kissinger: What about the four Airmen? Do they still think they are in the University?

Mr. Saunders: We have no word. The Embassy doesn't think they are in the University and the Turks have widened their search—they went into 100 private homes last night looking for them. The demonstrations have stopped, though, and things are quieter today.

7. Editorial Note

National elections were held in India March 1–10, 1971. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Congress Party won 350 seats in the 521 seat Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. In an assessment of the election sent to Secretary Rogers on March 22, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph Sisco concluded that the election served Gandhi by "making both her party's and her own position unassailable." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 INDIA) On March 13 President Nixon sent a message to Prime Minister Gandhi congratulating her on her "landslide victory." (Telegram 42498 to New Delhi; *ibid.*) In a telephone conversation with Secretary Rogers on March 17, Henry Kissinger said that he had discussed the election over lunch that day with Indian Ambassador Jha. According to Jha: "Now that she has won, she wants good relations with us." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 367, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

8. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, March 13, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

An immediate showdown between East and West Pakistan has been averted for the time being. The prospects for a reconciliation and settlement remain poor, however, and the basic elements of the situation remain essentially unchanged.

Situation in Perspective

President Yahya and the West Pakistani military appear determined to maintain a unified Pakistan by force if necessary. The re-

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Nov 1969–July 1971. Secret. Sent for information. President Nixon put a checkmark on the memorandum to indicate he saw it.

placement of the Military Governor in East Pakistan with a tougher man, the generally harsh tone of Yahya's March 6 speech² and the explicit warning that force would be used against any move for separation are all indications in this direction. There is also evidence that the military forces in the East Wing are being gradually strengthened by troops being airlifted through Ceylon. Yahya may personally lean toward conciliation, but he must answer to the dominant hardliners in his army.

While East Pakistani leader Mujibur Rahman has stepped back a bit from a declaration of independence, the full text of his March 7 speech³ conveys a harsher tone than the initial summary reports, and it seems apparent that his retreat was tactical. He made clear that something very close to independence, i.e., "emancipation," is his goal and that his movement will not be deflected until that is achieved. Noteworthy also is the fact that Rahman quite openly took issue with Yahya, accusing him of "submitting to the declaration of a minority" [West Pakistan]⁴ and asserting that his own Awami League is the only legitimate source of authority in the country.

Our embassy in Islamabad believes that Rahman's goal remains unchanged—"emancipation" of East Pakistan from West Pakistani domination. This could still conceivably mean "full provincial autonomy" within a united Pakistan. But it is just as likely, if not more so, that Rahman has come to believe firmly that the freedom he seeks is only attainable by outright independence. His speech last Sunday would suggest an effort to achieve his goal by gradual assertion of power without risking a direct confrontation with the army that might follow a unilateral declaration of independence.

The other element in this delicate political equation—West Pakistani political leader Z.A. Bhutto—is for the moment remaining relatively quiet. Since triggering the current crisis in mid-February with his refusal to attend the constituent assembly, Bhutto has worked to consolidate further his support in the West Wing and at least to appear more conciliatory. Substantively, the differences between Bhutto and

² See footnote 5, Document 6.

³ Awami League President Mujibur Rahman addressed a rally at Dacca racecourse on March 7 and called for a continuation of the "peaceful non-cooperation" movement against the government, including the closure of all government offices and educational institutions. He said that he would consider attending the National Assembly session scheduled by President Yahya for March 25 if martial law were terminated, the troops in East Pakistan were withdrawn to their barracks, and power was returned to the elected representatives of the people. (Telegram 637 from Dacca, March 7; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK)

⁴ Brackets in the source text.

Rahman on the division of powers between the center and the provinces might be reconciled, or at least papered over, if a constituent assembly could be held. The bigger question, at this point, is whether either Bhutto or Rahman retain any genuine interest in cooperating toward settlement.

Conclusions

The coming days should tell whether Yahya and the West Pakistani military decide there are still grounds for trying to work out a political solution that would insure the continued unity of Pakistan. Yahya reportedly is going to Dacca to meet with Rahman shortly.

The following would seem to be the most likely situations that could now develop:

1. Yahya could decide not to take Rahman's challenge lying down and to retaliate, perhaps to the extent of arresting Rahman and the other leaders, and attempting to clamp a military lid on East Pakistan. There are two basic problems here: (1) Rahman has embarked on a Gandhian-type non-violent non-cooperation campaign which makes it harder to justify repression; and (2) the West Pakistanis lack the military capacity to put down a full scale revolt over a long period.

2. A static waiting game could develop with neither the army nor the civilians prepared to take a bold initiative to break the deadlock and each hoping the other will break first. This is where we are now and Rahman would probably prefer to continue like this for a while longer so that he can gradually take de facto control of East Pakistan without forcing a showdown.

3. There might be more tactical political moves by Yahya, Rahman or Bhutto designed to probe for areas of accommodation and buy more time without giving up anything. This has been the mode of operation so far but it may be that just about all of the possibilities in this sphere have been played out.

In short, the Pakistan crisis is far from over and could suddenly flare up again.

As you know, the Senior Review Group met last Saturday⁵ to consider the U.S. posture at this juncture. It was generally agreed that very little, if anything, could be gained by U.S. diplomatic intervention at this point and that the best posture was to remain inactive and do nothing that Yahya might find objectionable. The choice was basically between continuing on this course, at least until the situation jelled, and weighing in now with Yahya in an effort to prevent the

⁵ March 6; see Document 6.

possible outbreak of a bloody civil war. The case for inaction at this point is:

—It is not necessary for us to shift now to a more activist approach since Yahya knows we favor unity and is doing everything possible to achieve a political settlement.

—It is undesirable for us to intervene now since we could realistically have little influence on the situation and anything we might do could be resented by the West Pakistanis as unwarranted interference and jeopardize our future relations.

It should be pointed out that the main cost of following this approach is that it may jeopardize our future relations with East Pakistan if it becomes independent. On balance, however, it is a more defensible position to operate as if the country remains united than to take any move that would appear to encourage separation. I know you share that view.

9. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, March 15, 1971.

SUBJECT

Mujib Takes Over East Pakistan; Yahya Flies to Dacca

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced in Dacca early today, that his party, the Awami League, was taking over the administration of East Pakistan on the grounds that the party had a majority (288 of 300) in the Provincial Assembly. Mujib acted unilaterally and in defiance of President Yahya Khan's Martial Law Administration which continues to be the Government of Pakistan. The fact that Mujib's announcement contained 35 "directives" for assuming control of the administration indicates that it was a deliberate and carefully planned move.

In taking this step, Mujib has directly confronted the Yahya government but has carefully avoided an unqualified declaration of East

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–8 PAK. Confidential. Drafted by Craig Baxter (NEA/PAF) and cleared by Spengler and Van Hollen.

Pakistani independence and has based his action on the “democratic” voice of the people as expressed in the December election. The Yahya regime must react quickly to this critical move, and Yahya himself has flown to Dacca to talk with Mujib.

The options available to Yahya appear to be two, either of which would further endanger the already fragile unity of Pakistan. If Yahya acquiesces in the step, he has forfeited his martial law powers, at least in the East, and would be hard pressed to retain them in the West (see below regarding Bhutto’s speech on Sunday²). If Yahya, or others in the military, decide to resist Mujib’s action by force, East Pakistan will be engulfed in a struggle between the military and the Bengali nationalists, the outcome of which can only be eventual independence of Bengal and the breaking of all ties with West Pakistan—unless, as seems unlikely in the long run, the army can successfully contain a rebellion. Mujib’s statement called on Bengalis to resist “by all possible means” any force used against them.

In a speech in Karachi on Sunday, West Pakistan political leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto demanded that power be turned over to majority parties in each wing, Bhutto’s in the West, Mujib’s in the East. Bhutto’s speech, in fact, may have triggered Mujib’s action. It may also indicate what has been suspected for some time, that Bhutto has decided that his chances of attaining power in the West are best achieved by a split—total or nearly so—in the country. However, Bhutto has less opportunity to act than Mujib because the army is strong in the West and could probably contain a rebellion.

The day’s events cast further doubt on continued unity in Pakistan. Yahya’s response will be the most important determining factor.

² March 14.

10. **Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon**¹

Washington, March 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

The West Pakistani army has moved to repress the East Pakistan secession movement. Our embassy believes that the military probably has sufficient strength to assert immediate control over Dacca and other major cities, but is not capable of maintaining control over an extended period. This raises two immediate problems for us: (1) the safety of official and private Americans, and (2) the U.S. role, if any, in a peace-making effort. I have called a WSAG meeting for 3:00 p.m. today and will provide recommendations after that.

Safety of Americans

There are at present some 850 Americans, including 250 U.S. officials and dependents, in East Pakistan. State's plan is to make no immediate move to evacuate these people since they could be in greater danger on the streets and we have no information yet as to the situation at the airports. Our consulate, however, is seeking the protection of the local authorities, and evacuation plans—worked out earlier in the present crisis—are being reviewed for both East and West Pakistan. Military aircraft from Southeast Asia could be made available on short notice for the purpose of evacuation.

No reports have been received so far of injuries to Americans or any other foreigners in East Pakistan.

U.S. Peacemaking Role

Contingency plans on East Pakistan have been drawn up and reviewed by the Senior Review Group. For this situation, these plans present a series of theoretically possible options ranging from doing nothing other than protecting resident Americans through approaching Yahya in concert with the British and other powers, with an appeal to halt the bloodshed, if necessary using the threat of sanctions including the cessation of economic aid and military supply.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A handwritten notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

The real issue is whether we involve ourselves or not. The British may well weigh in on their own, and that has advantages for us. Beyond that, however:

—The advantage of not involving ourselves at this stage is that we do not prematurely harm our relationship with West Pakistan. We can for a time yet claim with the Easterners that the situation is too unclear there to provide a basis for action.

—The arguments for pressing Yahya to end the bloodshed would be (a) humanitarian, (b) political since this could arouse emotions like those surrounding Biafra over time and (c) diplomatic in preserving a relationship with the new East Pakistani nation of 75 million.

Comment

I shall send you recommendations after the WSAG meeting.

In addition to reviewing the evacuation plans, the group will concentrate on the two operational decisions that may present themselves:

1. Whether to approach Yahya, urging him to end the bloodshed. It is probably a bit early to make this decision today because we do not yet know whether calm will be restored in the East or whether the pattern of violence will continue and broaden. This, therefore, seems a decision for the next two or three days.

2. How to respond to a definitive announcement of East Pakistani independence. Our Consul General has standing instructions to refer any such question to Washington. The issue might remain unclear for some time if the military re-establishes control in the cities and the resistance moves to the countryside. On the other hand, our response will set the tone for our relationship with both wings.

11. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting¹

Washington, March 26, 1971, 3:03–3:32 p.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. A briefer record of the meeting was prepared in OASD/ISA by James Noyes. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 092 (Jan–Jul) 1971)

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. U. Alexis Johnson

Mr. Christopher Van Hollen

Defense

Mr. David Packard

Mr. James H. Noyes

CIA

Mr. Richard Helms

Mr. David Blee

JCS

Lt. Gen. Melvin Zais

Col. Frank W. Rhea

NSC Staff

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Mr. Harold H. Saunders

Mr. Sam Hoskinson

Mr. Keith Guthrie

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

After reviewing the situation in East Pakistan, the WSAG agreed that the U.S. should continue its policy of non-involvement in the dispute between West and East Pakistan. In particular, the U.S. should avoid being placed in a position where it could be accused of having encouraged the break-up of Pakistan. The WSAG agreed that the U.S. should delay action on any request that might be forthcoming for recognition of an independent East Pakistani regime.

The WSAG agreed that the State Department should be responsible for monitoring developments in Pakistan on a day-to-day basis and for insuring that the White House is fully informed. The State Department should insure that adequate preparations have been made to evacuate U.S. citizens should that become necessary.

Mr. Helms: *[1 line of source text not declassified]* the situation in the area of the Consulate General is very quiet but that an enormous fire has been going on for hours in the old part of the city. Very few shots or explosions have been heard. Only two of the Consulate personnel had been able to get to the Consulate building by 6:30 p.m.

[1 line of source text not declassified] Mujibur Rahman was taken into custody at 1:00 p.m. by the martial law authorities. Two of his supporters were killed when the arrest took place. *[2 lines of source text not declassified]*

[1½ lines of source text not declassified] They say that Yahya's speech Friday² night has to be heard to appreciate the venom in his voice as he described Mujibur Rahman. The fat is in the fire. Islamabad confirms that Mujibur Rahman was successfully arrested.

It is unclear what caused the collapse of the talks.

Dr. Kissinger: Yesterday it looked as though an agreement were in sight.

² March 26.

Mr. Helms: Yes, an agreement appeared near on March 24. The breakdown may have been because of Mujibur Rahman's insistence on the immediate lifting of martial law.

A clandestine radio broadcast has Mujibur Rahman declaring the independence of Bangla Desh. There are 20,000 loyal West Pakistani troops in East Pakistan. There are also 5,000 East Pakistani regulars and 13,000 East Pakistani paramilitary troops, but their loyalty is doubtful. We cannot confirm Indian press reports that a large number of Pakistani troops landed by ship. Six C-130s carrying troops were supposed to be going from Karachi to Dacca today. It will take them a long time, since they have to go via Ceylon.

There are 700 potential U.S. evacuees in Dacca and 60 or 70 in Chittagong. There has been no request for evacuation yet.

[1 paragraph (1½ lines of source text) not declassified]

Dr. Kissinger: I have no idea what caused the breakdown in talks. I was as much surprised as anyone else.

Mr. Van Hollen: One possible reason was that Yahya was unable to sell the settlement in West Pakistan. Another factor was the killing of twenty people and the resultant rise in tension.

Dr. Kissinger: Had the compromise³ [under discussion between Yahya and Mujibur Rahman]⁴ gone through, the next step toward independence couldn't have been prevented. That being the case, I don't understand why Mujibur Rahman wouldn't accept the compromise.

[omission in the source text] Will Bhutto become the dominant figure in the West?

Mr. Van Hollen: Possibly there will be a backlash in the West against Bhutto because it was he who forced Yahya to postpone the constituent assembly.

Dr. Kissinger: What do you think is going to happen?

Mr. Van Hollen: An effort will be made to prevent secession. However, the ability of the West Pakistani forces to maintain law and order in East Pakistan over the long run approaches zero. They may be able to control Dacca, but the Awami leadership will move to the countryside.

³ According to telegram 927 from Dacca, March 24, Mujibur and Yahya reached tentative agreement on March 23 on a solution that involved the immediate establishment of provincial governments, temporary continuation of the central government under Yahya, and the drafting of a constitution. The constitution would embody a division of power between the central government and the provinces in which central government control would be limited to defense, foreign affairs, and currency. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71-15 May 71)

⁴ Brackets in the source text.

Dr. Kissinger: Do you think the Awami will organize a resistance?

Mr. Van Hollen: They began to prepare for it last month.

Dr. Kissinger: If their leaders are arrested, can they continue?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes, because of the tremendous popular sentiment behind them. After all, they won 160 out of 162 of the Assembly seats from East Pakistan in the election.

Dr. Kissinger: Then the prognosis is for civil war resulting eventually in independence or for independence fairly quickly.

Mr. Van Hollen: That's right.

Dr. Kissinger: Now that Yahya has taken the lead in opposing the secession, how will he be able to back off without fighting?

Mr. Van Hollen: It will be very difficult. He was on record as early as March 6 as opposing secession.

Mr. Johnson: The question is how long he can sustain this policy.

Dr. Kissinger: How long can he supply his forces in East Pakistan?

Mr. Van Hollen: It will be very difficult to do so.

Dr. Kissinger: Do his forces have stocks in East Pakistan?

Mr. Helms: No.

Mr. Van Hollen: There is one understrength division there. It has effective control of only a part of Dacca. It is surrounded by 75 million hostile Bengalis, who could easily be stirred up, particularly if Mujibur Rahman is arrested.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the prognosis for the next few days?

Mr. Johnson: Dawn comes in Dacca at 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. our time. We will know better in one more day how much bloodletting there is likely to be.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we all agree that there is nothing we can do except evacuate our citizens if that becomes necessary?

Mr. Johnson: As of this time, that is true.

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Mr. Packard: Yes.

Mr. Van Hollen: The British are no more inclined to do anything positive. After our earlier approach Heath sent an anodyne message to Yahya. At best that is what we might get again from the British.

Mr. Johnson: We have made arrangements with them to get the reports from their people in Dacca. We are maintaining a 24-hour watch at the Department.

Dr. Kissinger: I talked to the President briefly before lunch. His inclination is the same as everybody else's. He doesn't want to do anything. He doesn't want to be in the position where he can be accused of having encouraged the split-up of Pakistan. He does not favor a very

active policy. This probably means that we would not undertake to warn Yahya against a civil war.

Mr. Johnson: I agree. If we do so, he can blame us for the break-up of his country.

Dr. Kissinger: What about recognition?

Mr. Johnson: We can drag our feet on that.

Mr. Van Hollen: We can defer a decision and lay low. A public request would make things more difficult. We should certainly not be the first to recognize.

Mr. Johnson: Our principal concern is the Americans who are there. Thus far, the disturbances have not taken any anti-American tone. The best thing for Americans to do right now is to stay home. We have a warden system, with radio communications. Our evacuation people have been in touch with Pan American and TWA to tell them that we might want some planes. They have also contacted the Pentagon, JCS, and CINCPAC about the possible use of military aircraft. If the airport is available, we can get our people out. We are going to ask Islamabad this afternoon about the possibility of getting West Pakistani troop support to get our people moved out.

Dr. Kissinger: What happens to the aid shipments that were diverted to West Pakistan?⁵ Are they on the way now?

Mr. Van Hollen: They have almost certainly reached Karachi.

Dr. Kissinger: The problem is that West Pakistan now owes East Pakistan for these shipments. This question will have to be settled later.

Mr. Van Hollen: We will probably have to make it up.

Dr. Kissinger: Are you sure we can't get into any problems domestically?

Mr. Van Hollen: No, we made arrangements [for compensation to East Pakistan].⁶

Dr. Kissinger: Our judgment on representations to Yahya [against trying to suppress the secession] is that they would serve to make a record for international and domestic opinion and that they would be money in the bank in East Pakistan. However, we don't need to make

⁵ In response to a request from the Government of Pakistan, a decision was reached in Washington on March 1 to divert to West Pakistan 150,000 tons of wheat intended for disaster relief in East Pakistan. The request was triggered by grain shortages and rising prices in West Pakistan, and U.S. agreement to the request was conditioned upon the understanding that Pakistan would make commercial purchases before the end of 1971 to replace the grain that was diverted. (Memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger, March 1; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71)

⁶ All brackets from this point are in the source text.

a gesture to domestic opinion, and we can't judge what international opinion is like. It might, however, help us in East Pakistan.

Mr. Van Hollen: In the present situation I don't think it would put much money in the bank. If we get a public appeal for recognition, we will have a problem.

Dr. Kissinger: What should we do in that case?

Mr. Van Hollen: Go slow. This will be a problem for our relations with Yahya.

Dr. Kissinger: I talked to the Indian Ambassador the other day. He said that the Indians preferred Pakistan to remain united because of the pressure an independent Bengal would create.

Mr. Van Hollen: I think all the principal countries (the Soviet Union, India, and the U.S.) feel that the integrity of Pakistan is in their interest.

Dr. Kissinger: China would be different.

Mr. Van Hollen: No, it wouldn't. The Indians have a problem because of the Bengali sentiment in India.

Dr. Kissinger: Secession might encourage communal separatism.

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: I take it we are not competing with India in East Pakistan. It doesn't matter if they steal a march on us.

Mr. Van Hollen: No, [it doesn't matter].

Dr. Kissinger: This seems to be a straightforward operational problem. We can let Alex [Johnson] handle it. There are no major interdepartmental differences. (to Johnson) I will keep in close touch with you.

Mr. Van Hollen: The situation in West Pakistan may possibly be worse from our standpoint than in East Pakistan because of the suspicion in the West that the U.S. is behind separatism.

Mr. Johnson: Certainly Bhutto won't discourage that impression.

Dr. Kissinger: Yahya doesn't believe that.

Mr. Van Hollen: He has been told enough times that we are not supporting separatism.

Dr. Kissinger: Is there more suspicion of us than of the British?

Mr. Van Hollen: Much more.

Dr. Kissinger: What would we stand to gain from the break-up of Pakistan?

Mr. Van Hollen: In the eyes of the Pakistanis we somehow want to weaken Pakistan.

Mr. Saunders: This is a case of smear politics being exploited for personal gain.

Dr. Kissinger: Should we send a message to Yahya on this?

Mr. Van Hollen: We have made this point to him again and again.

Mr. Johnson: It would not be a good idea at this time. Yahya would think we were encouraging separatism.

Lt. Gen. Zais: We have looked into the possible availability of military planes in case commercial aircraft cannot be used because the East Pakistanis took their people out of the control tower.

Dr. Kissinger: That would make it difficult to evacuate by commercial aircraft.

Lt. Gen. Zais: It would certainly be a problem.

Dr. Kissinger: Can anyone land now?

Lt. Gen. Zais: It would be possible to land. We could get four C-141s with seats in Westpac. They could be launched out of Utau. From there it is a two-hour flight to Dacca. We would have control personnel on the first plane. After they got there, we could bring the evacuees out fast. We could get everyone in two roundtrips.

Dr. Kissinger: Doesn't this make it probable that evacuation will have to be by military aircraft?

Mr. Johnson: No commercial plane would go in under these conditions.

Dr. Kissinger: We will have to make our plans on that basis [i.e., using military aircraft].

Lt. Gen. Zais: The field is under the control of the West Pakistanis.

Mr. Johnson: Have we been in communication with their air force?

Col. Rhea: The last communication we had was three or four days ago.

Mr. Johnson: Can't the tower at Bangkok determine whether there is anyone at Dacca?

Col. Rhea: The Pakistani Air Force has people operating the tower. They said they might be able to handle six flights per day.

Mr. Johnson: All this suggests we might be able to use commercial aircraft if their communicators could give us some help.

Mr. Packard: That would be all right with me.

12. **Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State**¹

New Delhi, March 27, 1971, 1400Z.

4416. Subj: GOI Reaction to East Pakistan Developments.

1. At Foreign Secretary Kaul's request, I called on him afternoon March 27. DCM and Joint Secretary Ray, Pakistan Division, MEA, also present.

2. Foreign Secretary began by handing me copy of Foreign Minister's statement made in Lok Sabha earlier in day. (Text and subsequent developments in Lok Sabha reported septel.)² Kaul said Foreign Minister had been criticized by members of all parties on the basis his statement was too cold. Foreign Minister had had to intervene and state there was no doubt that the Government of India's sympathy was with the people of East Pakistan who were being suppressed. Kaul said GOI was deeply concerned at developments. It now appeared that Yahya's attempt at a settlement had been a facade in order to allow time for the transport of additional troops to East Pakistan.

3. Kaul said GOI information was that [garble] meeting that Yahya had had was with Bhutto who had objected to acceptance of Mujib's six points.³ Latest information, to which Kaul said he did not know whether to give credence or not, was that casualties ran into the tens of thousands.

4. Kaul said GOI was concerned about its own borders. There could be a threat to India's security. It had to be expected that they

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK. Confidential; Priority. Repeated to Islamabad, London, CINCSTRIKE for POLAD, and USCINCMCAFSA.

² In his statement in parliament, Foreign Minister Singh described developments in East Pakistan and accused the Pakistan army of suppressing the people of East Pakistan. (Telegram 4414 from New Delhi, March 27; *ibid.*) On March 31 Prime Minister Gandhi introduced a more strongly worded resolution in the Lok Sabha. The resolution, adopted by the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, expressed "deep anguish and grave concern at recent developments in East Bengal" and alleged that "a massive attack by armed forces, despatched from West Pakistan, has been unleashed against the entire people of East Bengal with a view to suppressing their urges and aspirations." (Telegram 4677 from New Delhi, March 31; *ibid.*)

³ The six-point program of the Awami League, drafted by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, called for virtual autonomy for East Pakistan within a confederated state with the central government exercising control over only defense, foreign policy, and currency, with limited powers of taxation. The six-point program is included in the Awami League's 1970 election manifesto. (Sheelendra K. Singh, et al., eds., *Bangla Desh Documents*, Vol. I, Madras: B. N. K. Press, 1971, pp. 66–82)

would have an unusually large influx of refugees. GOI, he said, were prepared to make their contribution toward the care and feeding of such refugees. However, they were deeply concerned that the magnitude of the problem would considerably exceed their ability to cope with it.

5. Kaul said he would be grateful if I could get in touch with my government and ask what its ideas were about coping with this problem.⁴ Already some refugees had started coming into India. When he was asked where this had happened, Kaul said it was in the Tripura area.

6. I told Kaul that I had understood that at least until recently the magnitude of the refugee influx had been trickling down. He confirmed this had been the case, but said that this time the problem would be of quite a different magnitude and he anticipated a need for medicines, blankets, food and shelter. He asked that we join with the GOI and other members of the international community in order to bring relief to the victims of the conflict.

7. The Foreign Secretary then said he hoped there would not be outside intervention by any country. He added that perhaps even at this late hour it may still not be too late for US to express to the Pakistan Government our hope that a political solution can be reached. Kaul said he would be grateful if we could exchange any information we may get on the situation with the GOI.

8. Kaul then said that there had been rumours of possible Chinese intervention. He could appreciate that the Chinese would feel that it was in their interest to support West Pakistan. There was some evidence that China may have authorized Pak overflights by way of Kashmir, Tibet and Burma to East Pakistan. DCM said we understood that Indian radar had not picked up any evidence of such overflights. Ray replied that was correct, but that the GOI still did not rule out possibility that such overflights had in fact taken place.

9. Foreign Secretary said that Chinese had at least, an understanding with the martial law administration. They did not like Mujib because he was considered to be pro-Western and pro-Indian. There were extremist elements in East Pakistan headed by Bhashani.⁵ At the

⁴ In telegram 53097 to New Delhi, March 31, the Department instructed the Embassy to inform the Indian Government that since a serious refugee problem had not yet developed, it was too soon to anticipate what the United States response to such a development would be. If an emergency situation did develop, the United States would probably participate in a disaster relief effort, but would want to reserve judgment on specifics in light of Pakistan's concerns. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK)

⁵ Maulana Abdul Hamid Bhashani, leader of the National Awami League.

moment, Mujib had the upper hand over him. The Chinese might try to fish in troubled waters. There was also a hard core of Naxalites in East Pakistan.

10. Kaul said they had just heard that Radio Pakistan had reported the arrest of Mujib. This had subsequently been denied by the Free Bengal Radio which had said Mujib was not in his house at the time of the reported Pak raid. Kaul said "our apprehension is that this will not simmer down." He felt it was not wise for West Pakistan to be attempting to control the situation by force since this would only sow the seeds for future trouble. He then asked for my assessment.

11. I said that I had thought that Yahya was sincerely attempting to carry out his original idea of a democratic government in all of Pakistan and that he was prepared to accept the six points and recognize greater autonomy in East Pakistan. Speaking personally, I told him that when I heard six shiploads of army personnel had arrived in East Pakistan I had doubts and wondered if talks were being dragged out waiting for the troops to arrive and then crack down. I told Kaul that based on our cables, it was my government's position that the present conflict was an internal matter that should be settled internally.

12. Kaul said GOI had recently heard that all units of the Pak army had been permitted to ask for fighter support from the Pak air force and that there had in fact been some air activity in Comilla. At this point, Kaul read me the text of what I took to be a reporting telegram from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad recording the events of the last few days. The essential point was that Bhutto had made it known that he believed that accession to the Awami League demands verged on a grant of sovereignty.

13. Kaul said that GOI information was that there had been four army brigades in East Pakistan. Since the crisis began, two brigades had been added one of which had been brought in by air and one by sea. Seven passenger ships loaded with troops (not six, he said) had arrived. This all amounted to more than two divisions of West Pakistani troops. Kaul said that since March there had been at least 13 C-130 flights and 30 flights of PIA Boeings transitting Ceylon. In reply to a question about tank strength, Kaul said that West Pakistan had one armoured regiment in East Pakistan, one squadron of which was employed in Dacca city.

14. I asked Kaul if there had been any movement of Indian troops. He reminded me that they had militarily reinforced West Bengal prior to the elections and had said at the time that they would not remove such troops until they were certain that the situation had stabilized. So far, he said, we have not made any movements of troops in response to the developments in East Pakistan. However, "we may have to strengthen our borders". When asked if this meant increasing the

border security forces, he replied that border security was already stretched to the limit.

15. At this point, S.K. Singh, MEA spokesman, walked in carrying a ticker story. Kaul read this aloud. Story was based on a monitor report from Agatala of the Free Bengal Radio which claimed that martial law administrator Lt. General Tikka Khan had been killed by resistance forces which had stormed his premises.

16. *Comment:* I believe it will be useful for us to be reasonably full and frank in exchanging information on East Pakistan with the GOI. I hope Department can give me an indication of the extent to which we would be prepared to do in humanitarian relief effort on behalf of East Pakistan refugees soonest.

Keating

13. Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 28, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

As you will have noted from the cables² and situation reports, the situation in East Pakistan appears to have taken another turn for the worse. Having beaten down the initial surge of resistance, the army now appears to have embarked on a reign of terror aimed at eliminating the core of future resistance. At least this seems to be the situation in Dacca. We have virtually no reliable information on the situation in the other major cities or what is going on in the countryside where most of the population resides.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71-15 May 1971. Secret. Sent for action.

² On March 28 Consul General Blood reported from Dacca as follows: "Here in Dacca we are mute and horrified witnesses to a reign of terror by the Pak military. Evidence continues to mount that the MLA authorities have a list of Awami League supporters whom they are systematically eliminating by seeking them out in their homes and shooting them down." He recommended that the United States express shock

These latest developments would seem to raise new policy issues for us. The most immediate questions which come to mind are:

—Is the present U.S. posture of simply ignoring the atrocities in East Pakistan still advisable or should we now be expressing our shock at least privately to the West Pakistanis? Our Consul General in Dacca thinks that the time has now come to approach the West Pakistanis. We do not yet, but should before long, have a recommendation from Ambassador Farland. [*Comment*: The Government has deported all foreign press correspondents but the story is still getting considerable play here. The full horror of what is going on will come to light sooner or later. After our major effort to provide natural disaster relief last fall, the Administration could be vulnerable to charges of a callous political calculation over a man-made disaster.]³

—The Indians are clearly nervous about the situation. They do not seem disposed to intervene but there is considerable pressure on Mrs. Gandhi and we know that they are dusting off their own contingency plans. At a time when tensions are high in the subcontinent, there is always a chance that another irrational move could ignite a larger and even more serious conflict. Is now the time, as our contingency plans would seem to suggest, to begin closer consultations with New Delhi?

—There are a whole range of AID issues that will be coming up because of prior commitments and things already in the pipeline. Our actions on those could add up, in some peoples' eyes, to approval or disapproval of the West Pakistani actions. At a minimum, they imply U.S. involvement given the situation in Pakistan.

to the Pakistani authorities "at this wave of terror directed against their own countrymen by Pak military." (Telegram 959 from Dacca) On March 29 the Consulate General reported that the army was setting houses on fire and shooting people as they emerged from the burning houses. (Telegram 978 from Dacca) On March 30 the Consulate General reported that the army had killed a large number of apparently unarmed students at Dacca University. (Telegram 986 from Dacca) The Embassy in Islamabad concurred in expressing its sense of horror and indignation at the "brutal, ruthless and excessive use of force by the Pak military," but went on to state: "In this Embassy's view, deplorable as current events in East Pakistan may be, it is undesirable that they be raised to level of contentious international political issue." (Telegram 2954 from Islamabad, March 31) All cables cited here are published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Documents 125–128. When President Nixon discussed the reports of atrocities in East Pakistan briefly with Kissinger in a telephone conversation on March 28, he agreed with the position taken by the Embassy: "I wouldn't put out a statement praising it, but we're not going to condemn it either." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 367, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

³ Brackets in the source text.

Recommendation: It is hard to predict what the next several days will bring, but, based on the current situation, you might wish to consider adding Pakistan to the agenda for Wednesday.⁴

⁴ Kissinger did not indicate whether he approved or disapproved the recommendation, but there was only passing discussion of the issue when the Senior Review Group considered developments in East Pakistan on Wednesday, March 31; see Document 17.

14. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

San Clemente, California, March 29, 1971.

P: Hello.

K: Mr. President.

P: Hi Henry. You sleep well?

K: Yes, very well. It's really a very restful place out here.

P: What's new today. Got anything on the wires or anything of interest?

K: There's nothing of any great consequence Mr. President. Apparently Yahya has got control of East Pakistan.

P: Good. There're sometimes the use of power is . . .

K: The use of power against seeming odds pays off. Cause all the experts were saying that 30,000 people can't get control of 75 million. Well, this may still turn out to be true but as of this moment it seems to be quiet.

P: Well maybe things have changed. But hell, when you look over the history of nations 30,000 well-disciplined people can take 75 million any time. Look what the Spanish did when they came in and took the Incas and all the rest. Look what the British did when they took India.

K: That's right.

P: To name just a few.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 367, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. A note on the transcript indicates that the tape recording from which the transcript was prepared was "brought in" on March 29.

K: Well in those cases the people were more or less neutral. In the Inca case they expected a god to come from the West . . .

P: That sort of . . . yeah, put them out.

K: Which helped a bit.

P: That's right. But anyway I wish him well. I just . . . I mean it's better not to have it come apart than to have to come apart.

K: That's right. The long-term impact of its coming about [*apart*] . . . people now say that the fellow Mujib in the East is really quite moderate and for a Bengali that's right. But that's an extremely unstable situation there and the radical groups are likely to gain increasing strength.

P: This will be only one blip in the battle and then it will go on and on and on and it's like everything in the period we live in isn't it since World War II.

K: That's right, that's right.

P: Where revolution in itself, independence is a virtue which of course it never was. That wasn't true at the time of the French revolution either and it isn't any more true today. The real question is whether anybody can run the god-damn place.

K: That's right and of course the Bengalis have been extremely difficult to govern throughout their history.

P: The Indians can't govern them either.

K: No, well actually the Indians who one normally would expect to favor a breakup of Pakistan aren't so eager for this one. Because they're afraid that East Pakistan may in time, or East Bengal may in time have an attraction for West Bengal with Calcutta and also that the Chinese will gain a lot of influence there.

P: Interesting.

K: And that, I think, is a good chance.

[Omitted here is discussion of issues unrelated to South Asia.]

15. **Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**¹

San Clemente, California, March 30, 1971, 9:35 a.m.

P: What's new today?

[Omitted here is discussion of issues unrelated to South Asia.]

K: In Pakistan it continues, but there isn't a whole lot we can do about it.

P: No. Are we pressing?

K: No, we may remove the American civilians.

P: That's okay.

K: But even that we won't do before Thursday.²

P: But we should just stay out—like in Biafra, what the hell can we do?

K: Good point.

P: I don't like it, but I didn't like shooting starving Biafrans either. What do they think we are going to do but help the Indians.

K: They have been ambivalent about it anyway.

P: They are ambivalent about everything.

K: That Consul in Dacca doesn't have the strongest nerves.

P: Neither does Keating. They are all in the middle of it; it's just like Biafra. The main thing to do is to keep cool and not do anything. There's nothing in it for us either way.

K: It would infuriate the West Pakistanis; it wouldn't gain anything with the East Pakistanis, who wouldn't know about it anyway and the Indians are not noted for their gratitude.

[Omitted here is discussion of issues unrelated to South Asia.]

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 367, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² April 1.

16. Letter From the Pakistani Ambassador (Hilaly) to Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, March 31, 1971.

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I have just been requested by the President of Pakistan to convey the following message from him to President Richard M. Nixon. I will be grateful if you transmit it to its high destination urgently.

Begins:

“Your Excellency.

I am taking earliest opportunity to inform you of the political developments which have taken place in Pakistan since general elections were held last December. It has been my constant endeavour to lead the country towards a restoration of democratic processes through elected representatives of the people. For this purpose, I have been holding talks with leaders of political parties. I had hoped that these discussions would lead to a broad political agreement regarding convening of the National Assembly and framing of a constitution. Unfortunately however the political leadership in East Pakistan and especially Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took a progressively rigid stand which made such an agreement impossible. Meanwhile murder, arson and widespread disorder in defiance of governmental authority were let loose in the province.

In the larger interest of the country I exercised utmost restraint and patience and tried to evolve a generally acceptable formula to resolve constitutional difficulties. In pursuit of the same objective, I went personally to East Pakistan to hold consultations with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Even while I was there, the Awami League leaders continued to make statements and to indulge in practices which clearly showed that they were not prepared for pursuing a compromise. The last round of talks in Dacca left me in no doubt that they had no intention of accepting any constitutional formula which would ensure integrity and unity of the country. Eventually a point was reached where the Awami League put forward final proposals which virtually amounted to dismemberment of the country. Since they had no such mandate from the people and as unity of the country was at stake, firm action had to be

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). Most Immediate. The letter was conveyed to the White House on March 31 under cover of a transmittal memorandum from Executive Secretary Eliot to Kissinger. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK–US)

taken to assert government's authority and to safeguard the integrity of Pakistan. There was no option but to take that decision.

The situation in East Pakistan is well under control and normal life is being restored. Accounts to the contrary circulated by some outside sources especially from news media, do not reflect the correct position and are designed to mislead world public opinion.

While we are engaged in a national effort to safeguard our integrity, the Indian attitude is causing us grave concern. The Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and other important leaders of India have made public statements regarding developments in East Pakistan which constitute a clear interference in our internal affairs. A dangerous precedent is thus being set by India which is of direct concern to the international community.

Far more serious is the deployment of nearly six divisions of the Indian Army not too far from the borders of East Pakistan. The composition of these forces which include artillery regiments and parachute brigades has no relevance to the needs of internal security in West Bengal or to the requirements of Indian elections which ended three weeks ago. This concentration of Indian forces on our borders constitutes a direct threat to our security.

In view of Your Excellency's dedication to the cause of international peace and security and to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other states, I hope Your Excellency would consider the desirability of expressing your support for the forces of peace and stability in this region and of impressing upon Indian leaders the paramount need for refraining from any action that might aggravate the situation and lead to irretrievable consequences.

I remain

Very sincerely yours

A.M. Yahya Khan"

Ends.

With my warm personal regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. Hilaly

17. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting¹

San Clemente, California, March 31, 1971, 11:55 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Greece and Pakistan

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. U. Alexis Johnson

Defense

Mr. David Packard

Mr. James S. Noyes

JCS

Lt. Gen. Richard T. Knowles

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman

Mr. David Blee

VP Office

Mr. Kent Crane

NSC Staff

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Mr. Keith Guthrie

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

[Omitted here are conclusions relating to Greece.]

Pakistan

1. The SRG briefly reviewed current developments in East Pakistan.

[Omitted here is discussion relating to Greece.]

Pakistan

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Johnson) Can you give us a two-minute run-down on Pakistan?

Mr. Johnson: You probably know more than I do. We are approaching the Pakistanis about getting planes in to evacuate our people. As the story [of what is happening in East Pakistan]² comes out,

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information is indicated on the source text. The meeting was held in the Conference Room at the Western White House in San Clemente, California.

² Brackets in the source text.

we are going to face a sort of Biafra situation. You might be interested in the Secretary's [Rogers']³ comment: "Sentiment in India may force the Indians to be the first to recognize unless Ambassador Keating beats them to the punch."

Lt. Gen. Cushman: That [what Mr. Johnson reported]³ is about all we have. The Pakistani situation is posing a problem for India by raising the question of whether they should try to help the Bengalis.

Dr. Kissinger: India is the one country that would suffer from the establishment of an independent East Pakistan.

Mr. Packard: How much fighting is there?

Lt. Gen. Cushman: Dacca is quiet.

Mr. Blee: Chittagong has been hit badly. The Indians are having a problem with East Pakistani refugees.

Dr. Kissinger: What is our judgment on the countryside generally? Can 30,000 troops do anything against 75 million people?

Lt. Gen. Cushman: It could be very bloody.

Dr. Kissinger: Unless it turns out that with the cities under control of the government, the countryside will be indifferent.

Mr. Blee: The Bengalis may be pretty indifferent if they think they really aren't in a position to fight.

Dr. Kissinger: Is the countryside politically conscious?

Mr. Blee: The Bengalis are extremely politically conscious, but they are not fighters.

Mr. Johnson: In the long run, it will be difficult for 35,000 troops to maintain control over 75 million people.

Mr. Blee: In the long run there will be pressure. The Bengalis may seek help from the Indians.

Dr. Kissinger: Will the Indians provide it?

Mr. Blee: Four hundred Indian parliamentarians signed a statement in favor of recognizing East Pakistan.

Lt. Gen. Cushman: If India doesn't provide support, the Communist Chinese will.

Mr. Blee: The Communist Chinese are on the other [West Pakistani]³ side right now, but they could change.

Dr. Kissinger: Does the government have Mujibur Rahman?

Mr. Blee: They captured him. Presumably he is in West Pakistan, perhaps in Quetta.

³ Brackets in the source text.

Dr. Kissinger: Will they execute him?

Mr. Blee: The [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reports we have been getting indicate they might do so. It would be more sensible for them to keep him comfortable in captivity in order to use him as a pawn.

Lt. Gen. Cushman: Yahya accused him of treason. Possibly he has been shot already or was shot inadvertently.

Dr. Kissinger: Are we going to keep VOA quiet about reports coming from our Consul?

Mr. Johnson: That was not VOA's fault. It was Charlie Bray's.⁴ Frankly, we slipped on this. VOA just picked up what Charlie said at the briefing. Charlie talked on the basis of his daily report. No one had briefed him on the sensitivity of the Consulate communications.

Dr. Kissinger: I didn't know about that either until I saw Farland's blast.⁵

Mr. Blee: If the Indians recognize the Government of Bangla Desh, the Pakistanis might recognize Kashmir. However, this doesn't look probable.

Dr. Kissinger: There is no government to recognize in East Pakistan.

Mr. Blee: There is a radio [that purports to speak for the government of East Pakistan].⁶

Dr. Kissinger: Where is it located?

Mr. Blee: Probably in one of the small towns.

Dr. Kissinger: Did they kill Professor Razak? He was one of my students.

Mr. Blee: I think so. They killed a lot of people at the university.

Dr. Kissinger: They didn't dominate 400 million Indians all those years by being gentle.

⁴ Spokesman of the Department of State.

⁵ On March 27 Ambassador Farland reported that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had registered a complaint about a report broadcast by the Voice of America, All India Radio, and the BBC, which cited Consul General Blood as the source of a report that heavy fighting was taking place in Dacca and that tanks were being used. Farland noted that, despite the fact that communications between Islamabad and Dacca had been severed, he had denied that Blood was the source of the report. He also said that he had counseled against spreading incendiary rumors. (Telegram 2770 from Islamabad; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9)

⁶ Brackets in the source text.

18. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 3, 1971.

SUBJECT

Background to the Thinning Out of the U.S. Presence in East Pakistan

The situation in East Pakistan has seriously deteriorated over the last ten days. In the period up to March 25 there had been considerable hope that President Yahya and the East Pakistan Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would reach an agreement on some constitutional formula which would have permitted Pakistan to remain a united country. However, at some point in the period March 23–25, President Yahya decided that Mujibur Rahman's constitutional proposals would have led to a virtual separation of East from West Pakistan. As a result, on the evening of March 25 President Yahya, using Pakistan Army troops, arrested Mujibur Rahman and his principal followers, suppressed the Awami League and asserted full military control over East Pakistan.

The details of what transpired on the night of March 25–26 may never be known in full because reports are conflicting and first-hand evidence is scarce. Our Consul General in Dacca estimates that between 4000–6000 people were killed in the Dacca area over the next several days. Extensive damage was done to the University, to the offices of the newspapers supporting the Awami League, and to Hindu settlements in the heart of Dacca. In Chittagong, the principal port of East Pakistan, considerable damage and fatalities also occurred.

In the days which followed the Army's intervention a semblance of normality has returned to Dacca but there continues to be small arms firing at night in residential areas in which Americans live. Some foreigners already have had narrow escapes with their lives. Most shops remain closed, and a very small portion of the civil servants are at work in government offices. It is not possible for foreigners to leave the vicinity of Dacca or Chittagong, the two cities in which most of the approximately 750 Americans in East Pakistan are located.

In this situation, our Consul General recommended the thinning out of the U.S. presence in East Pakistan. In making his recommendation, the Consul General noted the continuing danger to Americans

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK. Secret. Drafted by Van Hollen and Anthony C.E. Quainton (NEA/INC) on April 2, and cleared by Sisco, and by Spengler in draft.

and the psychological stress under which the Americans were living. He explained that schools were not operating, shops were closed, mail and telephone service was suspended, and that many of our people were unable to carry out the jobs to which they had been assigned. He also noted that the World Bank, the UN, the Germans, Japanese, and the Yugoslavs had already begun evacuating their personnel. Since then, the British, French and Australians have decided to evacuate dependents and we are informed that the Soviets have decided to do so as well.

In keeping with the Consul General's recommendation, endorsed by Ambassador Farland, we have made plans to facilitate the departure within the next few days of nonofficial Americans who want to leave, the wives and children of American officials, and some official Americans who are considered non-essential. To ensure that their departure will not appear to be a precipitate or large scale evacuation, we have made it clear to the Pakistan Government and to the press that, although we are temporarily thinning out our people, we will maintain a substantial enough American presence in East Pakistan to represent our continuing interests and take care of our operational requirements. We are phasing the withdrawal of Americans over a period of days beginning on Sunday, April 4. The Pakistan Government has shown full understanding of our decision and has put at our disposal one Pakistan International Airline commercial flight each day to enable us to move our people from Dacca to Karachi.

Our overriding concern to date has been the safety of the American community in East Pakistan. However, as a manifestation of our humanitarian concern, we have also made plans to be ready to offer food and other types of relief assistance if requested by the Pakistan Government.

Looking toward the future, much will depend upon the ability of the Pakistan armed forces in the East, now numbering about 30,000, to maintain effective military control in the face of the general alienation of the Bengali population of 75 million. Thus far, the Awami League resistance groups have gained little momentum although they control an estimated 75% of the East Pakistan territory. However, over time these resistance elements may be able to mount a large scale rebellion with possible covert support from Bengali elements in India. The key question is whether the events of the last week have made it unlikely—or impossible—for the Government of Pakistan ever to reassert effective political influence over the East.

During the period immediately ahead we may be faced with a number of difficult policy decisions. These include our political reaction to the events in East Pakistan and various aspects of our economic assistance and military supply programs for Pakistan.

William P. Rogers

19. **Telegram From the Consulate General in Dacca to the Department of State¹**

Dacca, April 6, 1971, 0730Z.

1138. Subj: Dissent From U.S. Policy Toward East Pakistan.

1. Aware of the task force proposals on "openness" in the Foreign Service, and with the conviction that U.S. policy related to recent developments in East Pakistan serves neither our moral interests broadly defined nor our national interests narrowly defined, numerous officers of AmConGen Dacca, USAID Dacca and USIS Dacca consider it their duty to register strong dissent with fundamental aspects of this policy. Our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy. Our government has failed to denounce atrocities. Our government has failed to take forceful measures to protect its citizens while at the same time bending over backwards to placate the West Pak dominated government and to lessen likely and deservedly negative international public relations impact against them. Our government has evidenced what many will consider moral bankruptcy, ironically at a time when the USSR sent President Yahya a message² defending democracy, condemning arrest of leader of democratically elected majority party (incidentally pro-West) and calling for end to repressive measures and bloodshed. In our most recent policy paper for Pakistan,³ our interests in Pakistan were defined as primarily humanitarian, rather than strategic. But we have chosen not to intervene, even morally, on the grounds that the Awami conflict, in which unfortunately the overworked term genocide is applicable, is purely internal matter of a sovereign state. Private Americans have expressed disgust. We, as professional public servants express our dissent with current policy and fervently hope that our true and lasting interests here can be defined and our policies

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 1 PAK-US. Confidential; Priority; Limdis. Sent as a joint State/AID/USIS message. Also sent to Islamabad and repeated to Karachi and Lahore. Received at 1008Z. In his memoirs Kissinger suggests that the Consulate General deliberately gave a low classification to this telegram in order to encourage broad circulation in Washington. (*White House Years*, p. 853) The distribution limitation was added to the telegram in the Department.

² The text of President Podgorny's message to Yahya Khan, as released to the press by TASS on April 3, was transmitted to Islamabad on April 3 in telegram 56617. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK)

³ Apparent reference to the contingency study on Pakistan prepared by the Inter-departmental Group for Near East and South Asia on March 2; see footnote 5, Document 5.

redirected in order to salvage our nation's position as a moral leader of the free world.

2. Our specific areas of dissent, as well as our policy proposals, will follow by septel.⁴

3. Signed:

Brian Bell	Desaix Myers
Robert L. Bourquein	John L. Nesvig
W. Scott Butcher	William Grant Parr
Eric Griffel	Robert Carce
Zachary M. Hahn	Richard L. Simpson
Jake Harshbarger	Robert C. Simpson
Robert A. Jackson	Richard E. Suttor
Lawrence Koegel	Wayne A. Swedengurg
Joseph A. Malpeli	Richard L. Wilson
Willard D. McCleary	Shannon W. Wilson ⁵

4. I support the right of the above named officers to voice their dissent. Because they attach urgency to their expression of dissent and because we are without any means of communication other than telegraphic, I authorize the use of a telegram for this purpose.

5. I believe the views of these officers, who are among the finest U.S. officials in East Pakistan, are echoed by the vast majority of the American community, both official and unofficial.⁶ I also subscribe to

⁴ The dissenting members of the Consulate General sent a follow-on telegram to the Department on April 10 in which they characterized the martial law regime in East Pakistan as being of "dubious legitimacy" and took further issue with the view that the "current situation should be viewed simply as 'constituted' government using force against citizens flouting its authority." They concluded that it was "inconceivable that world can mount magnificent effort to save victims of last November's cyclone disaster on one hand, and on other condone indiscriminate killing of same people by essentially alien army defending interests different from those of general populace." Telegram 1249 from Dacca is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 130.

⁵ On April 6 seven specialists on South Asian affairs from the NEA bureau, one from INR, and another from AID/NESA sent a letter to Secretary Rogers associating themselves with the views expressed in telegram 1138 from Dacca. (National Archives, RG 59, NEA Files: Lot 73 D 69, Box 6396, Pakistan)

⁶ Ambassador Farland supported the principle that members of his mission had the right to express their views on the problems facing the United States in the crisis developing in Pakistan. He noted that the Embassy had also submitted a proposal to register serious concern about developments in East Pakistan, and he suggested that it was time to review the policy toward Pakistan which excluded interference in its domestic affairs. (Telegram 3196 from Islamabad, April 6; *ibid.*, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK-US)

these views but I do not think it appropriate for me to sign their statement as long as I am principal officer at this post.

6. My support of their stand takes on another dimension. As I hope to develop in further reporting, I believe the most likely eventual outcome of the struggle underway in East Pakistan is a Bengali victory and the consequent establishment of an independent Bangladesh. At the moment we possess the good will of the Awami League. We would be foolish to forfeit this asset by pursuing a rigid policy of one-sided support to the likely loser.⁷

Blood

⁷The Department responded on April 7 in telegram 58039 to Dacca, drafted by Sisco and approved by Rogers. In addressing the complaint that the United States had failed to denounce the actions taken by Pakistan's army in East Pakistan, Sisco noted that there were conflicting reports about atrocities. He stated that the Department had not been silent about the conflict in East Pakistan and he reviewed a number of statements made by the Department spokesman between March 26 and April 5. One of the statements expressed concern about the "loss of life, damage and hardship suffered by the people of Pakistan," but none of them addressed the atrocities reported from Dacca. (Ibid., POL 27 INDIA-PAK) Telegram 58039 is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 129.

20. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Rogers and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, April 6, 1971, 9:35 a.m.

R: I wanted to talk about that goddam message from our people in Dacca.² Did you see it?

K: No.

R: It's miserable. They bitched about our policy and have given it lots of distribution so it will probably leak. It's inexcusable.

K: And it will probably get to Ted Kennedy.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 367, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See Document 19.

R: I am sure it will.

K: Somebody gives him cables. I have had him call me about them.

R: It's a terrible telegram. Couldn't be worse—says we failed to defend American lives and are morally bankrupt.

K: Blood did that?

R: Quite a few of them signed it. You know we are doing everything we can about it. Trying to get the telegrams back as many as we can. We are going to get a message back to them.

K: I am going in these [next] two days to keep it from the President until he has given his speech.³

R: If you can keep it from him I will appreciate it. In the first place I think we have made a good choice.

K: The Chinese haven't said anything.

R: They talk about condemning atrocities. There are pictures of the East Pakistanis murdering people.

K: Yes. There was one of an East Pakistani holding a head. Do you remember when they said there were 1000 bodies and they had the graves and then we couldn't find 20?

R: To me it is outrageous they would send this.

K: Unless it hits the wires I will hold it. I will not forward it.

R: We should get our answers out at the same time the stories come out.

K: I will not pass it on.⁴

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

³ Reference is to the speech Nixon delivered to the nation on April 7 on the situation in Southeast Asia. For text, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1971*, pp. 522–527.

⁴ In his memoirs Kissinger writes that the dissent cable from Dacca pointed up a dilemma for the administration. "The United States could not condone a brutal military repression," and there was "no doubt about the strong-arm tactics of the Pakistani military." He explains the administration's decision not to react publicly to the military repression in East Pakistan as necessary to protect "our sole channel to China." As a result of the cable, President Nixon ordered Consul General Archer Blood transferred from Dacca. Kissinger conceded that "there was some merit to the charge of moral insensitivity." (*White House Years*, p. 854)

21. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State¹

Islamabad, April 6, 1971, 0838Z.

3164. Subj: Yahya's Letter² to President Nixon. Ref: State 54514,³ Dacca 1045⁴ and New Delhi 4814.⁵

1. The main point of Yahya letter, which I presume is similar in content to the one Brits received and possibly also others, is the final section where Yahya seeks help against possibility of Indian intervention. Pak build-up of "Indian threat" is probably a mixture of genuine concern and an effort to divert internal and external attention from Pak army actions in East Pakistan. I know the Paks are worried about India's intentions, and from info available through intelligence channels they have cause for worry. At the same time, India serves, as always, a ready and convenient whipping boy.

2. This mission recommended in Islamabad 3018⁶ that we accommodate to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan's request for public statement expressing concern about possible internalization of conflict. Department in State 56401,⁷ however, came down against our acceding to Sultan's request. I will not press our recommendation further, having modified it as explained hereafter.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL PAK-US. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Received at 5:25 a.m.

² See Document 16.

³ Telegram 54514 to Islamabad, April 1, transmitted the text of President Yahya's March 31 letter to President Nixon. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL PAK-US)

⁴ Consul General Blood commented on Yahya's letter in telegram 1045 from Dacca, April 2. He noted that 75 percent of East Pakistan was still under the control of the Awami League. He argued that if the U.S. Government were to make a public statement in support of the army's actions in East Pakistan, as Yahya had requested, the effect would be to put U.S. citizens in much of East Pakistan in danger. (Ibid., POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

⁵ Ambassador Keating commented on Yahya's letter in telegram 4814 from New Delhi, April 2. Foreign Secretary Kaul assured him on April 1 that India did not intend to interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs. Keating had also reviewed Indian military dispositions and concluded that the Indian army was not oriented against East Pakistan. Keating recommended against the initiative proposed by Yahya: "Given Indian military dispositions and positive statements of responsible Indian officials I believe there should be no question of *démarche* to GOI along lines suggested by President Yahya in his last paragraph." (Ibid., POL PAK-US)

⁶ Dated April 1. (Ibid., POL 23-9 PAK)

⁷ Dated April 3. (Ibid.)

3. In discussions in Washington and Delhi between USG and GOI, latter has stated that India will not intervene against Pakistan. Since our position against intervention has been made clear to GOI in these discussions, we have in effect already, albeit privately, responded to Yahya's request. Nonetheless, given what intelligence sources have reported about covert Indian activity, this mission believes the Department, on an early occasion and at an appropriately high level, should underscore our strong feeling that no outside power should take any steps that would tend to broaden and escalate the conflict.

4. With regard to Yahya's letter, I see the President's response primarily as providing a vehicle for USG to note our disquietude over course which GOP has chosen. As we have previously reported, we do not believe army over long run can hold East by bayonet against overwhelming opposition of Bengalis. I think Yahya's action against Awami League is a self-defeating step which in time will land Pak army into a hopeless morass. I share ConGen Dacca's view that Yahya's short-term action has probably made inevitable the thing he is ostensibly seeking to prevent in the long term; the disintegration of Pakistan.

5. The President has an excellent relationship with Yahya. Without reproaching or lecturing Paks, I think we have an opportunity to put across our point with Yahya, and not, coincidentally, raise too many hackles. In combination with President Podgorny's outspokenly partisan and public message,⁸ which goes far beyond what we have in mind, President Nixon's private message would hopefully give Pak military some pause about course on which they are embarked.

6. In terms of specifics, I suggest that the President pass lightly over, without much comment, Yahya's justification for military intervention and suppression of Awami League as well as his questionable assertion that East Pakistan was again becoming "normal." I see no particular gain in arguing merits of Yahya's claims and believe these portions of his letter require little in the way of response.

7. I believe that the following would be appropriate points for the President to make, roughly in order outlined below:

A. US sympathy with people of Pakistan and our humanitarian concern about the suffering and loss of life in East Pakistan. Our feeling that all friends of Pakistan, of which the US is one, share hope that peace can shortly return to the province. Our willingness to participate in an international relief effort to help the people of East Pakistan if requested by the Government of Pakistan.

B. Our belief that events in East Pakistan are an internal affair of Pakistan and should remain so. Our agreement with Yahya that in-

⁸ See footnote 2, Document 19.

volvement by foreign powers would serve only to escalate the crisis, introduce new dangers, and render an ultimate settlement more difficult. The letter could (perhaps should) appropriately mention that we have been in touch with GOI and made clear the US position on the matter.

C. The principal substantive paragraph to air concerns noted foregoing could be made as follows: "I would be less than candid, Mr. President, were I not to mention the disquietude [we] feel about the grave human and economic loss which is occurring in East Pakistan as a result of the current troubles. As you know, many of our people had to leave East Pakistan because they were no longer able to engage in their usual work activities. Under conditions currently prevailing, we face serious difficulties in carrying on in East Pakistan the reconstruction and development programs with which I had hoped and continue to hope the United States could assist your people. I look forward to an early end of turmoil in the East so that economic activity, including our participation, can again resume. I believe that conditions of tranquility would provide a more favorable atmosphere for attaining a satisfactory solution to Pakistan's political problems than those of violence. I know how long and hard you have toiled for an early and peaceful transfer of power to civilian government. I know how distressed you must be that this has not so far proven possible. I continue to hope that you will find a way in the near future to achieve this admirable goal."

8. Department has consistently taken the position that USG should not become involved in Pak situation—either in the pre-March 26 period of political negotiation when we rejected the Awami League's request for US help, or more recently since Yahya sent the army into action against East Paks on March 26. This mission has, on the whole, agreed with this position. We have been skeptical that US intervention, either with Yahya or Mujib, would have been effective. We were also concerned that a more active US role, especially before March 26, would have endangered our relationship with GOP (or with West Paks). In addition, we have shared the disinclination, felt by many Americans today, over a USG involvement in a situation where US interests are not clearly and directly at stake.

9. This mission still subscribes to the view that East Pak developments are an internal Pak affair. I note that Department spokesman has enunciated such a position to the press (State 56154).⁹ The Department also provided this view as the principal element in the instructions to Embassy Colombo for Ambassador's call on the Ceylonese Prime

⁹ Telegram 56154 to Islamabad, April 2, transmitted excerpts from a press briefing by the Department of State spokesman on April 2. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, PR 11-3)

Minister (State 56327).¹⁰ Nonetheless, I believe that, in the present circumstances, we should be somewhat more willing than we have been heretofore to express our thoughts with controlled candor to the main parties concerned. The human and political problems that are likely to ensue from prolonged violence in East Pakistan and/or from Indian intervention argue cogently for less reluctance on our part about using our influence with India and Pakistan toward preventing further deterioration of political and economic conditions in South Asia.

Farland

¹⁰ Not found.

22. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State¹

Islamabad, April 8, 1971, 1105Z.

3228. Subj: Assessment of Pak Situation. Ref: State 59106² (Notal).

1. Summary: Following is Embassy's current assessment. Since struggle on ground remains inconclusive, appraisal tentative and subject revision in light changing developments in East Pakistan.

2. Two weeks after Yahya sent army into action, Pak military has control major cities in east, but Bengalis still hold major areas, especially in countryside. If resistance continues into June when monsoon begins,

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK. Secret; Priority. Repeated to Dacca, Kabul, Karachi, Kathmandu, Lahore, London, New Delhi, Rangoon, USUN, Colombo, and Tehran. A copy of this telegram was sent by Saunders and Hoskinson to Kissinger on April 8 as "useful to read" prior to the Senior Review Group meeting scheduled for that afternoon. The meeting took place on April 9. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-053, SRG Meeting, Pakistan, 4/9/71)

² Telegram 59106 to Islamabad, April 8, reported on a conversation on April 7 between Assistant Secretary Sisco and Ambassador Hilaly. Hilaly offered a hopeful prognosis for political developments in East Pakistan. He anticipated that the Martial Law Administration would be willing to concede on the Awami League's six-point agenda, with minor adjustments. He also noted that Yahya had reiterated his intention to transfer power to a provincial government in East Pakistan, and he speculated that the change would take place within the next few months. Hilaly did not feel that the arrest of Mujibur Rahman or the outlawing of the Awami League would significantly effect the political outcome in East Pakistan. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK)

Pak army will face major logistical and operational difficulties. However, if resistance crumbles in next two months, military should be able assert control of province, at least for short and possibly medium term.

3. Over long run, Embassy continues believe West Paks will be unable to maintain their hold over East Pakistan. In time, renewed resistance likely emerge. Breach between wings now too deep to permit reconciliation although we expect MLA will make try, possibly along lines Hilaly suggests. In short, we believe Hilaly prognosis, as would be expected, is overly optimistic, reflecting official GOP line rather than current unclear situation on ground. End summary.

4. Two weeks after President Yahya Khan ordered Pak army into action in Dacca and elsewhere in East Pakistan, it is now clear that operation has not been breeze which Pak military leadership had expected. From info available here, army controls Dacca and Chittagong and number of towns, but even though Sheikh Mujib is reportedly in prison at Attock Fort in West Pakistan, his supporters still hold major parts of East Pak countryside.

5. First question is whether army will be able succeed in spreading control outside of major urban centers and in breaking back of organized Bengali resistance. For moment, Awami Leaguers appear to have rallied Bengali Nationalists in western half of East Pakistan (i.e., area west of Ganges River) and in northeast Bengal areas close to India border. Disaffected elements of East Bengal regiment, East Pakistan rifles and police providing Nationalists with limited military capability. Total EBR and EPR strength before March 26 only 15,000 and presumably much lower now after casualties suffered in Dacca and Chittagong fighting and desertions. Bengalis reportedly sabotaged road and rail links and also destroyed some ferries. Net effect has been to restrict mobility West Pak forces and to isolate outlying garrisons like troops at Jessore which reportedly cut off except for air re-supply.

6. If army fails to destroy Bengali insurgency capability before monsoon breaks in June, West Paks will shortly face major problems. Once monsoon begins, much of East Pakistan will be under water. Land communication will become increasingly difficult. Long and virtually wide-open border with India will offer insurgents both source for supplies and safehaven. Indians already providing covert help and flow of supplies can be expected to increase once Indians build up pipeline. At same time, West Paks will have major logistical difficulties not only in moving around East Pakistan but in maintaining flow of supplies from West. Loss of air landing rights in Ceylon or Indian interference with sea traffic could rupture supply lines and render military position for extended operation untenable.

7. If army does succeed in crushing organized resistance, it should be able establish semblance control over East for short and possibly

medium term. MLA can be expected try to rally “loyalist” East Paks using alleged “Indian interference” as means to evoke support. West Paks also likely try to cut ground out from under Awami League by launching major effort to alleviate Bengali economic grievances. Mission contacts among GOP economists in Islamabad have already suggested that this likely to be GOP strategy. Ten-man team has just departed for East to assess economic situation.

8. We, however, extremely doubtful about chances that GOP can regain loyalty of East Paks and believe Hilaly wrong on this fundamental point. Indian bogey likely to be seen by most East Paks for what it largely is—attempt to divert attention from West Paks’ own deeds. West Paks in no financial position to defray costs for economic program of size needed. More important, events of past two weeks have left such severe emotional scars that it hard to conceive that anything West Paks can now do will make most Bengalis willing citizens of Pakistan. Bengali grievances now etched in blood.

9. Even if West Paks win short-term victory, Bengali resistance movement likely in time revive. In early stages, such activity might consist of random acts of terror and harassment of West Pak troops and/or “quislings.” However, movement likely gain momentum. For present, Awami Leaguers leading resistance forces. If AL movement crumbles before it able consolidate position on ground, resistance movement likely to pass to more radical and left extremist groups such as Naxalites.

10. Our prognosis regarding West Pakistan’s prospects for holding East remains unchanged from views expressed previously. Even if army able crush current resistance, we continue believe military cannot maintain control over long term. Regardless of short-term developments, in time West Pak military likely become bogged down in hopeless morass. Yahya’s military intervention March 26, however justified from his standpoint, probably ensures very thing which move designed to prevent—disintergration of Pakistan.

11. Meanwhile, Yahya faces decision of how and when to replace current MLA set-up which clearly not satisfactory long-term governmental arrangement. In East, it hard to see what he can do until situation on ground clarifies. If army gains sufficient control, it may wish appoint some civilian “advisers” although it probably more likely that martial law administration will continue for extended period.

12. In West, there is pressure from peoples’ party for establishment some form civilian government. Bhutto has told ConGen Karachi (Karachi 673)³ that he hopes for provincial governments in West which

³ Dated March 31. (Ibid.)

might be held out as example for which East Pakistan could strive. However, army leadership may be uneasy about idea of leftist peoples' party ruling the Punjab and Sind. In addition, army may worry about traditionally troublesome Baluchistan where National Awami Party (Wali group) largest party. NAP had close links with Awami League and wants broad provincial autonomy.

13. On balance, we think Yahya will take some steps to set up semblance of civilian government, both to defuse potentially troublesome situation in West and as may try undercut foreign criticism of his action against Awami League. However, any arrangement likely be much less democratic than prospect Yahya offered people of Pakistan during last year.

14. In addition possibilities of provincial ministries mentioned above, Yahya may, as Hilaly has speculated, form new central cabinet with number tame Bengali ministers, including possible Prime Minister, such as Nurul Amin whom MLA sources told us last summer would make "good" PM. Emphasis such approach would be on return to normalcy and effort to spur reconciliation between East and West.

15. Role of Z.A. Bhutto and his PPP in such set-up is important. Bhutto is eager for power and he may be prepared make deal with military to play key, if not leading role, in new central government. Given conservative orientation of military leadership, such government—even with Bhutto in cabinet—would probably amount to Ayubism without Ayub. At same time, we think Bhutto would insist that regime implement some of his campaign platform reforms as means of reducing potential for economic and social discontent in West Pakistan.

16. It also possible that Yahya may concede much of six points in eventual constitutional arrangement although we highly skeptical Bengalis will gain substance of genuine economic autonomy which has heart of six points. Under any constitutional arrangement which MLA likely grant, central government will retain control on all aspects of foreign affairs, including aid and trade, and will have ability to provide adequate financing for defense forces. West Pak establishment is now not about to give up voluntarily what it has engaged to protect by the bayonet.

Farland

23. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, April 9, 1971, 11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Ceylon and Pakistan

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin, II

Joseph Sisco

Christopher Van Hollen

David Schneider

Thomas Thornton

Defense

G. Warren Nutter

James H. Noyes

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robert Cushman

David Blee

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

R/Adm. William St. George

NSC Staff

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel M. Hoskinson

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

[Omitted here are conclusions relating to Ceylon.]

PAKISTAN

It was agreed:

(1) to prepare a memorandum for the President on the implications of the provision of emergency food to West Pakistan;

(2) that the IG would continue with preparation of a paper outlining the dilemma, which would be considered by the SRG and by the NSC;

(3) that a draft reply to Yahya's letter² to the President should be prepared and held in readiness if the President should ask for it;

(4) to have another SRG meeting next Wednesday or Thursday (April 14–15) to consider the IG paper.

[Omitted here is discussion relating to Ceylon.]

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. No drafting information is provided on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. According to Kissinger's appointment book, the meeting took place from 11:12 a.m. to 12:24 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

² See Document 16.

PAKISTAN

Mr. Kissinger: Let's turn to Pakistan. General Cushman?

Gen. Cushman: As you know, since March 25 there has been fighting in East Pakistan—30,000 West Pakistan troops against an armed peasantry, approximately 10,000 guerrilla fighters and a few battalions of Bengali troops which came over to the East Pakistan side. Dacca, Chittagong and most of the cantonments are controlled by West Pakistan. The countryside between the cities is controlled by the Bengalis. The prospects for peaceful settlement are not too bright. Mujib, the East Pakistani leader, is in jail, apparently in West Pakistan, but other leaders have come to the fore. They may be trying to hold out until the end of the dry season around the end of June. After that time, most of the countryside becomes a lake and transportation is very difficult. The Bengalis have cut bridges and are interfering with road traffic. The government is trying to get an inland water route going, without too much success. There is a shortage of aviation fuel in Dacca and a fuel shortage is developing in Ceylon, which may put a limitation on reinforcement flights for West Pakistan. However, the Bengalis are poorly armed and trained.

Mr. Kissinger: Do they have a cohesive command system or are they in isolated pockets?

Gen. Cushman: Their communications are very poor but we don't know if they have a central command and control system.

Mr. Sisco: We think it very doubtful. They (the Bengalis) seem to be collecting themselves and trying to regroup.

Gen. Cushman: We think this is a very dangerous period. There is a possibility of Chinese Communist influence. Or that an extremist group, like the Naxalites in West Bengal, might take over. There is also the danger of famine and disease. Planting in the countryside may be disrupted, and the problems would become acute if there is starvation or an epidemic. India has publicly stated they favor the Bengalis. Although they deny any intervention, they are probably sending in arms.

Mr. Kissinger: Why would they do that?

Gen. Cushman: They think that anything that makes trouble for Pakistan is in their interests.

Mr. Irwin: They also fear that, if they don't intervene, the Naxalites will make trouble for them.

Mr. Kissinger: I should think trouble in East Pakistan would fuel separatist feelings in West Bengal.

Gen. Cushman: India has taken the position that they would prefer to see an independent Bengali state.

Mr. Irwin: Before the trouble, however, India preferred continuation of a unified Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: How does East Pakistan strengthen West Pakistan?

Adm. Moorer: It provides the Pakistan government with more foreign exchange. Also, it has more people than West Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: But if West Pakistan succeeds in restoring order, East Pakistan would be unreliable.

Mr. Sisco: I agree that East Pakistan now would become a drain on West Pakistan.

Gen. Cushman: Jute sales from East Pakistan are one of the primary sources of hard cash for West Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: There is an interesting article in the *Washington Post* this morning on the economic aspects.

Mr. Van Hollen: There has been a shift in the Indian position as a result of the crisis. They had preferred a unified Pakistan. After March 25, and the intervention of the military in East Pakistan, India became concerned primarily with the effect of long-term Pakistani military control, which they saw as leading to radicalization in West Pakistan, with an impact on West Bengal and therefore on India.

Gen. Cushman: There is a great deal of trade between the two Bengals and East Pakistan.

Adm. Moorer: I have just come from a CENTO military meeting and had long conversations with the Pakistani and Iranian military representatives. There is no question in their minds that the Indians would like to see an independent East Pakistan. The Pakistanis were very bitter about the arms supply.

Mr. Kissinger: Did they think West Pakistan could win with 30,000 troops?

Adm. Moorer: Yes.

Mr. Irwin: How important is West Pakistan's concern that East Pakistan would be helpful in a war?

Adm. Moorer: Their principal concern was foreign exchange. Also, they do have 25 jets there. I think more important, possibly, is the relationship of Iran to West Pakistan. Iran has a certain value to us and some of this spills over.

Gen. Cushman: We believe the actions of the West Pakistan army have made the breakup more certain. There is a psychological rift now and we don't think they can really bring the country back under West Pakistan control, particularly if the Indians supply arms.

Mr. Sisco: The Pakistan Ambassador on Wednesday,³ in what I think was a highly optimistic vein, said he assumed there would be some new political move by Yahya within X number of weeks.

³ April 7; see footnote 2, Document 22.

Mr. Kissinger: Some move toward Mujib?

Mr. Sisco: He implied that Mujib's six-point program would be conceded. If this is true, Yahya will give them substantial autonomy. Our people believe this is too little too late, and that the likelihood of a united country is not too great. We will just have to wait and see, though.

Mr. Kissinger: Why would the Pakistan Government do this?

Adm. Moorer: They thought that they could do it a lot faster than they did.

Mr. Sisco: There is no question that it was an unwise act, but Yahya was confronted with a cruel dilemma. The use of force, per se, was probably the final step and precluded any real integration or unity.

Mr. Kissinger: We have a number of issues relating to Pakistan that are coming up piecemeal—emergency food, the program loan, the President's reply to the letter from Yahya, military supply, etc.

Mr. Sisco: These decisions will all have to be taken within the broader framework. We will have to try to reach a judgment on the basis of the circumstances. I think the military picture may be inconclusive for some time.

Adm. Moorer: I agree.

Mr. Sisco: I think it likely, however, that East Pakistan will end in some form of separatism. Our job is to maintain reasonable relations with both wings. As we view the subcontinent, in terms of our relative interest, our interest in India is probably greater than our interest in Pakistan, although not in absolute terms. We have begun to draft a fundamental paper in which we will make the best assumptions that we can. In that framework then, we can attempt to reach the difficult decisions.

Mr. Kissinger: Could we have a preliminary discussion now? Does everyone agree with this analysis? Is there anyone that believes West Pakistan can reestablish complete control over the country?

No one disagreed with the analysis.

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose West Pakistan controls the cities? With whom would we establish contact in East Pakistan?

Mr. Sisco: We don't know who will come to the fore in East Pakistan. We don't have an organized insurgent resistance with identifiable leadership. We also have the added problem of how we deal with India, in the likelihood that they will support the Bengalis in East Pakistan either with direct help, their blessing, their acquiescence, etc.

Mr. Noyes: If this drags on, how do they intend to feed the people in the cities? Will we be confronted by a request from West Pakistan for food for city dwellers in East Pakistan in the area they control?

Mr. Sisco: We have told the Pakistanis they should begin to think about this problem and avail themselves of offers of food from the international community. This is an example of what we mean when we say we cannot *not* intervene.

Mr. Kissinger: On the question of emergency food, we had made a commitment to East Pakistan as a result of the cyclone, which had not been fulfilled because of Pakistani bureaucracy. If West Pakistan comes to us with a specific proposal to put food into East Pakistan, what do we do?

Mr. Sisco: One possibility would be to agree on the condition that we were satisfied the food was going to East Pakistan. The problem of our doing this on a bilateral basis, however, is that it appears to support Yahya in relation to East Pakistan. It would be better to do it in the context of an international mechanism which would depoliticize the situation and not create a situation where our position would be irrevocably jeopardized.

Mr. Kissinger: If there had been no civil war, would we have wanted to use an international mechanism?

Mr. Sisco: No.

Mr. Kissinger: It could be in Pakistan's interests to satisfy us as to distribution of food. The practical consequences would be helping West Pakistan consolidate its control. If we go back on our commitment to supply the food, it would be pretty strong medicine.

Mr. Irwin: We can wait and see how things develop with the international agencies.

Mr. Kissinger: What will we know then that we don't know now?

Mr. Irwin: I have talked with Maury Williams in AID about the food situation and he thinks they have adequate food stocks. The question is what mechanism should be used to get it to the countryside.

Mr. Sisco: They have two months' food supply.

Mr. Irwin: What I am saying is that AID could handle the problem.

Mr. Kissinger: That would be all right for a new agreement, but I am talking about our previous commitment.

Mr. Sisco: We would have to insist with Yahya that our people would play a role in the distribution to insure that the food was made available to all of East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: If there were no war, would we assume they would deliver the food where they say they would?

Mr. Sisco: Yes, but circumstances have changed. There will undoubtedly be some rubs between the US and Yahya on this account.

Mr. Kissinger: If we insist that the food be delivered to all of East Pakistan, wouldn't it be spread awfully thin?

Mr. Sisco: We would have to be satisfied that it was being made available to the people.

Mr. Kissinger: In effect we will be saying that they won't give them the food. What you are really driving at is whether we should get food in or keep food out.

Mr. Irwin: It is a real dilemma. The US wants to help maintain a food supply, ideally to both the cities and the countryside. But we could not accept working with West Pakistan if that meant starving the countryside. I don't know how we solve this.

Mr. Kissinger: We have to get at the implications. It would be as though, in our civil war, the British had offered food to Lincoln on the condition that it be used to feed the people in Alabama.

Mr. Sisco: The implications are very serious.

Mr. Irwin: We also should consider what the international agencies are doing themselves, if anything.

Mr. Kissinger: If the President decides to work through the existing government, with some humanitarian wrinkles, any failure to carry out our agreement, or to impose conditions that make it impossible to carry out, would represent a major shift in policy. This is not a technical question of how the food should be distributed. The position of the East Pakistanis as "rebels" is practically official. We didn't tell Mrs. Bandaranaike⁴ that we won't give her aid in these circumstances.

Mr. Sisco: We could make the argument that this is humanitarian assistance. I agree with Henry, however, that this is not a technical question and that it does have far-reaching implications.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Saunders) Let's get a memo⁵ explaining these implications so that the President does not just decide on what he thinks is a simple matter.

Gen. Cushman: The countryside has plenty of food.

Mr. Kissinger: It depends on how we interpret the situation. If we accept the West Pakistani judgment that the food is needed in the cities, there is no problem. If we insist on distribution in the countryside, there is.

Mr. Saunders: Part of the countryside is the disaster area for which the post-cyclone emergency food was originally requested.

⁴ Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon.

⁵ See Document 26.

Mr. Noyes: Once the monsoon season starts it will be very difficult for West Pakistan to get food to the countryside.

Mr. Sisco: This is another reason why an international mechanism would be better.

Mr. Kissinger: Has this been raised with them?

Mr. Sisco: Yes. We have suggested to the Pakistanis that they give it some thought. We have pointed out that it would be in their interest, and that the US would help in any international effort.

Mr. Kissinger: Are they asking us to help now?

Mr. Sisco: The problem won't arise for some time but we need to be ready when it does arise.

Mr. Irwin: The timing is uncertain.

Mr. Van Hollen: We are laying out these various dilemmas in the paper.

Mr. Kissinger: Who is we? Is the IG doing the paper? (to Saunders) Are you participating?

Mr. Sisco: It will be an IG paper and we have been in touch with Hal [Saunders]⁶ all the way. I see the paper coming to the SRG and, if necessary, to the NSC.

Mr. Kissinger: This issue will have to go to the NSC. We will schedule another SRG meeting next week on the basis of the IG paper. We should also get a draft reply to the letter from Yahya even though we may not send it.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have done a draft.

Mr. Sisco: We have done a hand-holding draft, but we want to give it a little more thought. I think we need to sort ourselves out on some fundamental questions first. It is difficult to have the President write a letter to Yahya in which he does not opt one way or the other in the present situation.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's get ourselves in a position so that, if the President gets restless about the Yahya letter, because he does have a special feeling about Yahya, we can get the text of the reply to him quickly.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Yahya letter to the President was substantially similar to that he sent to other heads of state. There was nothing special about his letter to the President.

Mr. Kissinger: We will have another SRG on this next Wednesday⁷ or Thursday.

⁶ Brackets in the source text.

⁷ April 14.

24. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, April 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

40 Committee Meeting—April 9

PARTICIPANTS

Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
 John Irwin, Under Secretary of State
 Thomas Moorer, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
 Robert Cushman, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
 Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense
 Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State
 David Blee, CIA
 Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

Following a Senior Review Group meeting on Ceylon and Pakistan,² the meeting moved into executive session at the request of the CIA member in order to consider an item appropriate to the 40 Committee.

General Cushman began by summarizing a request that had been received [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] which had been circulated in a short memo before the meeting (attached).³ This was a request for CIA provision of unmarked small arms [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] to provide to the “freedom fighters” in East Pakistan. General Cushman remarked that the Agency had a secure channel through which it could deliver such weapons but that his personal opinion was that this operation would not remain secret much beyond that. He noted that Director Helms did not favor the project.

In response to Dr. Kissinger’s query, the following views were expressed:

- Mr. Irwin was “reluctant.”
- Admiral Moorer felt that it would be “very wrong” to be working on both sides of the East Pakistani issue at once.
- General Cushman felt that an affirmative response would prejudice the larger policy issue which the Senior Review Group had been discussing.
- Dr. Kissinger summarized by saying that he felt the President would never approve this project.

¹ Source: National Security Council Files, 40 Committee, Minutes—1971. Secret; Sensitive.

² See Document 23.

³ An April 9 memorandum from Helms to Kissinger was attached but not printed.

Mr. Sisco said that he felt the Indians were “testing us.” It is one thing, he noted, for the U.S. to close its eyes to reports of clandestine Indian support for the East Pakistani resistance movement but quite another thing for the U.S. to collude with the Indians in this supply.

Dr. Kissinger stated his assumption that the U.S. could not, in any case, deliver enough equipment to make a difference in the outcome in East Pakistan. He assumed, in any case, that the Indians would have sufficient stocks to supply any small arms that might be needed.

Mr. Blee said that the Indians do not have a large enough quantity of unmarked, unattributable weapons to supply what the East Pakistanis need in the quantities they need, so there would be a need if someone wanted this done. On the other hand, he did not see how Indian supply could make a difference in the outcome of the contest between the leftists and the moderates to gain control over the East Pakistani nationalist movement. He felt that it was a foregone conclusion that the leftists would win out.

Dr. Kissinger said that that is a very serious judgment which should be taken into account in our policy considerations. If we feel that, under present circumstances, the radicals are likely to take over, that could affect our judgment about the necessity of bringing the civil war to an end. He continued that, if the U.S. had been presented with a choice on March 25, it would certainly have urged President Yahya not to take a military course of action. But he recalled that everyone had been taken by surprise when the negotiations broke down and Yahya turned to military action.

Mr. Sisco noted that the U.S. and President Yahya both have a large stake in the preservation of moderate leadership in East Pakistan. He noted that he had said privately to Ambassador Hilaly that Pakistan has some interest in allowing those whom it had jailed to play a role in establishing a moderate leadership in East Pakistan. He noted that he had said privately to Ambassador Hilaly that Pakistan has some interest in allowing those whom it had jailed to play a role in establishing a moderate leadership in East Pakistan. In response to a question from Dr. Kissinger, Mr. Sisco felt that CIA much earlier than State had indicated the likelihood of President Yahya’s taking recourse to military action. State had been much more inclined to see a negotiated settlement and therefore had worried less about this issue before March 25.

Mr. Blee noted that the main opposition to Mujibur Rahman was leftist. The moderate leadership was now mostly in jail or dead. He concluded by noting that President Yahya is trying to crank up a “quiz-zling leadership,” and Mr. Sisco described Ambassador Hilaly’s present line about how Yahya is planning to concede the “six points” to East Pakistani leadership. Dr. Kissinger wondered why Yahya would have tried a military solution if he had expected to end up conceding

anyway. Mr. Blee surmised that the army had misjudged its ability to subdue East Pakistan quickly.

The discussion then turned to what the Indians want. Dr. Kissinger noted that in earlier sessions of the SRG it had been assumed that the Indians wanted a unified Pakistan. Mr. Blee replied that he felt what the Indians had really wanted was a very loose confederal relationship between East and West Pakistan.

Mr. Irwin noted that the Indians had proposed rescheduling the US-Indian bilateral talks—postponed from January because of the election—for May 24–25. He noted the problem of going to New Delhi without stopping in Islamabad. Mr. Saunders noted the difficulty of going to New Delhi if the East Pakistani insurgency were continuing and the West Pakistanis were holding India responsible for fueling it.

Dr. Kissinger showed great reservation, noted that the President had a special feeling about Pakistan and said he felt this problem would have to be checked with the President.

Comment: The assumption underlying the discussion after Dr. Kissinger asked individuals' views on the Indian request was that there was no question of approving it.

H.S.

25. Editorial Note

President Nixon met in the Oval Office of the White House with Henry Kissinger and H. R. Haldeman on the morning of April 12, 1971, to discuss developments in Pakistan. Kissinger began by observing that "the Dacca consulate is in open rebellion." Nixon and Kissinger expressed concern about the possibility of the United States becoming involved in the emerging civil war in Pakistan. Kissinger's assessment was that if the United States were to support the insurgents in East Pakistan "we get West Pakistan turned against us, and . . . the Bengalis are going to go left anyway." Nixon agreed: "If we get in the middle of that thing it would be a hell of a mistake." He observed that: "The people who bitch about Vietnam bitch about it because we intervened in what they say is a civil war." "Now some of those same bastards . . . want us to intervene here—both civil wars."

Kissinger said that the same people wanted the United States to cut off economic assistance to Pakistan. He judged that their argument was made for "pure doctrinaire reasons," and in response to the loud

complaints coming from India about the situation in East Pakistan. “But India is screaming,” Kissinger added, “because they are scared to death of their own Bengalis. Deep down the Indians don’t really want an independent East Pakistan because within ten years of that the West Bengalis are going to start bringing pressure on them for autonomy.” He concluded: “It’s a classic situation for us to stay out of.” He added: “For us to cut off aid would infuriate the West Pakistanis.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation among Nixon, Kissinger, and Haldeman, April 12, 1971, 10:24–10:33 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 477–1)

26. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 13, 1971.

SUBJECT

Policy Review on Pakistan

Secretary Rogers has sent you the attached memo² saying that the time has come to “re-examine our basic stance toward Pakistan.” He cites the need to keep our options open in case East Pakistan becomes independent and to examine our relative priorities between India and Pakistan and the interplay of U.S. interests with those of Communist China and the Soviets in South Asia. To this end, the Secretary has ordered the Interdepartmental Group for the Near East and South Asia to conduct an “urgent review” of U.S. policy toward Pakistan and to make recommendations for consideration by the Senior Review Group and possibly by the NSC.

The situation in Pakistan is changing, and the Senior Review Group met Friday³ morning to discuss our posture in light of these new developments. You will soon be called upon to make some decisions on our economic aid and military supply programs for Pakistan

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-053, SRG Meeting, Pakistan 4/9/71. Secret. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² Dated April 7; attached but not printed.

³ April 9.

on which it will be difficult, if not impossible, to find a neutral ground. Whatever we do or do not do has implications.

It is important that this exercise begin with a clear focus on our overall interests and objectives in South Asia and result in a policy framework that will provide a sound basis for these decisions. I shall report further as this review proceeds. The Senior Review Group is meeting again this week.

27. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, April 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

SNIE on Prospects for Pakistan

Attached is a Special National Intelligence Estimate on "Prospects for Pakistan"² produced at the request of the State Department in connection with the current review of our posture toward Pakistan. In case you do not have time to read through the document yourself, the main points are summarized below:

The following judgments are made concerning the *outcome of the conflict in East Pakistan*:

—The prospects are "poor" that the army can substantially improve its position, much less reassert control over the Bengalis.

—Whether the army is to face widespread non-cooperation or continued active resistance will depend in part on how much help India gives the Bengalis. The estimate is that India "will continue and increase" its arms aid to the Bengalis and that this will enable them to develop at a minimum the kind of insurgency capability that the army cannot entirely suppress.

—Whatever the extent of Indian support to the Bengalis, the West Pakistanis will face "increasingly serious difficulties" in East Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-054, SRG Meeting, Pakistan and Ceylon, 4/19/71. Secret. Sent for information.

² Special National Intelligence Estimate 32-71, April 12; published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 131.

The army's will to continue the campaign will over time come to depend "a good deal" on outside pressures, particularly by the great powers, and on developments in the west wing itself where popular support "is likely to dwindle."

The Soviet and Chinese attitudes are:

—The Soviets have put themselves firmly on the record in opposition to West Pakistani military suppression of East Pakistan. The decision was "no doubt" heavily influenced by the Indian attitude but probably also involved a calculation that the odds favor a separatist solution and that Soviet interests would not be served by a prolongation of the conflict.

—The Communist Chinese have come down heavily on the West Pakistani side but Chinese military intervention in support of the West Pakistani course does "not now seem likely" although they may increase deliveries of military equipment. The Chinese however, may in time face a dilemma should an extremist group come to the fore and seek Peking's support.

The following judgments are made concerning the *political prospects for East Pakistan*:

—In the unlikely event that the West Pakistanis did succeed in reasserting military control over the Bengalis, they would almost certainly find it impossible to develop a new political system based on anything approaching a consensus of opinion in the two wings. The army would remain the final arbiter of power and a substantial majority of the population would continue to be strongly disaffected, probably to the point of launching sporadic uprisings.

—If an independent Bangla Desh were to come into being "rather soon" there would seem to be a good chance of its having a relatively moderate leadership. However, the longer the fighting goes on, the more the prospects for a takeover by an extremist and radical leadership are enhanced. Over a longer term even if the moderates initially took over their inability to solve Bangla Desh's serious problems would lead to increased susceptibility to radical and extremist ideas and groups.

—Bangla Desh would remain an object of continuing concern to India and in the name of national security, would be an object of manipulation and even of open interference on New Delhi's part. Indeed, an independent Bangla Desh is likely to remain very much in India's orbit so long as that country has a government strong and decisive enough to seek to exercise its influence.

The following are the *prospects for a separate West Pakistan*.

—The army is likely to remain the principal political factor in West Pakistan, though it might eventually turn over formal political power to some civilian groups whose views are compatible.

—A separate West Pakistani regime, even if Yahya goes, would be likely to pursue the same foreign policies it now does in balancing off China, the USSR and the US.

—West Pakistan might experience a crisis in the wake of the loss of the East wing that could lead to its breakup but this contingency “now appears unlikely.”

28. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, April 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Farland's Recommendations on Pakistan

Ambassador Farland has sent in his recommendations on what our posture toward the conflict in Pakistan should be at this point (Tab A).² These are, of course, integrated into the NEA/IG paper,³ but they are also [worth] reading since they provide a clear picture of the problems involved as seen from Islamabad.

The Ambassador believes that our “first aim” should be “an early end to the violence in East Pakistan and introduction of a working government. In seeking this end he sees three alternative postures the US can adopt: (1) “business as usual,” (2) “sanctions against West Pakistan,” (3) “maintaining options in both East and West Pakistan.”

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-054, SRG Meeting, Pakistan and Ceylon, 4/19/71. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information.

² Telegrams 3337, 3351, and 3363 from Islamabad, all April 13, were attached at Tab A. Telegram 3337 outlined the Embassy's recommended response to the crisis developing in Pakistan. Telegram 3351 offered recommendations concerning economic assistance to Pakistan in light of the crisis. Telegram 3363 dealt with the military sales program. (Also *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK, AID (US) 15 PAK and DEF 12-5 PAK, respectively)

³ Reference is to a paper entitled “Pakistan-American Relations—A Reassessment” prepared on April 16 by the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Near East and South Asia. Sisco, as chairman of the group, sent the paper on that date to Kissinger for consideration by the Senior Review Group at its meeting on April 19. (Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-054, SRG Meeting, Pakistan and Ceylon, 4/19/71) The paper is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 132.

Business as Usual would involve:

—In public continue to associate ourselves with humanitarian appeals for relief and, perhaps in private, point out the advisability of accepting such relief.

—No modifications in our on-going military sales programs and move to implement the one-time exception.

—Carry out our economic assistance program making only such changes as are necessitated by the physical impossibility of implementing programs in the East and at about the same proportionate level.

The Ambassador points out that this posture is clearly what the West Pakistanis would like most and it would permit us to at least hold our own and probably register some gains in East Pakistan. At the same time, it would be extremely unpopular in East Pakistan and would create serious residual problems there. It would also be charged that we were financing Pakistan's civil war.

Sanctions against the West Pakistanis would involve:

—U.S. public condemnation of West Pakistani military actions.

—Privately telling Yahya we think his present course is tantamount to national suicide and urging him on to an early political settlement.

—Suspend all military sales, including implementation of the one-time exception.

—Suspend ongoing FY-1970 economic commitments and postpone any discussion of new US aid commitments until the government modifies its policy toward the East Pakistanis.

—Limit PL-480 to only that which is strictly humanitarian and feasible under current conditions.

The Ambassador points out that this posture would stand as well in East Pakistan but would reduce to a minimum, if not eliminate entirely, our influence in West Pakistan for the foreseeable future. He is doubtful, moreover, that it would achieve the desired short-term political effect. On the plus side, he notes that such an approach would align us with India.

Maintaining options in both East and West Pakistan would involve:

—In our public stance we would take a somewhat firmer line than we have so far, although sticking to "non-interference," this would include expressing concern for loss of human life and suffering, underscoring our desire to see an early end to the fighting and return to civilian government, and making clear our continuing concern about the use of US arms to suppress the East Pakistanis.

—Privately, we would inform the Pakistanis, without threatening or lecturing, that we do not believe force will provide a solution. This dialogue could begin with the President's answer to Yahya.

—Continue current PL-480, technical assistance, and selected project assistance with substantial overall reduction in our assistance activities and levels as required by difficulties we now face in implementing normal development program. We would maintain activities we can now justify on developmental criteria and ones which would not be seen as directly supporting military action against the Bengalis. We would explain our actions in terms of present inability to carry out many activities, especially those in East Pakistan and hold out hope for full resumption as soon as conditions permit and revised development plans are prepared.

—On military supply, take internal actions such as “technical delays” which would have the effect of suspending supply of the most sensitive items such as ammunition. On the one-time exception, enter into a “bureaucratic waltz” without taking any formal action to suspend it.

Ambassador Farland urges the adoption of the last—the posture of keeping our options open to both the East and West Pakistanis. The arguments he advances in favor of it are:

—On military supply we would have a defensible position at home without having to justify it to the West Pakistanis.

—West Pakistani unhappiness with some aspects of this approach may be mitigated by fact we would be continuing at least some economic aid and military supply and not engaging in public moralizing.

—West Pakistanis might choose to slam the door in our face but this would then be their decision defensible both in US and at some later date in West Pakistan.

—Provide basis for re-establishing ties and programs with Bengalis when situation so permits.

The only arguments the Ambassador advances against are:

—It is the harder alternative to implement and *runs risk of offending both West and East Pakistanis and satisfying neither.*

—Many in East Pakistan will conclude that our half-way house measures [are] inadequate and criticize US for failing to impose total sanctions on “West Pak aggressors.”

Comment

Ambassador Farland seems to have come up with about the same general range of options as the IG working group here has arrived at independently.⁴ The only argument at this point—and it is a crucial

⁴ Kissinger added a handwritten note in the margin at this point which reads: “Maybe he was prepositioned.”

one—is what the specific components of each option should be and this revolves mainly on one’s judgment of Pakistani tolerance for US pressure. Some would argue, for instance, for the inclusion of formal suspension of military supply in the “options open” posture on the grounds that it contributes very little in the short run to the Pak military machine but to continue such supply would break any link we may have with the Bengalis. Farland believes, on the other hand, that formal suspension of military supply would be the straw that broke our relations with the West Pakistanis no matter what else we might do.

Farland’s analysis would appear to be fairly sound as far as it goes. His analysis, of course, is limited to Pakistan. At Tab B⁵ is a cable from Ambassador Keating with his familiar views on this subject.

⁵ Telegram 5311 from New Delhi, April 12, was attached at Tab B. In this telegram Keating called for an accommodation to what he saw as the new realities in South Asia. “Pakistan is probably finished as a unified state; India is clearly the predominant actual and potential power in this area of the world; Bangla Desh with limited power and massive problems is probably emerging.” Keating felt that the United States should condemn the military repression of East Pakistan, suspend economic assistance and cut off military supplies to Pakistan. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK)

29. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon¹

Rawalpindi, April 17, 1971.

Dear Mr President,

In my pre-occupation with events and developments at home, I have not so far been able to acknowledge your letter of March 3, 1971,² with which I received a copy of your valuable and comprehensive report to the Congress of the United States on American Foreign Policy. I take this opportunity of thanking you for your letter and for your very kind expression of sympathy for me and the people of Pakistan in this hour of crisis. I share your hope, Mr President, that, with the restoration of normal conditions in East Pakistan, saner councils in that province will emerge to assist in the resumption of the interrupted task

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). Mistakenly filed under India. No classification marking. The letter was presented to President Nixon on May 10 by M. M. Ahmad, President Yahya’s Adviser for Economic Affairs; see Document 44.

² Not found.

of democratic processes and a peaceful transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people.

I trust that you have had an opportunity of seeing the message³ which I had instructed my Ambassador in Washington to convey to you on March 30, 1971. I am conscious of the pressure of public opinion in the United States much of it based on unauthenticated, and in some cases biased, reports inspired by the Indian Government—which has created an impression quite different from the true state of affairs in Pakistan. No one is more pained than I am, Mr President, about the events leading to the breakdown of law and order in East Pakistan. During the eleven days which I spent in Dacca last month, my efforts were directed solely towards the achievement of a workable constitutional arrangement which would ensure the integrity, sovereignty and progress of Pakistan. It is indeed tragic that my efforts were thwarted by a group of unpatriotic elements.

In order to acquaint you more fully with the background of the events of the last three months, following the general elections and with my plans for the future, I am sending Mr M. M. Ahmad, my Adviser for Economic Affairs, to Washington to convey to you personally all relevant information. I hope you will be good enough to find the time to receive him and provide him the opportunity to explain to you my present endeavours and future plans.

At this time of painful and anguished crisis in Pakistan, I am deeply gratified that your Government has made it clear, to all those who have raised the question, that the United States recognises the current events in East Pakistan as an internal affair, for whose solution the responsibility rests with the Government of Pakistan.

May I avail of this opportunity, Mr President, of expressing to you my appreciation of the understanding and cooperation which we have received from your Administration, especially from your esteemed Secretary for State, the Hon'ble Mr William Rogers, and the officials of his Department.

I am happy to know also that the alternative arrangements which we made for the evacuation of American nationals from Dacca by Pakistan International Airlines, as a substitute for the requested use of United States Air Force aircraft, were so readily accepted and that these arrangements have been satisfactorily completed.

In conclusion, may I reiterate what I said in my letter of March 30 that it continues to be my endeavour to resume the interrupted process of transferring power to the elected representatives of the people at the very earliest date. Now that the situation in East Pakistan is rapidly

³ Dated March 31; see Document 16.

returning to normalcy, I intend to announce shortly, as a first step, my plan for the induction of provincial governments on the basis of elections held in December. It is my earnest hope that this will create appropriate conditions to enable me to proceed to the next stage of dealing with the constitutional issues at the national level.

With warmest personal regards,
Sincerely,

A.M. Yahya Khan

30. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India¹

Washington, April 17, 1971, 0128Z.

65665. Subj: East Pakistan Situation.

1. NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary Van Hollen in discussion with Indian Embassy DCM Rasgotra April 16 expressed USG concern about any escalation recent incidents between India and Pakistan along East Pak frontier. Van Hollen noted that reported advance toward frontier check posts and border towns by Pakistan Army could be new factor which might heighten chance of clashes. He hoped India would continue to exercise restraint it had shown thus far. Rasgotra said he was sure it would but he noted that Pakistani firing across border did cause problems.

2. In response to Van Hollen inquiry, Rasgotra said refugee flow from East Pakistan into India had definitely increased and India feared it might increase further.² He said India was not [*sic*] presently planning an approach to international organizations for assistance in dealing with situation and would be in touch with USG before doing so. Van Hollen noted when we last consulted on refugee problem (in Delhi)

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK. Confidential. Drafted by R. Grant Smith (NEA/INC) on April 16, cleared by Schneider (NEA/INC) and Alexander S.C. Fuller (NEA/PAF), and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to Islamabad and Dacca.

² In a conversation with Ambassador Keating on April 19, Indian officials put the number of refugees who had fled from East Pakistan into India at 150,000. (Telegram 5828 from New Delhi, April 19; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger)

it had not reached stage where international assistance required. He hoped GOI would keep in touch on this. If serious problem developed we would be prepared to consider what might be possible in terms of assistance on our part.

Johnson

31. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan¹

Washington, April 17, 1971, 2102Z.

65773. Subject: Provisional Government of Bangla Desh.

1. Pakistan Ambassador Hilaly told Van Hollen on instructions April 16 that Government of Pakistan wished to bring to USG's attention possible approach by representatives alleging to represent "Provisional Government of Bangla Desh."

2. Hilaly said India had permitted establishment provisional government on its territory and was providing financial support. In GOP view, such provisional government exists only in GOI's imagination, is designed to justify Indian intervention, and to aggravate already serious situation.

3. Hilaly said GOP understands that several representatives of so-called Provisional Government already have gone abroad to seek support. One such representative, Zakaria Choudhury, has already arrived in London. According Reuter news report London, April 15, he has held press conference and has been interviewed on BBC, claiming that Bengali separatists control three fourths of East Pakistan. Same news report states that FCO has refused receive Choudhury.

4. Hilaly concluded by saying that it was probable that another representative of Bangla Desh would come to Washington in effort see USG officials. In anticipation of this possibility, he had been asked formally to advise USG that GOP considered establishment of Provisional Government as essentially Indian-sponsored action. Representatives of

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15 PAK. Confidential. Drafted and approved by Van Hollen and cleared by Spengler (NEA/PAF). Also sent to London and Dacca and repeated to New Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Lahore, and Karachi.

Bangla Desh, who have been charged with treason, have no right to speak regarding Pakistan.²

5. *For London*: Would appreciate any information re activities Zakaria Choudhury, including any efforts he may have made to approach FCO.

6. *For Dacca*: Do you have any data on Choudhury?

Samuels

² On April 13 a representative of the Awami League called on the British Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta and indicated that “Bangla Desh Prime Minister” Tajuddin Ahmed wanted to meet with U.S. and British officials. (Telegram 641 from Calcutta, April 13; *ibid.*, POL 23–9 PAK) The Consulate General in Dacca confirmed that Ahmed was a key figure in the Bengali resistance and would probably emerge as political head of the resistance movement. (Telegram 1297 from Dacca, April 14; *ibid.*) Although British officials agreed to meet with Ahmed, the Department instructed the Consulate in Calcutta to decline to do the same. The Department felt that such a meeting arranged through the British raised questions about the organization Ahmed represented and could have implications regarding recognition of a government of Bangla Desh. The Department did not preclude, however, future meetings with Ahmed or other representatives of the Awami League. (Telegram 62715 to Calcutta, April 14; *ibid.*)

32. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, April 19, 1971, 3:10–4:10 p.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan and Ceylon

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. Another record of this meeting was prepared in OASD/ISA by James Noyes. (Washington National Record Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 092 (Jan–Jul) 1971) David Blee of the CIA also prepared a brief record of the meeting. (Central Intelligence Agency Files, Job 80–M01044A, Box 1, Folder 9, DCI Helms: Various Subjects)

State
 John N. Irwin
 Christopher Van Hollen
 Tom Thornton

Defense
 David Packard
 James S. Noyes
 G. Warren Nutter

JCS
 Adm. John P. Weinell
 Col. James Connell, USA

CIA
 Lt. Gen. Robert Cushman
 David Blee
 [*name not declassified*]

AID
 Donald MacDonald
 Maurice Williams

OMB
 James Schlesinger
 NSC Staff
 Harold Saunders
 Sam Hoskinson
 Col. Richard Kennedy
 Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed to:

—Get a consolidated list of all items of military equipment scheduled for delivery in the next year.

—Get from the President an idea of the basic stance he wishes to take and, within the stance, present him with the various choices.

—Do nothing one way or the other on the military shipments or the loan questions until the President has had a chance to review the situation.

[Omitted here are conclusions relating to Ceylon.]

Mr. Kissinger: General Cushman, can you tell us where we are?

Gen. Cushman: After three weeks of fighting in East Pakistan, the West Pakistanis hold the cities and are moving along the roads west of the big river. They can apparently move throughout the countryside as they wish, and it is only the fact that they do not have enough men that is limiting their movement.

Mr. Kissinger: Is Bogra in rebel hands?

Gen. Cushman: The rebels are still there but the Army hasn't moved up there yet. They are taking the villages without any real resistance. There are 20,000 to 40,000 West Pakistan troops—possibly more. It is only a matter of time before they control all the population centers. The Bengali forces aren't resisting; they're just melting away.

Mr. Kissinger: Are they melting away or disintegrating?

Gen. Cushman: They're disintegrating. They are not in communication with each other and are not an effective force. Their morale is low and they are disorganized and fatalistic. They could, however, be a long-term problem if the Indians keep supplying them and they turn to terrorism or acts of sabotage. There is no doubt that the Indians are

involved in clandestine support activities; they're supplying them with arms, ammunition, food and medical supplies, and have sent in advisers and sabotage teams. They also helped organize the Bangla Desh government that was proclaimed on April 13.

Mr. Kissinger: Where is it located?

Gen. Cushman: Chuadanga near Kushtia, although there is some question that they are still there. The press reports that the leaders have crossed the border into East Bengal. Mujib is its titular head, although its acting head is Ahmed, second man in the Awami League. They have no conception of what is happening. The Indians apparently had thought of recognizing the regime, but that is now doubtful since they don't control anything. The Russians have recommended against recognition because of their doubts about its viability. Chinese public statements remain favorable to West Pakistan and accuse India of intervening, but we doubt that they will go beyond verbal support. The Soviets are apparently opposed to the bloodshed and are not specifically supporting the insurgents. The East Pakistani economy may be a determining factor. The fighting has disrupted transportation, food is becoming short, the ports are barely operating. If this continues, we can anticipate a crisis by September. The cost of the operation, the drop in trade, the loss of foreign exchange from East Pakistan—these are all additional strains on an already stagnant economy.

Mr. Kissinger: The IG paper² gives us three basic choices and seems to prefer the second. They are related to a number of issues: military supply, program loans, PL-480, a reply to the letter from Yahya, recognition of Bangla Desh, our public posture. Can we assume the recognition question is moot? There is nothing to recognize. The choices are described as "hands off", use of selective influence, and an all-out effort to end the hostilities. These choices all seem to assume a prolonged war. How realistic is this since West Pakistani superiority seems evident. I agree I used to think that 30,000 men couldn't possibly subdue 75 million, which I suppose is the Western way of looking at it. But if the 75 million don't organize and don't fight, the situation is different.

Gen. Cushman: It's a little too early to tell what the Bengalis will do. They could undertake acts of sabotage or massive non-cooperation.

Mr. Kissinger: Is that happening?

Gen. Cushman: Not yet.

Mr. Kissinger: If they organize themselves in guerrilla forces and go in for mass non-cooperation, it could be very tough. But we have no evidence that they are doing that.

² See footnote 3, Document 28.

Mr. Irwin: We have no evidence either way. I can't help but think, however, that eventually there will be trouble. We have no evidence that there will be cooperation by any East Pakistan elements with any influence. We can't really tell yet, but I think there is a good possibility they will not cooperate.

Mr. Kissinger: Whom are we trying to impress in East Pakistan? If there were a functioning guerrilla force it would be one situation. Suppose West Pakistan regains control?

Mr. Irwin: That's the advantage of the middle solution.³ We don't have to commit ourselves.

Mr. Kissinger: But with the middle course we could get the disadvantages of every course of action. It could infuriate West Pakistan and mortgage our relations with them, without getting anything concrete from East Pakistan. Particularly when we can't define the East Pakistan leadership.

Mr. Van Hollen: We've already passed the first phase in the paper. The West Pakistan army is in effective control of the major cities and is moving toward the border towns. The question is whether they have effective control in the areas in between. They can't unload ships at Chittagong since they're not in full control and they can't get the Bengali stevedores to work. The question is whether India will sit still. They are worried about the radical element in East Pakistan and may step up their clandestine efforts across the border.

Mr. Kissinger: I've read the SNIE⁴ and I agree that it could happen. But we've seen no evidence of any effective opposition.

Mr. Van Hollen: You can't go by bus between Dacca and Chittagong. The railroad is not running. The East Pakistan government is simply not operating.

Mr. Kissinger: The recommendations under Option 2 would be interpreted by Yahya as a cut-off of military assistance. That may be what we want but we would be biting the bullet in terms of a substantial rupture of our relations with Yahya. If we hold up PL-480 shipments

³ The object of the selective influence option, as outlined in the IG paper, was to maintain influence in both parts of Pakistan without foreclosing future options. Under this option, the IG team recommended deferring all lethal military supplies as well as new development loans. To balance those deferrals, they recommended continuing technical assistance and loan support, and the resumption of the distribution of food supplies under PL-480 to the area affected in 1970 by the cyclone in East Pakistan. On the issue of how to respond to the resistance movement in East Pakistan, they recommended establishment of discreet contact with Bangla Desh representatives while refraining from recognition of a new government until the Bengali resistance gained effective control over East Pakistan.

⁴ See Document 27.

for assurance that the food will get to the countryside, this constitutes a substantial challenge to the West Pakistan notion of sovereignty. Although we may not consider it as a form of taking sides, it will be so read. And it may not be enough for East Pakistan.

Mr. Packard: I've been looking at the items on the military sales supply list and there is not much shippable for some time. We may not have to take a position now and it would probably be better to wait.

Mr. Kissinger: We could do it on technical grounds. When is the question likely to come up?

Mr. Packard: In May 72 when we are due to ship 300 APCs.

Mr. Kissinger: And we don't have to take a position now?

Mr. Saunders: We have to decide whether or not to let the sale proceed.

Mr. Packard: We have some spares and accessories due to be shipped in the fourth quarter of 1971, but most other items are not due until 1972. We can take some more time with this . . .

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose West Pakistan should pay for the APCs?

Mr. Van Hollen: They have already made a down-payment of \$1.3 million.

Mr. Kissinger: When is the next payment due?

Mr. Packard: We certainly shouldn't send the down payment back.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree. Let's just sit on this one until closer to the delivery date.

Mr. Packard: We can sit still for sometime. There are a few things we might want to deliver which wouldn't come down on one policy or another. We might alienate West Pakistan if we don't go ahead, with no clear result.

Mr. Irwin: I thought that was what the paper is saying—that we should make each decision on a case by case basis.

Mr. Packard: With one difference—we wouldn't state any policy.

Mr. Van Hollen: We can hold in abeyance any policy judgment.

Mr. Irwin: The paper says we should defer for the time being. It doesn't say we should announce anything.

Mr. Packard: I'm more worried about possible domestic reaction.

Mr. Kissinger: Is there anything in the pipeline?

Mr. Packard: We don't think so and we've given State some guidance on a public position. We can't determine what is with the freight forwarding agents and we don't want to ask them for fear of stirring up public notice. Also there is the question of commercial sales from private companies. I think we should hold everything in abeyance but don't say anything publicly.

Mr. Kissinger: (Reading from the paper) But the paper says "defer effective implementation of the one-time exception sales offer" and "defer all deliveries of ammunition and spare parts . . ." This goes beyond what Dave (Packard) is saying.

Mr. Schlesinger: When are the West Pakistanis likely to run out of ammunition?

Mr. Packard: We don't know.

Mr. Irwin: We have some more flexible wording of item 5 than in the original paper. (Passed a new paper⁵ around the table.)

Mr. Kissinger: (Reading from the new paper) "Defer for the time being deliveries of ammunition and deliveries of spare parts for lethal equipment which has been used or might be used in East Pakistan."

Mr. Packard: We have some spare parts for torpedos due to be shipped on April 15 and May 15. I see no reason to stop them.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we get a list of the deliveries scheduled for the next year.

Adm. Weinel: We have 28,000 rounds of ammo (\$30,000) due to go in July. Also 507 150-pound bomb parts for \$24,000 and \$15,000 worth of fuses.

Mr. Kissinger: Would it be in our interest to defer these?

Mr. Irwin: From the point of view of Congress, these deliveries of ammunition might be troublesome.

Mr. Kissinger: But we would pay a very heavy price with Yahya if they were not delivered.

Gen. Cushman: These items wouldn't affect their ability to fight a war to any extent. They are using mostly small arms.

Mr. Packard: I think we should be prepared to take a little heat from Congress. We can't let Congress decide everything.

Mr. Kissinger: I think we must go to the President before we hold up any shipments. This would be the exact opposite of his policy. He is not eager for a confrontation with Yahya. If these weapons could be used in East Pakistan, it would be different. I suggest we ride along on the 300 APCs. We don't have to accept any more money or ship anything. I see no relation to East Pakistan.

Mr. Packard: We will get a consolidated list of everything that is still due for shipment. Then I think we should wait until the situation clarifies.

Mr. Irwin: I agree that we should do it on an informal basis.

Mr. Kissinger: Before we start shipping anything that's due we should give the President a chance to rule on it. He should have a

⁵ Only one version of the IG paper has been found.

chance to get a crack at the APC shipment. You're not recommending we stop the shipment?

Mr. Packard: No, but I recommend we look it over carefully. I don't think we should change our policy, but we will bring specific items to your attention. If anything looks troublesome, you can check it.

Mr. Kissinger: We have two bureaucratic choices. If we want to defer all military shipments, we will have to go to the President. If we want to defer particular items, we can raise them here and possibly settle them without going to the President.

Mr. Packard: We will get a consolidated list and work out a plan. We'll try not to ship any controversial items so to avoid facing the issue. (to Mr. Nutter) Will you go over the list?

Mr. Nutter: Yes. We don't know what may be on the way now.

Mr. Irwin: Is it possible something may show up in the near future?

Mr. Packard: It's possible. Congress may holler and you can just blame it on the stupid Defense Department.

Mr. Nutter: We can't find out about the shipments for sure without alerting the forward freight shippers to a possible change of policy.

Mr. Schlesinger: We're not talking about suspending sale of the APCs, are we?

Mr. Packard: No.

Mr. Kissinger: When is another payment due?

Adm. Weinell: The balance is due on the date of shipment which is expected to be May 1972.

Mr. Irwin: We don't have to suspend any contracts, just hold up deliveries. We need not do it officially.

Mr. Schlesinger: Are items 1 and 7 consistent?⁶ Item one chides Yahya because he is unable to carry on development activity. No 7 defers new development loans.

Mr. Irwin: We don't know what the established development criteria are.

Mr. Kissinger: Have we asked them to come up with a development plan for all Pakistan; or just for West Pakistan? What do we want them to do? Let's make sure we get an NSC meeting or a Presidential decision before we undertake a major revision of policy. If East Pakistan collapses, no matter what our view may be of the savagery of the West Pakistan troops, we would just be pulling India's chestnuts out of the fire if we take on West Pakistan. If East Pakistan goes into

⁶ Reference is to items listed under the selective influence option of the IG paper.

guerrilla warfare, the paper is correct. But we need enough time to determine what the situation in East Pakistan really is. The President thinks he has a special relationship with Yahya; he would be most reluctant to take him on. This reluctance might be overcome, but we can't do it at this level.

Mr. Van Hollen: We definitely want an NSC meeting. Now that the ballgame has changed, I think the World Bank should take the lead in a new assessment of Pakistan's development potential.

Mr. Kissinger: Is a new development loan due?

Mr. Van Hollen: We were about to go for \$70 million for Pakistan in the context of an integrated plan for both wings.

Mr. Kissinger: Is it for us to make a judgment? Should we say no and stop the loan?

Mr. Van Hollen: Let's get the World Bank to make a new assessment.

Mr. Nutter: \$70 million won't make or break the economy.

Mr. Packard: I think we should wait until the situation has clarified.

Mr. Kissinger: When is the \$70 million due.

Mr. Williams: This is part of the aid program for FY 1971. They expect it now or in the next two months.

Mr. Kissinger: To stop it would be a major act.

Mr. Williams: I agree, it would be a major act. Also, the President told Yahya we might go as high as \$100 million if they proceeded with their development as recommended by the IMF. They may say now that they are ready to go ahead with that development. They are losing their reserves rapidly, due largely to the loss of their jute earnings. They have a representative in Washington now talking to the IMF about a standby and to the World Bank about a moratorium on debt repayment. They have another \$60 million due in April. They can't meet their debts and are looking to the international agencies, then to us. We need information from them on their revised development plan before we can do much.

Mr. Kissinger: There are many ways of handling this.

Mr. Williams: That's a good reason for a reassessment.

Mr. Nutter: This isn't a development question. They're in a financial crisis and need help.

Mr. Williams: But the funds were approved by Congress for development.

Mr. Kissinger: We have to know what we want to do. We either need an NSC meeting or some other mechanism for the President to get a crack at the basic decision—to find out what basic stance he wants to take.

Mr. Irwin: If we stop the loan, that is a major act. If we let it go through, that is a major act. We have to shape up what issues are before us and when we have to act on them.

Mr. Kissinger: It would be less of a major act to go through with a loan which has already been approved for a government we recognize, than to stop it.

Mr. Irwin: Let's find out how the President looks at the overall problem, then we can fit the details in.

Mr. Packard: We have to decide whether to continue to support West Pakistan or to withdraw our support.

Mr. Kissinger: And to figure out what it gets us if we withdraw our support.

Mr. Irwin: We need time.

Mr. Kissinger: We need some indication from the President of what our basic stance should be. Within this stance then, we [defer?] the next step, we can present him with the choices either in the NSC or a smaller group. It would serve no useful purpose to go through the individual items here. The Bureau (NEA) can work out the implementing measures once we know what line he wants to take. I'll talk with the President and Secretary Rogers to see how best to get a Presidential determination. In the meantime, don't do anything by default one way or the other, on either the loan or the shipments, so as not to commit us to a course we can't avoid. I think that's as much as we can do today. Do you all agree?

Mr. Irwin: Yes. We also have the problem of a reply to Yahya's letter⁷ to the President.

Mr. Williams: The situation has changed a lot in a week. Another week will give us a better reading.

Gen. Cushman: We will lay on a requirement in the field for an estimate on the duration of the resistance.

Mr. Kissinger: I'll be in touch with the Secretary (Rogers) and the President.

[Omitted here is discussion relating to Ceylon.]

⁷ Reference is to the letter of March 31; Yahya's letter of April 17 was not presented to Nixon until May 10; see Documents 16 and 29.

33. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, April 19, 1971.

SUBJECT

Pakistan—A Personal Reflection on the Choice Before Us

Having sent you comprehensive material on the decisions before us in Pakistan, I want to write you this simpler personal note in an effort to leave aside some of the complexities and get down to central thoughts.

It appears that *the situation is settling down to one of prolonged conflict*. We must guard against moving too quickly to a view that the West Pakistanis are regaining control, but it does seem increasingly clear that we are not going to be dealing with a situation in which the resistance movement is so dramatically successful as to make it immediately apparent to the West Pakistanis that they cannot win.

Nothing has happened to alter our basic judgment that the breakup of Pakistan is inevitable, but events of recent days suggest that we may have been over-emphasizing its imminence.

What this suggests to me is that time may have been bought for a second chance to try mitigating some of the worst consequences of a split.

I have suggested in the analytical summary² for your SRG book that our basic strategy in South Asia should be to do all we can to avoid having to make a decisive choice among the three major political entities there. While the Soviet Union and Communist China may be more ready to make choices because of their rivalry, the U.S. interest lies in attempting to maintain a U.S. alternative to those two big Asian powers in each of the South Asian entities.

If this is a fair statement of U.S. purpose and strategy, then the present situation in Pakistan means that we have been saved for a moment from making that choice by the fact that an independent East Pakistan has not suddenly been thrust upon us. We may now have some time in which to come to terms with this emerging reality.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-054, SRG Meeting, Pakistan and Ceylon, 4/19/71. Secret. Sent for information.

² Dated April 16. (Ibid.)

If we are to preserve some position in both East and West Pakistan, we have to consider the interests of both sides:

—It is instructive to listen to the way the West Pakistanis are now describing the situation and their intent. They are talking in terms of setting up a political regime of respected East Pakistani politicians and conceding to them the six points as modified by Yahya in the negotiations before March 25.

—The general judgment in the intelligence community here is that these politicians will not be acceptable to most East Pakistanis and that the six points as Yahya defines them do not meet East Pakistani demands for government of their own affairs.

Those statements both may be true, but the main fact may be that the West Pakistanis will now succeed in setting up an administration which will at least permit the beginnings of food distribution and a face-saving way for them to back away from the more extreme elements of military repression.

In listening to the West Pakistani plans, one must recognize that accepting them too quickly as realistic could obscure the basic conflict which exists. The West Pakistani military establishment is intent on preserving the unity of the country. The East Pakistanis seem bent on gaining substantial autonomy. We cannot assume that the problem is solved; it is only deferred.

The present situation gives us an opportunity to re-assess one of the options which we discarded before March 25. We decided then not to inject ourselves into the negotiations between East and West. This was probably wise in that we really did not know what was going on and we would have appeared to be meddling in a situation over our depth. Now, however, we have seen the potential consequences—economic problems in West Pakistan beyond our capacity, the possibility of an Indian-Pakistani war and the difficult choices which East Pakistani independence would thrust upon us.

The most important issue before us, therefore, may be whether we wish now to involve ourselves more actively in it attempting to help work out a negotiated settlement between East and West Pakistan.

What I have in mind is fairly limited. It is still true that these negotiations are so intricate and involve such passions on each side that we are ill-equipped to involve ourselves.

However, the very problems we face lay the groundwork for an approach to Yahya which should be the product of the present policy review. However gentle our tactics, I believe our objective should be to encourage movement toward the greatest possible degree of East Pakistani autonomy.

The strategy to follow would be one of attempting to create now a regime in East Pakistan that could be genuinely transitional over time to real East Pakistani autonomy. By creating the impression of movement in

that direction, Yahya might just succeed in spinning out this process and averting for the time being the worst of a continued war of independence.

I would not tell Yahya that he must do anything. I am simply saying that it might be useful for us to see what we want in this light. Our approach to Yahya would emphasize the worst of what might come—especially in the economic field where he is already nearing desperation—and base our approach on wishing to share in his planning so that we might be as helpful as possible.

This would be quite different from trying to force him to take a position by cutting off aid. It would be quite different from rushing to get on the Bengali bandwagon. It would be *an effort to help a friend find a practical and face-saving way out of a bind*. It would capitalize on some of the goodwill we have built. It would be based on our recognition that we cannot keep hands off this problem without being forced to choices later when options for preserving our position in South Asia will be more limited.

This approach would not buy us favor in India or East Pakistan now. We would be sacrificing a near-term gain with the thought that evolution of East Pakistani autonomy would permit improvement in our position over the longer run. The near-term disadvantage might be somewhat lessened by a general dialogue with the Indians on what we are trying to achieve.

34. **Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**¹

Islamabad, April 21, 1971, 0730Z.

[*number not declassified*] Ref WH 10389.²

1. Greatly appreciate Presidential inquiry and this opportunity to express my views. Needless to say, what has occurred is extremely disconcerting and frustrating, a real setback to USG efforts here.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

² In White House telegram 10389, April 19, from Kissinger to Farland, Kissinger conveyed the President's request for Farland's assessment of the situation in Pakistan and his recommendations on the options open to the administration in dealing with it. (Ibid.)

2. I continue to hold with course three as set forth in Embassy's principal paper on U.S. posture toward Pakistan (Islamabad 3337; see also Islamabad 3351 and 3363).³ I continue to believe it necessary for USG to maintain a posture through which it can exert some influence on GOP for a variety of reasons, most of which I expressed in general terms during Chiefs of Mission Conference, Tehran, April 20–21, 1970. (General Haig was given a copy⁴ by me prior to decision on one-time arms exception for Pakistan.) ChiCom influence in Pakistan was one of the principal concerns.

3. Because of recent developments, I am persuaded that the ChiCom objectives, set forth therein, remain unchanged. To eliminate what leverage we have with GOP today is tantamount to moving it directly into the Chinese orbit. The implications, military and political, which would then apply for this whole region of the world, are monumental. Aside from the question of a Chinese dominant position in Pakistan, I find it extremely difficult to advocate a course of action which would markedly diminish U.S. influence in Pakistan at such crucial time in Middle East and Indian Ocean area affairs. While presently we have little affirmative influence, we can act, to some extent, as deterrent to movements contrary our interest.

4. By adopting course three rather than course two,⁵ the latter being ConGen Dacca's suggestion, we are keeping our options open and not becoming either over-committed or under-committed. Further, it allows U.S. position to be changed or reversed at any time, even on short term.

5. I am fully cognizant of the fact that much of world press has hammered hard at U.S. policy as enunciated by McCloskey, State Department spokesman, i.e., crisis in East Pakistan is internal affair, but U.S. has expressed concern humanitarian grounds and use of U.S.-supplied arms. However, this pressure may ease up in near future, if assumption from latest intelligence is justified. It has been reported from various sources that GOP military will complete offensive phase East Pakistan operation within ten days to two weeks, and thereafter military activity will be primarily "mopping up" operation. End of civil

³ See footnote 2, Document 28. Among the approaches for dealing with the crisis suggested in telegram 3337 from Islamabad, course 3 called for maintaining flexible options in East and West Pakistan. In line with this approach, Farland anticipated continued but somewhat reduced economic assistance, an ongoing military sales program, tempered by "technical delays" which would have the effect of suspending shipments of sensitive items such as ammunition, and an emphasis in private discussions with members of Yahya's government on the U.S. conviction that force would not lead to a solution in East Pakistan.

⁴ Not found.

⁵ Course 2 outlined possible sanctions that could be applied against West Pakistan.

war will reduce the newsworthiness of story. Also, this will lessen public interest on issue of the use of U.S.-supplied arms in conflict. It is believed that interest will then turn from the atrocity reporting to humanitarian needs: aid to victims, food shortages, etc.

6. In holding to course three, I have taken into consideration the assumption that East Pakistan, having become a garrison state, will eventually bring about the dissolution of Pakistan as it now exists. When this will happen or in what manner it will happen is only a guess; economic stresses will weigh heavily in the balance on both questions. In the interim, India can be expected to develop systematic program of infiltration and arms aid. Guerrilla warfare is virtually assured, but the extent of it is yet uncertain. Internationally, Bangla Desh advocates will make use of all public and private forums. If and when Bangla Desh becomes a reality, it will be one of world's worst headaches, having little economic or bureaucratic infrastructure and virtually no natural resources to build upon. It is unbelievable, but in an area about the size of Louisiana, the population is expected to reach 200–275 million in the year 2000.

7. You must be aware there is strong advocacy in the State Department seeking to pull rug from under GOP and support the idea of an early Bangla Desh. Further, Embassy has had full-scale revolt on general issue by virtually all officers in Consulate General, Dacca, coupled with forfeiture of leadership for American community there. Dacca's reporting has been tendentious to an extreme.

8. Advocates of aforesaid position argue that an extended guerrilla activity will bring about elimination of U.S.-oriented and moderate Bengalis and the leadership left in East Pakistan will be largely that of extremists, that is to say, Naxalites and Bhashani activists—this to the detriment of U.S. interests. It has been my view, perhaps substantiated by East Pakistan provincial Governor Tikka Khan's conciliatory TV broadcast April 19, that GOP is not yet prepared to go much further than it has already gone, unless perhaps goaded into a Sherman-like march prior to complete pull-out. Contrariwise, I think there is strong possibility that, after this initial act of violence, cooler heads may question the worth of hanging on unduly long to a wasting asset. Economic strain, coupled with the fact that there has been no love lost between the two wings almost from the moment of inception, probably will bring about a reevaluation.

9. Should course two be adopted, USG would take on both political and economic headaches of major magnitude. IBRD's David Gordon believes economic development East Pakistan set back 15–20 years. Having helped to bring new government into being, USG certainly would be expected to make early financial commitments far beyond the availability of that which I believe constitutes the resources of our

aid program for this region. Awami League leaders during period leading up to March 25 were passing word that USG supported separation movement and was prepared to give copious amounts of economic assistance to Bangla Desh. I fear that we could well become over-involved at a time when over-involvement seems less than politic.

10. Advocates for a pro-Bangla Desh posture also argue that Bengali good-will will be irreparably lost unless the U.S. immediately changes its policy from that which has been declared to that of support for an independent East Pakistan. This argument certainly would be valid as far as many individual Bengalis are concerned, but given premise that Bangla Desh does come into being some time in the future, I submit that the economic and administrative needs will be so great that USG friendship and aid will be eagerly sought after by the new government. Hence it would seem that degree of disaffection incurred by following course three can be countered and overcome in long term.

11. Evening April 19 Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan privately advised me that M. Ahmad, presently Economic Advisor to President Yahya and former head of the Planning Commission, has been fully briefed on GOP's economic and political plans for East Pakistan with hope for implementation soonest. Ahmad prepared to depart for Washington at once if there is possibility discussing these plans with you and hopefully with the President. Hope for presidential appointment stressed by Foreign Secretary. Ahmad applied for visa April 19. I look on this with favor as it would give USG best opportunity to delve GOP thinking, and I believe that U.S. lack of interest his visit will dampen opportunities here for me to ascertain same. Further, it would add a few days to the time allotted for decision-making which is important during this time of flux both in East Pakistan and in this whole area of the world. This conversation with Foreign Secretary reported to Department with request for its reaction (Islamabad 3601⁶).

12. If Washington opts for course two rather than course three, which is the Embassy's position, our relations with Pakistan would become simply a holding action and the duties of the post could well be turned over to a chargé d'affaires. Further, I believe it my duty to inform you that leaks out of New Delhi, Dacca and Washington have been deterrents to Embassy's utility.

⁶ Dated April 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 PAK)

35. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan¹

Washington, April 24, 1971, 1220Z.

70700. Subject: Review East Pakistan Situation and USG Position.

1. Prior Asst Secy Sisco's departure for Middle East and as balancing action to Sisco conversation with Indian Amb Jha April 22,² Sisco called in Pak Amb Hilaly April 23. Dep Asst Secy Van Hollen and Fuller, NEA/PAF, participated.

2. Sisco first summarized points made previous recent conversations with Hilaly, as follows:

A. We have said both publicly and privately we regard East Pak situation as internal matter.

B. Nonetheless, as friend of Pakistan, we have expressed concern re extensive loss of life, suffering and damage.

C. We have also conveyed concern about use American arms.

D. We have suggested GOP should consider availing itself of international offers of humanitarian assistance. We prepared to participate in such international effort if GOP desires.

E. We have also expressed hope every effort can be made to improve situation in ports East Pak and to restore normal food distribution channels.

3. Sisco then said we consider that East Pakistan situation has entered new phase, in light following developments:

A. Military have consolidated their position and extended control in many cases to Indian borders.

B. There have been increasing reports of incidents between Indian and Pak military forces—both regular and irregular.

C. Large number refugees have moved into adjacent areas of India.

D. Problems have arisen re status Pak Deputy High Commission Calcutta and evacuation members Indian Deputy High Commission Dacca.

E. Heated rhetoric and charges and counter-charges continue between India and Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Confidential; Priority; Limdis. Drafted by Alexander S.C. Fuller (NEA/PAF) and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, US Mission Geneva, Karachi, Lahore, New Delhi, USUN, and London.

² Sisco's conversation with Jha was reported to New Delhi on April 23 in telegram 69364. Sisco used the conversation to urge India to exercise restraint in the delicate situation developing on the subcontinent. (Ibid.)

4. In light above, Sisco asked Hilaly convey to GOP following supplemental points:

A. Recent developments have increase international tension in area and prospects for Indo-Pak confrontation.

B. In view of these circumstances, as friend, we hope GOP will exercise maximum restraint despite what it might consider provocations from other side.

C. We want make clear we have forcefully conveyed to GOI our belief it too should act with restraint. Sisco said he had told Amb Jha India was now strong and stable as result election and consequently could be expected to act responsibly.

D. Number of refugees has risen sharply during past week and we have noted GOI appeal for international assistance.³ At US initiative, Sisco had discussed matter with Jha, told him of US humanitarian concern, and indicated we considering what contribution we might make if some international program was mounted.⁴ Sisco emphasized we recognized and were anxious not to get involved in sensitive political aspects refugee question. On other hand Hilaly should understand that if USG seems to stand still in any human crisis like that of East Pak refugees, it immediately is criticized by Congress and US people. USG does have humanitarian concern, as expressed in our previous offer of help to any international effort accepted by GOP in East Pakistan.

E. Sisco asked for report on situation East Pak and any moves toward political accommodation, noting we attach importance to such moves.

F. Otherwise, there is prospect that continued tension in East Pakistan could lead directly to expansion of internal problem into an international issue involving the danger of Indo-Pakistan conflict and wider implications.

5. Commenting on foregoing, Hilaly complained GOI says one thing and does something quite different. Cited Indian involvement in

³ During a meeting with Under Secretary Irwin on April 19, Ambassador Jha asked for U.S. support for relief assistance for East Pakistan, possibly through the Red Cross. He also asked for help in dealing with the growing refugee problem in India. (Telegram 67591 to New Delhi, April 21; *ibid.*, POL INDIA-US)

⁴ Secretary Rogers sent a memorandum to President Nixon on April 23 in which he pointed to a dramatic increase in the flow of refugees from East Pakistan into India. He noted that the refugee total in India had reached 258,000. Rogers asked Nixon's approval for a program of relief assistance to help meet the needs of the refugees over a three month period. The program would include PL-480 food supplies plus limited dollar or local currency assistance. The projected cost of the program would be approximately \$2.4 million. (*Ibid.*, SOC 10 PAK)

ceremony just across border in East Pakistan announcing establishment Provisional Government Bangla Desh and special consideration given officials thereof through accommodation State Guest House, Calcutta. Condemned Indian handling of Pak Deputy High Commission problem in Calcutta.

6. Hilaly gave assurance on other hand GOP wishes avoid providing any pretext that GOI might use as *causis belli*. Indicated Pak army staying away from Indian border.

7. On situation East Pakistan, Hilaly said military "mopping up" and will complete job in about five days. Dismissed threat of monsoon rains as inhibition to military operation and also dismissed threat of terrorist assassinations pro-GOP Bengalis; GOP will not be scared. Referred to appeal by Tikka Khan⁵ to politicians, Awami League members and even rebel military to associate with government or rejoin Army. Asserted they won't be shot. In fact foreign press would be invited back to bear witness return of East Pak to normalcy. Said restoration port operations Chittagong and Chalna being given top priority.

8. On question East Pak refugees in India, Hilaly forecast Indians will push up their inflated estimate of total by 60,000 a day until it reaches one million. Noted report that majority Pak refugees staying with "friends and relatives" in India and claimed actual refugees from East Pak could not be so absorbed.

9. In somewhat heated reference to possible international assistance, strongly criticized ICRC intervention through sending plane from Geneva without permission GOP. Asserted ICRC Vice President had opposed move but "Indian influence" had prevailed. Hilaly went on to accuse foreigners in East Pakistan of strong partisanship and total acceptance Bengali charges against GOP. "Americans in Dacca are anti-West Pakistani", Hilaly said.

11. Despite these feelings about foreign offers of relief aid, Hilaly expressed personal view GOP would ultimately accept such aid. Referred to assessment of situation now under way in East Pak by senior officials from Islamabad. Said Paks would handle distribution of outside relief. GOP doesn't want foreigners coming in; instead plans organize local people. Warned against third countries associating selves with India in relief effort: "That simply won't work." Hilaly said India's objective to internationalize East Pak situation to extent possible and in process involve other countries in its efforts.

12. In conclusion Hilaly indicated West Pakistanis and others in Pakistan deeply concerned by "humiliating" situation that has arisen.

⁵ Lieutenant General Tikka Khan, Martial Law Administrator and Governor of East Pakistan.

Do not want to be difficult re outside assistance, indeed need such assistance in liquidity crisis. However people of West Pak can be expected to be sensitive to forms international aid, particularly relief aid.

13. *For Islamabad:* Ambassador or DCM should follow up with MFA making same points conveyed by Sisco to Hilaly.

Rogers

36. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 28, 1971.

SUBJECT

Policy Options Toward Pakistan

I do not normally bother you with tactical judgments. But in the case of the present situation in Pakistan, policy depends on the posture adopted toward several major problems. The purpose of this memo is to seek your guidance on the general direction we should be following.

The Situation

Three weeks after the West Pakistani military crackdown, these three judgments seem to characterize the situation we must deal with:

—The West Pakistani military seem likely to regain physical control of the main towns and connecting arteries. The resistance is too poorly organized and equipped to prevent that now.

—Physical control does not guarantee restoration of essential services like food distribution and normal economic life because that requires Bengali cooperation which may be withheld.

—Suppression of the resistance, even if achieved soon, will leave widespread discontent and hatred in East Pakistan, with all that implies for the possibility of effective cooperation between the populace and the military, for eventual emergence of an organized resistance movement and for the unity of Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret. Sent for action.

—Tension between India and Pakistan is at its highest since 1965, and there is danger of a new conflict if the present situation drags on.

Those judgments suggest that there will probably be an interim period, perhaps of some length, in which (a) the West Pakistanis attempt to reestablish effective administration but (b) even they may recognize the need to move toward greater East Pakistani autonomy in order to draw the necessary Bengali cooperation.

What we seem to face, therefore, is a period of transition to greater East Pakistani autonomy and, perhaps, eventual independence. How prolonged and how violent this period is will depend heavily on the judgments made in East and West Pakistan.

—In the East, leaders of the resistance will be faced with the problem of weighing the political disadvantages of cooperating with a West Pakistani administration against the need to restore essential services, especially food distribution. Without that restoration, large-scale starvation seems unavoidable.

—The West Pakistanis, on their part, face serious financial difficulties within the next several months. They have told us that unless they receive emergency foreign exchange help they will have to default on outstanding external loan repayments and restrict imports to the point of stagnating the economy and possibly bringing on a financial crash. It may well be that, as these costs become apparent to a wider group in West Pakistan, the pressure on President Yahya to let East Pakistan go will mount.

Outside actors will also play roles of varying significance:

—India will be the most important. By training and equipping a relatively small Bengali resistance force, India can help keep active resistance alive and increase the chances of a prolonged guerrilla war. From all indications, the Indians intend to follow such a course. They could also make it difficult for Yahya to negotiate a political transition in East Pakistan by recognizing a Bengali government. They seem more cautious on this.

—The US will be an important factor from outside the area: (a) We still have influence in West Pakistan and remain important to India. (b) US economic support—multiplied by US leadership in the World Bank consortium of aid donors—remains crucial to West Pakistan. Neither Moscow nor Peking can duplicate this assistance. (c) Our military supply, while relatively small and unlikely to affect the outcome of the fighting, is an important symbolic element in our posture.

—The USSR is concerned that instability will work to China's advantage and has shown perhaps more inclination in recent years than the US toward trying to settle disputes in the subcontinent. In the short run, Soviet interests seem to parallel our own, although they would certainly like to use this situation to undercut our position in India.

—Communist China could (a) be West Pakistan's main ally in threatening India with diversionary military moves and (b) eventually enter the contest with India for control of the East Pakistani resistance movement. For the moment, the Chinese seem to have cast their lot with the West Pakistanis.

The Options

The options are most clearly understood in terms of decisions on our ongoing programs. There are three, each described in terms of concrete actions that would be taken:

Option 1 would be essentially a posture of supporting whatever political and military program President Yahya chooses to pursue in the East. *Specifically:*

—On *economic assistance*, we would support debt relief and go on with our full development aid program as soon as the West Pakistanis could assure us that the money would go for development purposes, not to financing the war effort. We would not concern ourselves that most of the aid would go to the West.

—On *food assistance*, we would proceed with all shipments at the request of the government and state no conditions about how they distribute or withhold food from specific areas in East Pakistan.

—On *military assistance*, we would allow all shipments but ammunition to proceed. We would delay ammunition without taking any formal action.

Option 2 would be to try to maintain a posture of genuine neutrality. *Specifically:*

—On *economic assistance*, we would delay all further aid until the IMF and World Bank were satisfied that Pakistan has a satisfactory development plan revised to take account of the recent disruption in economic activity and to assure equitable allocation of resources between East and West Pakistan.

—On *food assistance*, instead of deferring to the West Pakistani government on distribution, we would insist before resuming shipments on assurance that food would be distributed equitably throughout East Pakistan, in the cyclone disaster area and in the countryside as well as in the army-controlled towns.

—On *military assistance*, we would have to defer all deliveries of ammunition, death-dealing equipment and spare parts for it. Non-lethal equipment and spares might continue.

Option 3 would be to make a serious effort to help Yahya end the war and establish an arrangement that could be transitional to East Pakistani autonomy. Such an effort would have to carry with it the understood possibility that, if the political effort broke down, US aid might have to be reduced by virtue of our being unable to operate in

the East. But our approach for the time being would be to support emergency help for the Pakistani economy to tide them over while we work with them in restructuring their development program in both West and East. We would not withhold aid now for the sake of applying pressure. We would face that question only after giving the West Pakistanis every chance to negotiate a settlement in the face of the costs of not doing so. *Specifically:*

—On *economic assistance*, we would state our willingness to help in the context of a West Pakistani effort to negotiate a viable settlement. We would have to point out that it will be beyond US—or World Bank or IMF—financial capacity to help Pakistan if the situation drags on and Pakistan faces a financial crisis. We would also have to point out that US assistance legislation requires that economic aid be reduced to the extent that there is a possibility of its diversion to military purposes. We would back World Bank and IMF efforts to provide short-term emergency assistance while helping West Pakistan to reshape the rationale for the development lending program—but with the intent of providing a framework to move ahead, not of seeking a facade for cutting aid. To justify this approach, Yahya would have to produce an administration in East Pakistan that would have enough Bengali acceptance to win popular cooperation in restoring essential services and preventing a further constitutional crisis soon. In the meantime, we would continue to process any loans whose development purposes have not been disrupted by the war.

—On *food assistance*, we would allow shipments to resume as soon as food could be unloaded and move into the distribution system. We would not stipulate destination, except perhaps for that amount committed to the cyclone disaster area. It would be implicit in our overall approach, however, that our objective would be the broad distribution that would come with restoring essential services.

—On *military assistance*, we would take a line similar to that on economic aid. In practical terms, this would amount to allowing enough shipments of non-lethal spares and equipment to continue to avoid giving Yahya the impression we are cutting off military assistance but holding shipment of more controversial items in order not to provoke the Congress to force cutting off all aid.

Comment on the Options. My own recommendation is to try to work within the range described by Option 3 above.

—*Option 1* would have the advantage of preserving our relationship with West Pakistan. It would have the disadvantage of encouraging the West Pakistanis in actions that would drag out the present situation and increase the political and economic costs to them and to us.

—*Option 2* would have the advantage of creating a posture that would be publicly defensible. The disadvantage would be that the

necessary cutback in military and economic assistance would tend to favor East Pakistan. We would be doing enough to disrupt our relationship with West Pakistan but not enough to help the East or promote a political settlement.

—*Option 3* would have the advantage of making the most of the relationship with Yahya while engaging in a serious effort to move the situation toward conditions less damaging to US and Pakistani interests. Its disadvantage is that it might lead to a situation in which progress toward a political settlement had broken down, the US had alienated itself from the 600 million people in India and East Pakistan and the US was unable to influence the West Pakistani government to make the concessions necessary for a political settlement.

If I may have your guidance on the general approach you wish taken, I shall calibrate our posture accordingly on other decisions as they come up.

Prefer *Option 1*—unqualified backing for West Pakistan

Prefer *Option 2*—neutrality which in effect leans toward the East

Prefer *Option 3*—an effort to help Yahya achieve a negotiated settlement²

² Nixon approved this option and added a handwritten note that reads: “*To all hands. Don’t squeeze Yahya at this time.*” He underlined “Don’t” three times. A note sent on April 28 from Haig to Nixon, which is attached to another copy of this memorandum, indicates that Kissinger suggested that in approving an option in the memorandum, it would be helpful if Nixon included a note to the effect that he did not want any actions taken which would have the effect of squeezing West Pakistan. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Nov 69–July 1971)

37. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)¹

Washington, April 29, 1971, ca. 9:30 a.m.

[Omitted here is discussion on Vietnam.]

P: And on the situation with regard to . . . I note one thing in here with regard to aid to India. Someone is saying we are contemplating sending aid to help the Pakistani refugees. I hope to hell we're not, but what about this?

H: No, we've not been planning that. There's been some talk about our assistance to East Pakistan . . .

P: For the refugees?

H: Yes.

P: But through East Pakistan?

H: Yes.

P: What about the reaction from India? Have we had one?

H: Not that I'm aware of.

P: But we can say our attitude toward the refugees is separate . . .

H: Humanitarian.

P: One question, whether the U.S. is helping to end the fighting in Pakistan as the Russians are. What about that?

H: The fighting is about over—there is considerable stability now . . .

P: But what have the Russians done?

H: Nothing positive in substantive support. There's been a lot of propaganda noises, but then they back off.

[Omitted here is discussion on the Middle East and Southeast Asia.]

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 998, Haig Chronological File, Haig Telcons 1971. No classification marking.

38. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

Relief Assistance for East Pakistani Refugees in India

Pursuant to your question this morning about the Indian request for U.S. assistance in behalf of East Pakistani refugees who have moved into India,² you should be aware that we have received a request from Secretary Rogers recommending a modest program of relief assistance to be extended through international and U.S. voluntary agencies for East Pakistani refugees in India.³ State has in mind an initial grant of some \$1.4 million in food and another \$1 million worth of other assistance if needs are established which other donors cannot meet. OMB has no budgetary problems with such a program.

The flow of refugees from East Pakistan into India has increased sharply in the last week. According to the Indians, there are now over 500,000 East Pakistani refugees and they expect their numbers could eventually total one to two million.

The magnitude of this problem—coming suddenly as it does—is beyond India's limited resources. We have already told them that we would support Indian efforts to obtain assistance through international relief agencies. At the request of the West Bengal state government—the Indian state most heavily affected—U.S. voluntary agencies traditionally operating there are already involved in a very limited relief effort.

It is believed that the Pakistanis would take strong exception to relief efforts which were channeled through the Indian government. To minimize this criticism, we plan to channel our assistance through international agencies like the Red Cross and U.S. voluntary agencies. By utilizing international agencies we can insist on an objective assessment of the needs and a reasonable inspection of the use of relief supplies in the border areas and be sure the supplies are not used to support the insurgency in East Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 575, Indo-Pak Crisis, South Asian Relief, 3/25/71–8/1/71. Confidential. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² See Document 37.

³ See footnote 4, Document 35.

Attached at Tab A⁴ is a question and answer which you might wish to draw upon tonight if the question arises.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that you approve this \$2.5 million modest program of assistance to East Pakistani refugees to be administered through appropriate international and voluntary agencies.⁵

⁴ Attached but not printed.

⁵ President Nixon initialed his approval of the recommendation on April 29. The Embassy in India was informed of the President's decision in telegram 75479 to New Delhi, May 1. Ambassador Keating was instructed to emphasize that it was important for the refugee relief program to be an international undertaking in both appearance and substance. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK)

39. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State¹

New Delhi, May 4, 1971, 0541Z.

6741. Subj: Alleged Indian Support to Freedom Fighters and Other Observations.

1. During my meeting with Foreign Minister Swaran Singh May 3 on refugees reported septel,² I told him that a number of my colleagues in the diplomatic corps had come to me with what they claimed to be first-hand information regarding the training and equipping of freedom fighters on Indian territory.³ I told him that I, of course, recognized the sensitivity of this matter. On a personal basis I asked him to give me the justification for Indian activities in support of the Bangla Desh forces.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Secret; Exdis.

² Ambassador Keating told the Foreign Minister that the United States would support the refugee relief efforts the UN High Commissioner for Refugees planned to undertake in India. He also indicated that he had authorized the release to various U.S. volunteer agencies in India of sufficient food to feed 175,000 refugees for a period of up to 3 months. (Telegram 6720 from New Delhi, May 3; *ibid.*, REF PAK)

³ In telegram 75390 to New Delhi, April 30, the Department referred to press stories speculating that India intended to train refugees for guerrilla operations in East Pakistan. The Department felt that such training would call into question humanitarian support for the refugees. (*Ibid.*)

2. The Foreign Minister replied that the information to which I referred was “absolutely incorrect.” Foreign Secretary Kaul referred me to the reports of Frank Moraes in the *Indian Express* as well as to those of British and American journalists regarding the organization and training of the liberation forces inside East Pakistan. Kaul said the refugees were in no state to fight. They were hungry, sick and at times almost naked.

3. Foreign Secretary Kaul insisted that the GOI had prevented the organizing of volunteers to fight in East Pakistan. They had not retaliated against fighting that had occurred on Indian territory or the more recent strafing of Agartala Airport by Pakistan air force planes.

4. Foreign Minister Swaran Singh said he had a very uncomfortable feeling that without making a careful assessment of what had actually transpired in East Pakistan an attempt was now being made by people who were close to Pakistan to allege that India’s actions were politically motivated against Pakistan. The Foreign Minister said, “I stoutly refute these allegations.” He went on, as he put it, to “make a special request to you” that the U.S. Government should be the last to put India on the defensive in a situation like this. He expressed concern if this was the type of international recognition that India would get for all the restraint that they had shown. Foreign Secretary Kaul commented that we were politicizing our relief.

5. The Foreign Minister said he felt extremely unhappy that there should be any such feeling. He said in a very basic way, the sense of justice of the international community would be shaken. Whether India received help or not was a relatively minor matter. If the international community was prepared to come to India’s assistance they would be most welcome.

6. At this point the Foreign Minister referred to J.P. Narayan,⁴ who has historically been the principal exponent of Indo-Pak reconciliation and who has now publicly condemned developments in East Pakistan. He said these were factors which should not be lightly ignored.

7. I told the Foreign Minister that I thought he was misstating some of my remarks. I was conscious of the situation which he faced and that I would prefer to leave the matter at that.

8. Later on in the conversation, Foreign Secretary Kaul asserted that the GOI did not wish to provoke war with Pakistan. The Pakistanis, on the other hand, were now deliberately killing Hindus in East Pakistan in order to provoke India. The GOI had suppressed this news.

9. In closing, I told the Foreign Minister that I was pleased with the increased consultation that had been going on between the Ministry

⁴ Jayaprakash Narayan, senior member of the Congress Party.

of External Affairs and the Embassy on a wide range of issues of mutual interest. I told him I would like to see this continued in even greater depth. The Foreign Minister said he was happy to hear this from me. He said he had already had a report from Ambassador Jha following his conveying the suggested dates for our next round of bilateral talks.⁵ The Foreign Minister said it had been his desire that relations with my country should be as close or closer than those with any other country in the world. That, he said, was the policy of his government. It was their desire that a close exchange of views take place. The GOI was anxious that our relations be one of mutual confidence and understanding.

10. The Foreign Minister said that the GOI was “not keen for leadership in the area” but they were prepared to face their responsibilities and they appreciated the increased understanding of the USG in this regard.

11. The Foreign Minister then referred to my pre-election article in which I stated that America’s candidate was not any one political party but rather the Republic of India and he said that my candidate had won and that he wanted to congratulate me on that.

12. Referring to the suggested dates of our bilateral talks the Foreign Minister explained that by September 1 parliament would no longer be in session. The United Nations General Assembly was scheduled to resume about September 17 or 18. He said he wanted a clear ten days before that time to prepare himself. It was these factors that had influenced him. He said he also understood that the USG was in the process of making a reassessment of its policy in this area and he realized we would want to have our reassessment completed before undertaking bilateral talks.

Stone

⁵ The annual bilateral talks to review relations between the United States and India had initially been scheduled for January 27–28. The talks were postponed several times, most recently in a meeting on April 19 between Ambassador Jha and Under Secretary Irwin. (Telegrams 209080 and 66318 to New Delhi, December 17, 1970, and April 20, 1971, respectively; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, ORG 7 U and POL INDIA–US)

40. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Acting Secretary of State Irwin¹

Washington, May 7, 1971.

SUBJECT

Letter to President Yahya

In response to the suggestion in the Acting Secretary of State's memorandum of April 27 that the President review the substance of the paper prepared on Pakistan for the Senior Review Group,² the President has reviewed the options and approved the attached letter³ to President Yahya.

As a result of this review, he has decided that our posture should be one of making a serious effort to help President Yahya bring an end to civil strife and achieve a peaceful settlement of the political problems which triggered it. While adjustments in some of our programs will be necessitated by the situation, these will be for development reasons only and not as a facade for application of political pressure. He recognizes that the only long-term prospect of restoring normal life in East Pakistan may be under conditions of greater East Pakistani autonomy, but he would prefer to see West Pakistanis reach that conclusion, if it is valid, for themselves. The U.S. position for now, therefore, will be to give President Yahya time to follow through his efforts to work out his own arrangements transitional to greater East Pakistani cooperation or autonomy.

The President also requested that the foregoing guidance be passed by the Department of State to Ambassador Farland in a restricted channel.

Haig⁴

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). Secret; Nodis. Copies were sent to the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Under Secretary Irwin was Acting Secretary of State while Secretary Rogers was on a 2-week trip beginning April 26 to attend a SEATO meeting in London and a CENTO meeting in Ankara.

² Irwin's April 27 memorandum to Nixon is *ibid.*, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar–15 May 1971. For a reference to the paper on Pakistan that Irwin called to the President's attention, see footnote 3, Document 28.

³ Document 41. A draft of this letter was attached to Irwin's memorandum to the President.

⁴ Haig signed for Kissinger above Kissinger's typed signature.

41. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya¹

Washington, May 7, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

I have given most serious thought to your message² on the tragic situation which has developed in East Pakistan in the past few weeks. This situation has been of great concern to me.

Having labored so hard to carry out free national elections and to achieve an early and orderly transition, you must also be deeply disappointed not to have been able to transfer power to a civilian government according to the plan you had adopted and which you explained to me during your visit here last fall.

First, I should like to emphasize the sympathy which we in the United States feel for all the people of Pakistan who have been affected by these events and our concern over the loss of life and human suffering. I understand the anguish you must have felt in making the difficult decisions you have faced.

We also share your distress over the economic losses which have occurred and the serious resulting problems with which your Government has been faced. As you know, some of the Americans who were affected by the cessation of economic activity have had to leave East Pakistan because they were no longer able to perform their usual work. Because of the uncertainties, some of our programs are in abeyance.

We look forward to an early renewal of your national development effort and of normal economic activity throughout Pakistan. We especially hope for the restoration of internal communications in East Pakistan to forestall food shortages, and we are prepared to support international humanitarian relief there.

As you are probably aware, some opposition has been expressed among our public and in our Congress to continuing economic and military assistance to Pakistan under present circumstances. This was due largely to the circumstances of civil strife which will hopefully continue to subside. Further, it is to no one's advantage to permit the situation in East Pakistan to lead to an internationalization of the situation. Foreign involvement could create new problems and compound the difficulty of securing an ultimate settlement. We have been in touch with the Government of India and have discussed the implications of the present situation. We have stressed the need for restraint.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking.

² Document 29.

Please let me know if there are any ways in which you believe that we can be helpful to the achievement of a satisfactory settlement. I would hope Ambassador Farland may have an early opportunity to discuss these matters with you and your colleagues.

With warm personal regards,
Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

42. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Palm Springs, California, May 7, 1971, 2:50–5:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Joseph S. Farland, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
David R. Halperin (notetaker)

After an exchange of pleasantries, Ambassador Farland stated that the State Department had accepted his cover story without question.² Mr. Kissinger expressed appreciation for the cables sent by Ambassador Farland, and for his loyalty over the past weeks.

Mr. Kissinger then stated that McNamara³ was preparing to submit a devastating report concluding that it would take \$250 million to give Pakistan breathing room; he then asked Ambassador Farland whether it is, in fact, possible to provide breathing room, and whether \$250 million is a realistic estimate of the support required. Ambassador Farland replied that although he thought it would be possible, there are some real problems to contend with:

—Ambassador Keating seems to have gone berserk; he has violated security and appears determined to break Pakistan. For example, he recently called in a *New York Times* reporter and, although he did

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 138, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Middle East, Farland, Amb. (Pakistan). Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. The meeting took place at the home of Theodore Cummings.

² According to a May 4 memorandum from Haig to Nixon, the meeting between Kissinger and Farland was arranged as a “covert meeting” on Nixon’s instructions. Farland accordingly “arranged a personal pretext” for an urgent visit to California. (Ibid.)

³ Robert McNamara, president of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank).

not release the text, he did tell him the essence of Blood's report.⁴ Ambassador Farland is convinced that Keating is determined to make a political issue out of the Pakistani situation, and is attempting to discredit the Administration in the process.

—Another problem is the quality of political reporting in Dacca. The reporters there are missionaries without significant practical experience. They have never before seen war and are grossly exaggerating the amount of killing and bloodshed there.

Moving to the primary item of business, Mr. Kissinger explained to Ambassador Farland that for some time, we have been passing messages to the Chinese through the Pakistanis. Because of the communications problem, it had not been possible to inform Ambassador Farland of this previously, and messages have been conveyed directly to Yahya by the President, or through Ambassador Hilaly. Mr. Kissinger then outlined the exchange of messages that has occurred to date:

[Omitted here are Kissinger's detailed briefing on the exchanges with the Chinese and discussion of communications and transportation arrangements relating to the contacts.]

Pakistan's Economic Situation

Mr. Kissinger stated that he would talk to McNamara on Monday, May 10, and tell him that Yahya must be kept afloat for six more months; one problem will be that McNamara is emotionally against Yahya—as is the entire liberal community. Ambassador Farland pointed out that matters won't be helped by the fact that Keating is now on his way back to conduct a series of conferences, including some with his old Senate confreres. Mr. Kissinger stated that he would tell McNamara that this is the only channel we have, and he must give Yahya at least three months. Ambassador Farland stated that six months should be the goal.

Ambassador Farland stated that he had urged Yahya to tell his staff to make a new presentation to the consortium.⁵ Ahmad is coming to the United States next week, and Ambassador Farland has stressed this to him. The Ambassador stated that one inherent problem is that the lower echelon in the Pakistani bureaucracy feels they have a commitment from China to support operations in East Pakistan. Although Japan is negative in their position, Ambassador Farland felt that Germany will not let Pakistan go down the drain and the British

⁴ See Document 19.

⁵ Reference is to the Pakistan consortium, organized by the World Bank to provide economic assistance to Pakistan. The consortium consisted of Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the International Development Association.

will probably help as well. Mr. Kissinger asked whether the \$250 million will be applied entirely to debt re-scheduling—and whether Yahya could propose a plan applicable to West Pakistan. Ambassador Farland thought some of the \$250 million would be a new loan, and that a consortium proposal would be geared to East Pakistan with the West receiving/administering the funds.

Mr. Kissinger next asked what he could do bureaucratically to help. Ambassador Farland said that the most important contribution would be to get McNamara to head up the consortium. Mr. Kissinger replied that he did not think McNamara would agree to this because it would antagonize his liberal friends. Ambassador Farland then pointed out that the IMF was another possibility that should not be overlooked. Assali had previously requested a standby loan from the IMF which was turned down; however, the loan request could be re-activated. Mr. Kissinger indicated that he would take this issue up with Peterson or Shultz, and that he would report on his meeting with McNamara through the Navy channel. [2½ lines of source text not declassified] Mr. Kissinger agreed that this was a good idea.

Political Situation

Mr. Kissinger asked how it was that the election results were so unexpected. Ambassador Farland said that everyone has missed in their predictions. In East Pakistan, Rahman had been able to capitalize on the cyclone. When the western nations began to pour in assistance, the Benghalis realized for the first time that they were part of the world. In the West, everyone had thought the landowners could continue to retain substantial support.

Ambassador Farland voiced some mild complaints about living in Pakistan and expressed the hope that if the China meeting came off successfully, a new post could be offered. Mr. Kissinger replied non-committally that if this gets done, “we will owe you a great debt of gratitude.”

Mr. Kissinger asked if there is any way West Pakistan can hold on to East Pakistan. Ambassador Farland said no, not in the long run. Mr. Kissinger then said that all we need is six months. East Bengal is bound to become an economic disaster; Chinese influence will grow there, and it will not be possible to win any permanent friends there. Ambassador Farland agreed and pointed out the difficulty of making a financial commitment to the Benghalis.

Ambassador Farland asked if Mr. Kissinger could have Hannah pass the word down through regular channels that we are going to work things out and support the government. Mr. Kissinger said he would insure this gets done. Ambassador Farland then said that our interest in trying to save Pakistan be conveyed to the heads of government in Britain, Germany—and possibly also Japan. Mr. Kissinger

replied that he might be going to Britain on other business and would speak to Heath about this. Ambassador Farland pointed out that at this point, the other members of the consortium do not know our position.

Summary

Mr. Kissinger indicated, by way of summary, that he would:

- (1) Have Hannah told that we want a positive attitude and six months time;
- (2) Talk to McNamara along the lines above;
- (3) Look into the IMF Loan;
- (4) Personally talk to Heath;
- (5) Have Rush⁶ talk to Brandt⁷ in two weeks time—or, in any event, before the end of the month; and
- (6) Possibly get the State Department to get to Japan if there is a convenient way to do this.

Mr. Kissinger then asked Ambassador Farland to check back with him if at any point he received instructions from the Department which were intolerable.

[Omitted here is further discussion of contacts between the United States and China.]

⁶ Kenneth Rush, Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

⁷ Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

43. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 10, 1971, 3:05–3:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

M.M. Ahmad, Economic Adviser to President Yahya Khan of Pakistan
Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

Mr. Ahmad opened the conversation with a long explanation of the political developments over the last couple of years in Pakistan and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL PAK–US. Secret; Nodis. No location for the meeting is indicated but it probably took place in Kissinger's office. A copy of the memorandum is *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. V, 16 May–31 Jul 71.

then turned, at Dr. Kissinger's request, in the last few minutes to the prospects for the future.

Mr. Ahmad described President Yahya's wish that he come to Washington and acquaint Dr. Kissinger and others with what has happened, why it happened, the present situation and the future program. President Yahya had been anxious that the army should hand over civil power as soon as possible and he had worked hard in that direction. He has been deeply disappointed at the way events have turned out. He believed that the solution to the situation in Pakistan was political—not military. Events prove this. A military solution could have been enforced easily back in 1969, and he did not choose to do so. He broke up the one unit in the West Wing, dividing authority in line with the several provinces. This tilted the balance in favor of East Pakistan. He held fair and free elections. Mr. Ahmad cited this background to show that President Yahya's main desire had been to find a political solution.

Mr. Ahmad continued, saying that President Yahya had placed no limits on the making of a constitution except that it be in the framework of one single country. The President felt disappointment that Mujibur Rahman had begun shifting his ground after the election. Mujib was to have come to Islamabad for meetings early in the constitutional process, but Yahya went to Dacca. Arrangements were made for a second round of talks but Mujib found an excuse not to come. The President felt that there had to be some understanding among the politicians before the constituent assembly actually met.

The problem was that the main political parties were regional in character. When the President was unable to arrange a round of discussions, he found it necessary to postpone the constituent assembly. Postponement had provoked a sharp reaction in East Pakistan, even though the President announced a fresh date within six days.

President Yahya had gone to Dacca on April 15. The Awami League put forward its six demands² plus four more. The additional demands amounted to lifting martial law before the constituent assembly and transferring power to civil government beforehand. Then Mujib began shifting ground again. Some progress had been made in the talks, and President Yahya asked other political leaders to come over from West Pakistan. Ahmad joined them for talks on the economic side of the problem. There were some differences on this subject, but general agreement that the economic problems could be worked out.

² See footnote 3, Document 12.

President Yahya offered the possibility of a solution along any of the three following lines:

—There could be a proclamation embodying an interim constitution including most of the six points. President Yahya wanted the constituent assembly to meet first, letting them provide the authorization for the constitution. But the Awami League wanted martial law to be lifted first.

—If the constituent assembly could not meet first, there could be a proclamation putting forward the interim constitution but not lifting martial law, although that would be pushed into the background.

—A third possibility would have been to make an announcement that such an interim constitution would date from the date that the constituent assembly adopted it.

The West Pakistani leaders wanted the constituent assembly to meet and then break into two houses. The Awami League wanted the assembly to meet as two houses right from the start.

At this point Dr. Kissinger interjected that he would have to be leaving soon for a meeting with the President and the Secretary of State to hear the Secretary's report on his trip to the Middle East. He said he wanted to hear whatever Mr. Ahmad had to say but simply wanted to point out that he would only have another ten minutes if Mr. Ahmad wanted to use the remaining time to look to the future.

Mr. Ahmad continued saying that President Yahya's policy is still for the transfer of political power. He does not intend fresh elections. Apart from those people against whom there is some unfavorable evidence, those elected last December will still be able to form the nucleus of a government.

Dr. Kissinger asked whether this would include Mujibur Rahman. Mr. Ahmad replied that he ranked within the first eight or so of those political leaders against whom there is evidence of conspiring to secession. However, the rest of the Awami League can drop its title and form a government. They will be able to operate on the basis of an agreement as close to the six points as possible, meeting the legitimate needs of East Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger asked when this might take place. Mr. Ahmad replied that this would be possible as soon as normal conditions are restored in East Pakistan—"shortly." The law and order phase is, by and large, completed. Civil administration needs to be restored. Indian activity on the border will have to be ended, and Pakistan will appreciate whatever US assistance there can be on this score.

When Dr. Kissinger asked how this might be done, Mr. Ahmad simply said he hoped we would try. President Yahya said he hoped that it would be possible to produce a political package that would permit the Awami League to come forward. He continued saying that he

hoped that Pakistan could remain an element of stability in South Asia and he sought US help.

Dr. Kissinger said that the President has high regard for President Yahya and a feeling of personal affection for him. The last thing one does in a situation like this is to take advantage of a friend. The development of Pakistan remains in the US interest. Mr. Ahmad is familiar with the political pressures that operate in Washington. Anything the government of Pakistan can do to take account of our public opinion and help us with it would be most useful, although Dr. Kissinger said quickly that he had no prescriptions to offer. We would do our best to be helpful and not to compound the anguish “your country is already suffering.”

Mr. Ahmad concluded that President Yahya was very appreciative of the stand that the US had taken “in a hostile atmosphere.” The political initiatives now planned are intended to help improve this atmosphere.

H.S.

44. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 10, 1971, 4:54–5:25 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

The President
M.M. Ahmad, Economic Advisor to the President of Pakistan
Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

The President opened the conversation by expressing sympathy for all that Pakistan had been through in recent days. He noted that President Yahya is a good friend and he could understand the anguish of the decisions which he had had to make.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret; Nodis. The meeting was held in the Oval Office. The time given of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files) The time given on the memorandum is 4:45–5:20 p.m. The conversation was tape-recorded, but the sound quality of the tape is poor. (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among President Nixon, M.M. Ahmad, and Agha Hilaly, May 10, 1971, 4:54–5:25 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 496–14)

Mr. Ahmad replied with President Yahya's appreciation for the stance that the President had taken.² He realized the fact that the President had been surrounded by a "hostile press." He also understood the pressures that had built up in the Congress.

The President smiled and acknowledged that there were a number of critics who felt that the US should become heavily involved in telling Pakistan how to work out its political difficulties. He said that the US is not going to become involved in that way. It is wrong, he concluded, to assume that the US should go around telling other countries how to arrange their political affairs.

Mr. Ahmad then launched into a brief discussion of how recent developments in East Pakistan had come about, what the situation is now and how President Yahya plans to proceed. He said that President Yahya wanted very much to have President Nixon know what his plans were before they were made public.

Mr. Ahmad said that President Yahya had made every effort to negotiate a political arrangement with East Pakistani leaders. He had made it clear from the start that he was willing to grant virtual autonomy within the framework of "one country." He had told Mujibur Rahman that he should not come to a soldier—Yahya—and ask him to split the country, that if he wanted to do that he should try to do it through the constituent assembly. President Yahya had granted the virtual autonomy described in the "six points" of the Awami League, but it became apparent that Mujib was negotiating for independence and not just for autonomy.

Now, President Yahya planned to create a provincial assembly around the representatives elected last December. He did not intend to hold fresh elections; he would consider the December elections valid. He would be prepared to proclaim an interim constitution which would contain almost all that had been asked for in the Awami League's "six points."

Mr. Ahmad noted that the objectives of President Yahya were first to restore law and order—a process which has now almost been completed. His next objective was to restore civil administration. Then it would be necessary for the Indians to cease assisting insurgents so that the border areas might be quieted. Pakistan would welcome anything the US could do to influence the Indians in that direction.

If that kind of framework could be established, Mr. Ahmad continued, then it would be possible to begin the rural works programs

² At this meeting, Ahmad presented President Nixon with the April 17 letter from President Yahya. (Telegram 83947 to Islamabad, May 14; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 US/NIXON) For text of the letter, see Document 29.

again to put enough money into peoples' hands to buy food. The food problem is not one of supply, however, since there is enough food for the moment in East Pakistan. Pakistan will need more later in the year, but that is not the problem now. The problem is that the communications system—the roads and railroads—had been disrupted.

Speaking of the food situation, Mr. Ahmad said that Pakistan is quite willing to accept contributions from the international relief organizations and would welcome the support of the United Nations in collecting contributions. President Yahya, however, wanted their participation to stop at that point. President Yahya felt that since the army had been forced to take firm measures in restoring law and order, it should now be involved in the duty of distributing food. Ambassador Hilaly added that President Yahya did not want all the voluntary agencies "flocking in" with all of the unfavorable publicity and criticism that had followed the cyclone disaster last fall.

The President acknowledged the Ambassador's point and then asked about the rural works program. Mr. Ahmad explained that this was a program that had been developed using US counterpart funds. When the President looked puzzled, Mr. Saunders stated that the proceeds from past PL 480 food sale programs had been devoted to a program of rural works to enable the East Pakistani government to develop irrigation, roads and other rural programs, using the currency that came from the sale of the food. The President said that he wanted to be sure that everything was done in this regard that was possible.

The President then came back to the question of the critics who wanted the US to have some policy other than supporting the present government of Pakistan. He said the question he always asks himself is what the alternative is. He implied that he did not see any alternative to working with the present government to help it do the best it could with the situation. Then he asked Mr. Ahmad and Ambassador Hilaly what they felt the alternative to the present government was. They stated that, if the present government were to fall, there would be chaos. In East Pakistan, for example, the army can not even be pulled out without the expectation of large number of killings by Bengalis directed at the non-Bengali population. Moreover, the economic problems of East Pakistan—the high ratio of population to land—left East Pakistan with tremendous problems which it was not prepared to attack by itself.

Ambassador Hilaly noted that it was essential for the army to remain in the wings. Moreover, he felt that in a united country, East and West balanced each other. The moderates in West Pakistan would offset the extremists in the East and vice versa. He thought it unlikely that the radicals in both West and East would come together and form a majority.

The President said that we wanted to stay out of the political negotiations and to do what we could to help within the limits of our law. He noted that attitudes in Congress had to be taken into account and could restrict our ability to help. He also stated that he was not familiar with the intricacies of all of the economic programs we have in Pakistan, with the implication that he was not addressing any particular solution or proposal in making this statement. But, he said, we would not do anything to complicate the situation for President Yahya or to embarrass him. He asked Mr. Saunders to be sure those who would be talking to Mr. Ahmad understood his views.

The President then asked about the ability of the World Bank to help. He understood that the Bank itself did not have a great deal of money to devote to Pakistan. He asked how helpful it could be. Mr. Ahmad explained that the Bank problem was partly the problem of other aid donors in the World Bank consortium. In response to a question from the President, Mr. Saunders noted that other governments—to varying degrees—are subject to pressures not to provide further development aid until they judge there is a viable political framework.³ The President asked who the principal members were and was told that the British, Germans and Japanese were—along with the US—the leading members. Ambassador Hilaly noted from his days as Ambassador in London that Sir Alec Douglas-Home understood the background in South Asia better than Prime Minister Heath. The President said he wanted to be sure the Bank understood that we feel strongly that it and the other aid donors should do what they could to be helpful. He said to Mr. Saunders that he thought “we had done this yesterday.” The President asked that a paper be given to him on this subject.

Mr. Ahmad mentioned briefly the programs which he had been working on with the World Bank for the rescheduling of debt and the need for some support in the current situation, but he did not go into detail about the specific programs he would be discussing. Nor did he present any specific proposals to the President.

The President then asked whom Mr. Ahmad would be meeting during his stay in Washington and was told that Mr. Ahmad would see Mr. Schweitzer of the IMF, Mr. Cargill and perhaps Mr. McNamara of the World Bank, Dr. Hannah, Secretary Hardin. He was told that Secretary Rogers had not had a chance to sort out his schedule for the

³ In a May 9 memorandum to President Nixon, Acting Secretary of State Irwin noted that most members of the Pakistan consortium had decided to delay or suspend new economic assistance to Pakistan. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 7 PAK)

week since returning from the Middle East but that Mr. Ahmad would certainly be seeing someone in the State Department as well.⁴

In parting, Ambassador Hilaly noted that former President Ayub of Pakistan had been operated on in open heart surgery earlier in the day and the report was of a successful operation. The President concluded, as he was seeing his guests out the door, that he wished that some of the marvelous things that were done by modern surgery could be performed on nations as well.

H.S.

⁴ Ahmad met with Secretary of State Rogers on May 12, with Secretary of Agriculture Hardin on May 13, and with AID Administrator Hannah on May 14. These conversations were summarized in telegrams 83022, May 12; 83948, May 14; and 85267, May 17; all to Islamabad. Telegrams 83022 and 83948 are *ibid.*; telegram 85267 is *ibid.*, SOC 10 PAK.

45. Editorial Note

On May 13, 1971, the Indian Government requested that the United States make available four C-130 transport aircraft and the crews to fly them to help ferry refugees from East Pakistan from the over-burdened state of Tripura to Assam. (Telegram 7325 from New Delhi, May 13; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK) The Department of State responded on the same day that the Indian request was receiving urgent consideration, and the Embassy was instructed to ask to what extent India was planning to use its own transport aircraft to participate in the airlift. (Telegram 83736 to New Delhi; *ibid.*)

On May 14 Assistant Secretary Sisco sent a memorandum to Under Secretary Johnson outlining the Indian request. He noted that the Department of Defense had reservations about providing the C-130s in that they were in short supply and needed in Southeast Asia. Sisco recommended a positive response to the request and attached a draft memorandum to the Secretary in which he argued that the request offered an opportunity to improve relations with India without necessitating a change in policy toward Pakistan. (*Ibid.*) The Embassy in Islamabad warned on May 14 that Pakistan would react unfavorably to a United States decision to participate in an airlift of East Pakistani refugees. (Telegram 4656 from Islamabad; *ibid.*) With that warning in mind, the Department explored whether the Indian request could be channeled through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

(Telegram 84775 to New Delhi, May 14; *ibid.*) After the UN High Commissioner had agreed to take responsibility for the airlift, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Warren Nutter recommended on May 18 that Defense approve a request for four C-130 transports for a period of up to 30 days. Secretary Laird approved the recommendation. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 65, India 1971)

The Department of State announced on June 12 that the United States would participate in the airlift. (Department of State *Bulletin*, June 28, 1971, page 823) The airlift exercise, which was code-named Bonny Jack, was terminated on July 14. (Telegram 127295 to New Delhi, July 14; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK)

46. Letter From Indian Prime Minister Gandhi to President Nixon¹

New Delhi, May 13, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your warm message of congratulations on our recent elections.² You know how much I value your good wishes.

I trust you have been following closely the sequence of events in East Bengal. I do not wish to write about the barbarities which have been committed across our eastern border. These have been vividly described in the world press. My concern is to draw your attention to the gigantic problems which Pakistan's actions in East Bengal have created for India.

The carnage in East Bengal has naturally disturbed the Indian people deeply. There has been a surge of emotion which we have tried to contain but we find it increasingly difficult to do so in view of the systematic effort on the part of Pakistan to force millions of people to take refuge in our territory. The two problems—Pakistan's war on the people of East Bengal and its impact on us in the form of millions of refugees—cannot be separated.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-US. No classification marking. Sent to the President under a covering letter from Ambassador Jha on May 19. (*Ibid.*)

² See Document 7.

Soon after it was returned to office in March, my government started mobilising all its energies in order to make up for the tardy growth of our economy in recent years. In the best of circumstances this would have been a formidable task but the situation with which Pakistan has confronted us makes it almost impossible. As things are at present, our economy faces disruption. This is not a prospect which we can contemplate with equanimity. As we see it, the rulers of Pakistan would wish the refugee problem in India to result in an aggravation of social tension and religious strife. They probably have a vested interest in this.

Until the 12th May, 1971, the number of fugitives who were registered on their crossing the border into India was 2,328,507. We believe that there is a fair number who have avoided registration. Refugees still continue to pour in at the rate of about fifty thousand a day. We are doing our utmost to look after them. But there is a limit to our capacity and resources. Even the attempt to provide minimum facilities of shelter, food and medical care is imposing an enormous burden on us. The rains have begun in the Eastern region and soon the fury of the monsoon will be unleashed and vastly complicate the problem of providing shelter to the evacuees. Apparently, Pakistan is trying to solve its internal problems by cutting down the size of its population in East Bengal and changing its communal composition through an organised and selective programme of eviction; but it is India that has to take the brunt of this.

In this grim situation, I feel I am entitled to seek the advice of all friendly Governments on how they would wish us to deal with the problem. As far as we are concerned, Pakistan's claim that normalcy has been restored in East Bengal cannot carry conviction until it is able to stop this daily flow of its citizens across the border and the nearly three million refugees who are already here begin to go back with some assurance of their future safety.

The regions which the refugees are entering are over-crowded and politically the most sensitive parts of India. The situation in these areas can very easily become explosive. The influx of refugees thus constitutes a grave security risk which no responsible government can allow to develop.

We are convinced that the loyalty of a people to a State cannot be enforced at gun-point. Through their recent elections the overwhelming majority of the people of East Bengal expressed their adherence to the concepts of nationalism and democracy. Since the expressed will of the people is being stifled, extremist political elements will inevitably gain ground. With our own difficulties in West Bengal the dangers of a link-up between the extremists in the two Bengals are real. If your assessment is different, I should be glad to have the benefit of your views.

I believe that the Government of the United States of America is interested in the peace and stability of the sub-continent and its evolution along democratic lines. I have no doubt that you are giving thought to the long-term consequences of the events in East Bengal. In the meantime, it is our earnest hope that the Government of the United States of America will impress upon the rulers of Pakistan that they owe a duty towards their own citizens whom they have treated so callously and forced to seek refuge in a foreign country.

It is also our earnest hope that the power and prestige of the United States will be used to persuade the military rulers of Pakistan to recognize that the solution they have chosen for their problem in East Pakistan is unwise and untenable.

The people of India, including all political parties, are deeply concerned with the personal safety of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who is in the custody of the Government of Pakistan according to their own announcement. If you consider sending any message to the President of Pakistan, we would appreciate your taking up this matter with him.

We are all delighted to hear of your daughter's engagement and wish her and her fiancé the very best.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,

Indira Gandhi

47. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State¹

Islamabad, May 14, 1971, 1045Z.

4655. Subj: Flow of Hindu Refugees to India. Ref: State 83656.²

1. We share Department's concern that continued massive outflow of East Pak refugees may have serious consequences, both in terms of

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Secret; Immediate. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, London, New Delhi, USUN, and to the US Mission Geneva.

² In telegram 83656 to Islamabad, May 13, the Department expressed concern that a continuation of the massive flow of Hindu refugees into India could generate pressure on India to cut off the flow. The upshot would be a serious escalation of the crisis. The Embassy was instructed to assess whether the Government of Pakistan was encouraging the Hindu migration and what its intentions were with regard to the Hindus in East Pakistan. (Ibid., REF PAK)

human suffering and increased danger of Indo/Pak conflict. Action of sort mentioned by ForSec Kaul para 5 New Delhi 7022³ for example would almost certainly lead to war. As practical matter, only way to “force” GOP to put aside area for Hindus would be for Indian army to seize territory. Kaul’s approach to US can only be read as a “threat” despite his denial.

2. As to GOP intentions re Hindus in East Pakistan, we think Kaul overstates position. We doubt that GOP has specific plan of action to drive out Hindu minority from East Pakistan. Nonetheless, thinking of West Paks, especially Punjab is colored by an emotional anti-Hindu bias. This has been buttressed in recent weeks by thrust of GOP propaganda line about East Pak situation which has stressed alleged role of Hindus (and Indians) in creating crisis. One aspect propaganda has been to play up supposedly important behind-scenes role of Hindus in Awami League.

3. While we do not think army policy as such is to expel Hindus, army has clearly been singling out Hindus for especially harsh treatment.⁴ Coupled with official anti-Hindu propaganda, army brutality has effect of spurring Hindu exodus. Faced with choice of uncertain and possibly physically unsafe future in East Pakistan, flight to India surely must be seen as lesser evil by many Hindus.

4. Even though GOP may not be officially encouraging mass exodus, we doubt it sorry Hindus are leaving. Pak military probably view Hindu departure as blessing which reduces element [garble—they?] regard as untrustworthy and subversive. In this regard we would not be surprised if GOP developed future policy that removed those Hindus remaining in sensitive jobs such as teaching profession. It frequently charged that Hindu teachers have actively propagandized Bengali nationalism as way undermine belief of young in Pakistan. Another aspect of such policy might be re-institution of separate Hindu-Muslim electorates as means reducing importance of Hindu vote in any future balloting.

³ Foreign Secretary Kaul called in Chargé Stone on May 7 to discuss India’s mounting concern over the refugee problem and to ask for U.S. support when India raised the issue of East Pakistan in the United Nations. Kaul said that at least 1.8 million refugees had entered India, and India feared that the number could mount as high as 8–10 million. In paragraph 5 of the telegram reporting on the conversation, Stone stated that Kaul said that if Pakistan did not create conditions to encourage the return of the refugees, it should be forced to set aside a portion of East Pakistan where refugees could be resettled. Kaul assured Stone that India was not threatening to take territory for the refugees by force, but he stressed that Pakistan had to do something soon to fulfill its “duty and obligation” to the refugees. (Telegram 7022 from New Delhi, May 8; *ibid.*)

⁴ The Consulate General in Dacca reported on May 14 that it had received numerous reports that the Pakistani army was systematically searching out Hindus and killing them. (Telegram 1722 from Dacca; *ibid.*, POL 23–9 PAK)

5. We think M.M. Ahmad visit provides useful opportunity voice USG anxiety about implications continued Hindu exodus and would welcome Department discussing problem with him. We have already expressed our concern regarding the refugee situation in general terms here and believe Department could underscore line we have taken, i.e.: that it essential GOP stop the shooting and begin the rebuilding in East. While public statement by GOP could have beneficial effect, principal determinant of whether refugee flow is stemmed will be actions of Pak army, not GOP's words.

6. One aspect of problem, which not suitable for discussion with M.M. Ahmad but could usefully be raised with GOI, is India's role in situation. Continued Indian support to East Pakistan resistance threatens itself to escalate Indo-Pak tensions and, together with Pak military action, tends encourage further population migration as people seek leave areas where fighting continues.

Farland

48. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, May 14, 1971.

SUBJECT

Humanitarian Relief for Pakistan

The Pakistani relief problem is attracting increasing attention in the Congress and press and you will want to know how the problem is being handled.

There are *two aspects to the human problem*:

1. There are now almost 2 million *refugees from East Pakistan in India*, and the figure could go substantially higher. You approved \$2.5 million for US participation in an international effort, and this is operating through the UN High Commission for Refugees and private voluntary agencies. More food will be required, but basically this seems in hand for now, though there are the makings of a long-term problem.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 575, Indo-Pak War, South Asian Relief, 3/25/71-8/1/71. Confidential. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

2. The larger problem lies *in East Pakistan*. Food stocks seem adequate in most areas for another two or three months, but the transportation and distribution systems are not functioning. We have privately offered Pakistan assistance through an international effort. U Thant has offered UN help and Secretary Rogers joined Foreign Secretary Home in encouraging U Thant to urge the Pakistanis to accept. As you know, President Yahya is adamant against inviting foreigners into East Pakistan.

In immediate terms there are *two issues*:

1. Mounting Congressional criticism must be dealt with. This involves marshalling the facts on what we are doing in such a way as not to be offensive to President Yahya. This may be done by State Department statement.²

2. A compromise must be found to meet President Yahya's sensitivity to foreign involvement as well as donors' requirements for assurance that the food and equipment they give will be used for humane and not military purposes. This issue will become active only when food begins to move again.

I shall keep you informed of developments.

² The President underlined the final sentence of the first paragraph and endorsed it with a marginal notation: "OK". In a statement to the press on May 19 by Department of State spokesman Charles Bray, the United States welcomed the appeal issued by UN Secretary-General U Thant for assistance to help support East Pakistani refugees in India. Bray noted that the United States was participating with other countries in providing such assistance through voluntary agencies and under the guidance of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The United States had set aside \$2.5 million for short-term assistance to the refugees, and Bray anticipated that under the guidance of the United Nations a longer-term program of international assistance would be developed to help meet the burgeoning problem. (Department of State *Bulletin*, June 14, 1971, pp. 764–765)

49. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan¹

Washington, May 14, 1971, 2358Z.

84783. Subject: Letter From President Nixon to President Yahya.

1. We have transmitted separately to you text of May 7 letter² from President Nixon in reply to President Yahya's letter of March 31.³ It is our conclusion on basis your reports and related interagency discussion that only long term prospect for restoration of normal life in East Pakistan is through re-establishment of representative civilian govt in East Pakistan and greatly enhanced East Pakistani autonomy. This reasoning may not be fully shared in West Pakistan although we note increasing indications of intention on part of MLA to seek some sort of political accommodation (Islamabad 4331,⁴ 4332⁵). We hope President Yahya will reach this conclusion himself and work out transitional arrangements leading to cessation of direct military control and greater East Pakistani cooperation and autonomy. We should be prepared to assist toward this goal in any way possible.

2. In this delicate interim period, while West Pakistanis coming to terms with situation, adjustments in our programs will be required for developmental reasons and to take account of US Congressional attitudes. However, these will not be used to apply political pressure, and our posture should be one of making serious effort to help President

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. IV, 1 Mar 71–15 May 71. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Quainton (NEA/INC); cleared by Van Hollen, Spengler, Schneider, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Rodger P. Davies, and Kissinger; and approved by Acting Secretary Irwin. Repeated to New Delhi and Dacca.

² Document 41. The text of the letter was transmitted to Islamabad on May 15 in telegram 84892. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971))

³ See Document 16.

⁴ In telegram 4331 from Islamabad, May 6, Chargé Sober reported on a conversation on that day with M.M. Ahmad. The conversation was in anticipation of Ahmad's trip to Washington, and he reviewed with Sober issues expected to be discussed in Washington. Ahmad said that Yahya anticipated that law and order would be reestablished in East Pakistan within a matter of days, and Yahya intended to establish a civil government in the near future based on an understanding he expected to reach with the Awami League and the People's Party. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 PAK)

⁵ According to information obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President Yahya planned to announce that all five provincial assemblies elected in December would be convened shortly. Members of the assembly in East Pakistan were being offered "fantastic" inducements to participate. (Telegram 4332 from Islamabad, May 6; *ibid.*, POL 23–9 PAK)

Yahya achieve peaceful settlement of underlying political problems which have caused present situation.

3. Within foregoing general guidelines you should make following points to President Yahya: (a) the President's letter is sent in spirit of friendship and concern for recent developments, (b) President welcomed opportunity he had last October to discuss Pakistan's political future with President Yahya, and would be most interested in Yahya's current plans for accommodation with people and politicians of East Pakistan, (c) we recognize that problems have multiplied and grown in complexity in recent weeks, and we hope for a peaceful political accommodation which would permit people of Pakistan to turn their attention to rehabilitation, reconstruction and economic development, and avoid dangers of escalation, (d) we would be willing to be of assistance in facilitating an accommodation.

4. With respect to economic development, you should indicate our pleasure that M.M. Ahmad is in Washington and that we have opportunity to discuss with him Pakistan's political prospects as well as GOP's revised development efforts and its plans regarding international humanitarian assistance. President had a good talk with Ahmad on May 10 and was pleased to receive from him Yahya's letter of April 17⁶ (being repeated septel).

5. With respect to relief and rehabilitation you should stress again our willingness to participate in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts as required and our hope that cyclone rehabilitation work in particular can be fully resumed at an early date. We are pleased to note that GOP will soon be prepared to avail itself of offers of international humanitarian assistance. In this regard, you should emphasize the importance which we attach to such international efforts, and to resolution of internal communications problems in East Pakistan which affect our ability and that of others to meet relief needs. We would anticipate that representatives of the international relief organization and foreign voluntary agencies, would, as has been customary in such circumstances, expect some type of participation in administration and distribution of relief aid. Perhaps some arrangement can be worked out to meet needs of both sides.

6. Finally should President inquire about status of our military supply policy you should note that this issue has not arisen as a question for policy decision, although we have had to review the subject in the light of current circumstances. In this connection, you may wish to refer to the growing Congressional, press and public concern which is being expressed over this issue. An example is the Case-Mondale resolution.

Rogers

⁶ Document 29.

50. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, May 17, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Assistance to Pakistan

Mr. Packard has sent you the information concerning military assistance to Pakistan that he promised at the last SRG meeting on Pakistan (Tab B).² Unfortunately, it is not presented in a very useful fashion in terms of the issues involved, contains some gaps, and lacks an interpretive element. We have attempted, with the assistance of the working level in ISA, to break out for you the most important policy-related aspects, but it seems to us that the next step is to ask Defense for a paper that could provide the basis for some decisions.

The following are the most important points that can be extracted from the immediately available data:

—The Pakistanis have some \$44 million worth of equipment, ammunition and spares on order here. This includes:

—about \$5 million in equipment that can be categorized as “non-lethal,” though this does not mean it would not contribute to the war effort;

—about \$18 million worth of so-called “lethal” items;

—about \$3 million in ammunition.

—about \$18 million in spares under a so-called “open-ended sales” agreement. The Pakistanis, subject to six-months’ notice of cancellation, can draw spares directly from our inventories. There is a ceiling on the amounts but they presently have a “right” to order some \$11 million in spares for aircraft and \$7.4 million for army equipment. This supply is essential to keeping the US-equipped part of the Pakistan air force flying. As you know, the air force has been used in East Pakistan.

—There is nothing major that we know of in the pipeline now. Nothing has been sent to Pakistan from official sources since the civil war broke out, although two small shipments of training items are currently being processed for shipment. However, about 20% of the “non-lethal” items (about \$1 million worth) are purchased directly from US

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 574, Indo-Pak War, South Asian Military Supply, March 25–Aug 26, 1971. Secret. Sent for action.

² Attached but not printed is an April 23 letter from Packard to Kissinger enclosing an April 21 memorandum from Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense Armistead Selden to Secretary Laird which detailed military assistance shipments to Pakistan during the previous 6 months as well as shipments that were pending.

commercial suppliers, and we have no way of finding out the delivery schedules on these unless we ask the suppliers and create concern among the West Pakistanis. In the course of preparing for Senator Fulbright's hearings, Defense also turned up the fact that the Pakistanis have ordered new engines for trainer aircraft under a trade-in arrangement we have with them.

—We will be forced before long to make some important military supply decisions. The Pakistanis have a considerable amount of ammunition for their aircraft on order for delivery in late May, June and July and could at any time place new orders or attempt to draw aircraft spares from our inventory under the "open-ended" agreement. Moreover, they may attempt to resume negotiations under the one-time exception before long.

Mr. Packard has instructed the Services to defer shipment, pending his specific clearance, of any end item, any spares package for lethal material usable in the civil war and all ammunition. He promises to inform you of "significant developments."

Now that we have an expression from the President as to the general posture he wishes to assume toward Pakistan, we need to consider what our specific policy on military supply should be at this point. There is a particular Congressional problem in that Senator Javits in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has requested State Department to inform the Committee when military shipments were made to Pakistan and State is on the hook to inform the Committee. There is also considerable bipartisan criticism of our military supply program to Pakistan.

As it happened, no significant shipments have been scheduled for delivery since March 25. Soon, however, specific cases will come up. We need a decision on our posture and how to handle it with both the Congress and the Pakistanis. As it now stands, the bureaucracy would simply hold up the shipment of major and controversial items without any real idea of what we might accomplish by this other than keeping our options open and appeasing the Senate.

We should establish a position soon so that unintended signals will not be sent to the Pakistanis. They could become concerned and test us with new orders on controversial items.

Recommendation:

That you answer Mr. Packard's note with a request for a paper analyzing our military supply relationship with Pakistan and our options at this point (Tab A).³ Dick Kennedy concurs.⁴

³ Draft letter attached but not printed.

⁴ Kissinger responded with a handwritten comment in the margin that reads: "Al— See me. The end result of this will be to terminate the relationship."

51. **Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers¹**

Washington, May 18, 1971.

SUBJECT

Dangers of Escalation in Current East Pakistan Situation

The Situation

Although almost two months have passed since the Pakistan Army moved against the Bengali separatists on March 25, the danger that the situation will escalate into a major Indo-Pakistan war remains. Essentially escalation could develop in two ways: (1) if India felt it was being subjected to intolerable economic, political and internal security pressures arising from the influx of East Pakistan refugees, it might strike against East Pakistan to end the struggle, and (2) the West Pakistanis might strike against India if they felt that in order to maintain their power in East Pakistan they had to put a halt to cross border activities by the Bengali separatists from Indian sanctuaries. For the time being, the former would seem to pose the more immediate threat of escalation, particularly since the Indians have reported to us that the flow of refugees has increased to a rate of 100,000 per day. The UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, who is now touring India, has concluded that the refugee flow is "monumental" and "the greatest displacement of people in recent times."

US Actions

We have been taking various steps to minimize the danger of escalation from either of the above causes.

1. *Refugees.* We are taking an active part in the international refugee relief effort. We are feeding an increasing number of Pakistani refugees in West Bengal. The number is now about 300,000 and it is still growing. We are considering providing an airlift to move refugees from Tripura to Assam where they can be more easily assisted. We have encouraged the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to organize an international relief effort and we have indicated our intention to support his efforts. To the degree that we alleviate the strain

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Confidential. Drafted by Quainton on May 17 and cleared by Spengler, Schneider, and Van Hollen. A copy was sent to Kissinger on May 20 under a covering note from Executive Secretary Eliot. (Ibid., POL 23-9 PAK)

which the refugees put on Indian resources we will be minimizing the pressures for escalation.

2. *Influence on Pakistan.* On the Pakistan side we have also been active. We have asked the GOP to assess and report its needs so that an international relief effort can be organized. We have also urged the Pakistanis to restore normal conditions and begin the process of political accommodation. I intend to reiterate these concerns to M.M. Ahmed when I see him on Tuesday, May 18.² What Pakistan does to restore normal conditions and achieve a peaceful political accommodation with the Bengalis will be critical in the avoidance of escalation. If conditions return to normal, the refugee flow should cease and in fact reverse. If a political accommodation is achieved, Indian support for cross-border operations will probably be abandoned. Without these developments, however, the situation could become increasingly dangerous.

3. *Influence on India.* We recognize that our efforts to prevent escalation cannot be pursued only in Pakistan. We have repeatedly urged the Indians to exercise the utmost restraint in their actions. I will be seeing the Indian Ambassador on Thursday, and will once again emphasize to him that we do not approve of Indian military support for the Bengali separatists.

4. *Contingency Planning.* While these various combinations of actions with both the Indians and Pakistanis may suffice for the time being, more vigorous actions may be required in the future. We have prepared a contingency study³ on the subject of Indo-Pakistani escalation which we have discussed informally with the Under Secretary. We are keeping this study under review and have in mind further actions such as use of the United Nations or third-party good offices as future steps to defuse the situation should it become more explosive.

² Sisco's conversation with Ahmad was reported to Islamabad on May 19 in telegram 87878. (Ibid., POL 7 PAK)

³ An undated 8-page study, entitled "Contingency Study for Indo-Pakistani Hostilities," apparently prepared in NEA, was sent by Executive Secretary Eliot to Kissinger on May 25 for circulation to the WSAG in advance of its meeting on May 26. This study is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 133.

52. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 21, 1971, 12:30–1:05 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
L.K. Jha, Ambassador of India
Samuel M. Hoskinson, NSC Staff

After the initial exchange of pleasantries, Ambassador Jha began to explain the refugee situation in India. Jha explained that it was not simply a question of money and relief, although this was of course important. The big problem, he said, is that India cannot absorb this many people and they must find a way to get them back into East Pakistan. Jha explained that “tensions are high” both as far as the political situation in India was concerned and in terms of social problems. He went on to explain that a high percentage of the refugees are now Hindus and that there were communal conflicts between the refugees and the local population. He pointed out that this was a particularly serious problem in the Indian state of West Bengal. Ambassador Jha then summed up the situation by calling it “very explosive.” He pointed out that it was all in the letter² that the Prime Minister had sent to the President.

Dr. Kissinger asked what the choices were, and noted that “you can’t go to war over refugees.” Ambassador Jha said that some will want to arm the refugees and send them back into East Pakistan. Others advocate bringing pressure on President Yahya. He then went on to explain that the prevailing high-level of tension could result in serious disruptions in already unstable West Bengal and to a serious problem in Indo-Pak relations. It could also result in a “backwash” effect on Indo-U.S. relations. Jha then went on to say that he hoped the President could reply to the Prime Minister’s letter in such a way as to convey support for India in international forums and informing her of what we were advising President Yahya.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 596, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. III, Sept 70–30 June 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. The meeting was held in Kissinger’s office at the White House. The time of the meeting is from Kissinger’s appointment book. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) Kissinger approved the memorandum as accurate on May 21 and instructed Hoskinson not to distribute it to the Department of State. (Memorandum from Hoskinson to Kissinger; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 596, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. III, Sept 70–30 June 71)

² Document 46.

Dr. Kissinger asked: "But what can we do? He (Yahya) claims he wants a political settlement." Ambassador Jha said what India needs is a sense of movement in that direction; we need confirmation that he is moving toward a political settlement.

Dr. Kissinger said, "I understand." "Frankly, I must tell you that I have not been able to study the Prime Minister's letter. Let's not play games." (At that point Dr. Kissinger searched for his copy of the letter and, when he found it, he quickly read it over.) Dr. Kissinger then said we will have to "study this carefully." We can go into this further when you return. I can tell you now, however, that we would deplore this matter getting totally out of hand. We believe that the evolution in East Pakistan should be "gradual and most delicately handled." Personally, I am not sure an "independent East Pakistan is in India's interest." Ambassador Jha indicated that he could understand this point of view. He said that India did not favor the break-up of Pakistan but the fact was that they did not see Pakistan surviving. This being the case, we fear guerrilla activity, he said. Also there is the question of Chinese involvement eventually in East Pakistan which is "ripe for this."

Dr. Kissinger reiterated again that the situation must evolve and be handled with great delicacy. He said how things happen are almost as important as what happens. He then noted that the tendency here is "to do more than we say." Dr. Kissinger advised the Ambassador to tell Prime Minister Gandhi that we are concerned and are doing here what we can with a low visibility. He said that he would like to continue this discussion with Ambassador Jha, perhaps over lunch, as soon as he returns. The reply to the Prime Minister's letter, however, will have to be more formal than these informal exchanges between us. Dr. Kissinger then noted that the decision to supply 4 C-130 aircraft to India to assist in the refugee relief effort was being considered and we were "favorably inclined."

Ambassador Jha said that Prime Minister Gandhi wants to keep the situation under control. But she needs a feeling of confidence from the President's reply. Dr. Kissinger assured the Ambassador that the response will reflect that we are "trying to move in a constructive way." Ambassador Jha asked that we point up the need to "share" what actions we are taking toward Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger responded by saying, "Let's start this process with lunch. You must understand we really can't go too far in a letter." Ambassador Jha again stressed the need for some indication of support in international organizations.

Dr. Kissinger then explained to the Ambassador that the President has a degree of "personal influence" with the Pakistanis. This needs to be used privately and things that we say publicly, of course, have an effect on this influence. Dr. Kissinger then said that he thought the Indians have acted in a "restrained" manner through this whole affair.

Dr. Kissinger followed on by saying that he did not want to advise Ambassador Jha or the Indians, but he did want them to know that we will do whatever we can to “strengthen and share” with you. You can tell Prime Minister Gandhi “we value” our relationship with India. We do not, however, want the subcontinent to blow up, especially now.

Dr. Kissinger stressed that we believe India is “the stabilizing force in the subcontinent” from every point of view—political, military and economic. We all face delicate problems in the area, however, and we need to stay in close touch. Hopefully, we can act together in a constructive way. Dr. Kissinger then asked Ambassador Jha when it would be best for the President to respond to Mrs. Gandhi. He said he would be willing to discuss the letter informally with Ambassador Jha after he returned from India if this were preferable. Ambassador Jha said it would be better if the President would respond before he returned in two or three weeks.

Dr. Kissinger said that our reply will, of course, be “warm and positive” but that just because of the very nature of such correspondence it will need to be supplemented in an informal way. In this regard, the Ambassador could convey to Prime Minister Gandhi that we wanted to stay “in step with India. But, of course, this requires restraint on all sides.”

Dr. Kissinger informed Ambassador Jha that he may join the delegation to the inauguration of the President of Korea in early July and wondered if it would be feasible for him to spend a day or so in New Delhi perhaps around July 5 or 6 on his return trip. He would also, of course, have to spend a day in Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger stressed that he would want to talk with a few officials to get a feel for the situation, but to maintain a low profile. Ambassador Jha said he thought this would be “a good idea” and would be “useful.”

The conversation ended with Dr. Kissinger reiterating that the reply to Mrs. Gandhi could not get into too many “specifics” but perhaps it might be possible to indicate that there would be further contact with the Ambassador. Ambassador Jha commented that would be good and appropriate.

[While Dr. Kissinger had to step from the room to answer a call from the President, Ambassador Jha asked Mr. Hoskinson if he thought it would be possible for J.P. Narayan to see the President when he visited here in early June. The Ambassador explained that Narayan was a highly influential and articulate Indian elder statesman very much in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. Hoskinson opined that he “personally” thought that this might be rather difficult for the President to do since, as he understood it, Narayan would be on a private visit and he thought there would probably be considerable Pakistani

sensitivity concerning this visit. Mr. Hoskinson then reiterated the point that Dr. Kissinger had made concerning the measure of personal influence that the President had with the Pakistanis and the problem of doing things in public that might denigrate this important influence. Ambassador then asked about the possibility of Dr. Kissinger seeing Narayan. Mr. Hoskinson commented that this might be easier, but of course he could not speak for Dr. Kissinger on this subject. Ambassador Jha also informed Mr. Hoskinson that Mrs. Gandhi has probably had too much on her mind to make any final decision on her planned trip here in November. He opined that much, of course, would depend on the political situation in India and in Pakistan at that time. He might, however, be in a better position when he returned from India.]³

SH

³ Brackets in the source text.

53. Telegram From the Consulate General in Karachi to the Department of State¹

Karachi, May 22, 1971, 1955Z.

1184. From the Ambassador. Subj: President Yahya's Observations on Pakistan Political Situation. Ref: State 084783.²

1. I met President Yahya Khan at President's house in Karachi, Saturday, May 22 at 1830 to present him President Nixon's letter of May 7.³ During hour and half conversation which ensued I discussed with Yahya, among other subjects which are reported by septel,⁴ the political situation within Pakistan and his plans with regard thereto.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, Islamabad, Lahore, New Delhi, and Kabul.

² Document 49.

³ Document 41.

⁴ Farland's discussion with Yahya about economic assistance to Pakistan and humanitarian assistance to East Pakistan was reported in telegrams 1183 and 1185 from Islamabad, respectively, both May 22. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, AID (US) PAK and SOC 10 PAK)

2. I stated that President Nixon sincerely welcomed the opportunity he had had last October to discuss Pakistan's political future with Yahya. He was deeply interested in hearing how Yahya planned to reach accommodation with the people and political leaders of East Pakistan. The USG believed that peaceful political accommodation was necessary to permit the people of Pakistan to turn their attention to rehabilitation, reconstruction and economic development and also to avoid the dangers of escalation and internationalization of the East Pak situation. I stated that, as a friend of Pakistan, the USG was willing to be of assistance in facilitating such an accommodation.

3. Speaking frankly, I said the first necessity was to stop the shooting and to start the rebuilding. The Embassy's impression of East Pakistan suggested that perhaps the most serious problem was a pervasive sense of fear. This had many causes and I saw no advantage to be gained in pointing the finger of blame at anyone. But as long as deep tensions persisted between Bengali Muslims, Biharis, Hindus and West Paks, I could see little ground for optimism that real normalcy would return. Little hope politically because of the fact that what leadership there is is afraid to come out into the open; and economically the laborers are staying away from their jobs. Unless public confidence was restored, the prospects for either political accommodation or economic development seemed dim.

4. I said my government had observed with interest the outcome of a political settlement which was sketched to us by Mr. M.M. Ahmad and Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan; of greater continuing interest, however, is how he (Yahya) gauged the prospects for success of this approach. Also, it was noted that to date very few Awami Leaguers had associated themselves with the government side. Also in question was how the GOP would deal with Sheikh Mujib; that would have an effect on the government's efforts to gain support of former Awami Leaguers and on the prospects for accommodation with the East. I asked who could fill gap in early political accommodation in Mujib's absence. I then posed to Yahya the question that if the majority of Awami Leaguers proved unwilling to join, where would Yahya turn next?

5. In West Pakistan, I stated that there was current interest in how Bhutto and his Peoples' Party figure in the MLA's political equation. Recalling that he, the President, had indicated his desire to proceed as quickly as possible toward some form of civilian representative government, I asked him what sort of time frame did he have in mind.

6. President Yahya said that he, too, had welcomed the opportunity last October to discuss the problems of Pakistan with President Nixon. He indicated that he could find no fault with the USG's belief that peaceful political accommodation was essential, not only to rehabilitation, reconstruction and economic development in East Pakistan

but to West Pakistan as well. Yahya continued by saying that by this he was affirming his belief that the future of the wings were intertwined with the whole. He added that he was gratified the USG was willing to be of assistance in facilitating such accommodation. (I rather anticipated that he might ask me precisely how USG intended to facilitate such an accommodation, but this was passed over without question.)

7. Interspersed throughout this portion of the conversation, President Yahya repeatedly attempted to defend the action of the GOP in “putting down an overt secessionist movement.” And I with equal persistence tried to stop him by pointing out as I had done earlier, that judgment of the events of the past would rest with the historians; rather, my government’s interest lay in the present and in the future and was directed to the needs of the people of Pakistan and the assistance which the United States could bring thereto. Yahya reiterated with emphasis that law and order was the first prerequisite to the reinstatement of a peaceful political accommodation; that rebuilding had to begin with a prompt cessation soonest of military action; and, that this was his objective. He acknowledged my thesis that fear had to be dispelled and public confidence restored. He was optimistic that this could be accomplished within a time frame of several months which would allow both for political accommodation and economic rehabilitation.

8. In answer to my observations and my stated interest in knowing more detailed aspects of how and when political accommodation could be accomplished, Yahya said he intended to go to the people via radio and television sometime next month. He said that he would use these media for the purpose of explaining in detail his plans for reinstatement of his efforts to transfer power and to remove the military apparatus as the dominant force in the national life of Pakistan. Yahya noted that his reported conversations with me should have by this time conveyed his overwhelming desire, at long last, to allow the politicians of Pakistan to worry with the multitudinous problems which beset his nation. He opined that the house he was building for himself in the cantonment in Peshawar was daily looking more attractive.

9. When pressed as to the how and when, President Yahya said it was his plan to hold a by-election in East Pakistan for those provincial and National Assembly seats, and those seats only, which were vacated by Awami Leaguers who had departed East Pakistan for India and elsewhere in the cause of Bangla Desh, or who had committed capital crimes during the period leading up to and subsequent to the secession attempt. Of the number of seats which would be vacated, President Yahya said he felt that no more than six or seven percent would be involved, and that it would be relatively a simple matter to hold an election for these few seats. He reaffirmed the fact that while the Awami League had been outlawed, the individuals had been elected

individually and that their election, subject to the foregoing, would be recognized. President Yahya added that the election in West Pakistan would stand in toto.

10. When I mentioned again the fact that few Awami Leaguers had come over to the government position, Yahya said that he was most certainly not desirous of setting up a "pseudo slate" or finding a number of quislings to give form rather than substance to the reinstatement of political accommodation. Acknowledging that but a few names had yet appeared in the press, President Yahya said that a "substantial number" had privately already indicated their desire to join with the GOP's efforts to formulate what amounted to a six-point program for East Pakistan which would give to the people of the east wing the benefits of the program sans secession. Yahya said that fact had not been publicized for the simple reason that too many names appearing too soon might be judged to have been solicited under duress and that this would be detrimental; hence, his government believes that these names should be disclosed over an appropriate interim.

11. As to the time frame he envisioned, President Yahya said that it was his hope that the bi-elections in East Pakistan could be held in the early fall and that provincial assemblies, East and West, could meet thereafter. This could be followed by the National Assembly meeting. It was my impression from the foregoing conversation that President Yahya had determined a time frame for at least some degree of transfer of power and that he had intended to publicly commit himself to this in his forthcoming broadcast to the nation.

12. After several abortive attempts I reintroduced the question of how the GOP would deal with Sheik Mujib. President Yahya said that as far as he was concerned Sheikh Mujib had committed a capital crime and would be tried in a duly constitutional court, and he would be given a fair and impartial trial. After noting that in the President's last address to the people of Pakistan it appeared to me as a lawyer that Sheikh Mujib had already been prejudged, and that a change of venue was impossible, I emphasized the fact that the GOP might well weigh world opinion vis-à-vis the severity of the sentence since Sheikh Mujib had a great deal international sympathy attaining. Yahya reply was noncommittal but not necessarily negative. He indicated that he would think about it.

13. In concluding the discussion of the political situation, I mentioned the references in President Nixon's letter to opposition in some U.S. public and Congressional circles concerning continuing aid to Pakistan under present circumstances. I stressed that public opinion played a large role in generating pressure on the USG and had been extremely critical of the GOP. I emphasized my view that a genuine GOP effort to establish civilian government, to restore more normal

conditions and reach an accommodation with the people of East Pakistan as well as acceptance of UN humanitarian aid for the East should have a very beneficial impact on U.S. public opinion. In this regard, I observed that the government's decision to send groups of journalists to the East was a helpful beginning.

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54. Telegram From the Consulate General in Karachi to the Department of State¹

Karachi, May 22, 1971, 2050Z.

1186. From the Ambassador. Subj: East Pakistan Refugees in India. Ref: State 085973,² Islamabad 04872³ (Notal); State 87878;⁴ State 089635⁵ (Notal).

1. I met with President Yahya Khan at the President's house in Karachi on Saturday, May 22 at 1830 hours. During hour and half

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, Lahore, Dacca, New Delhi, Calcutta, USUN, and US Mission Geneva.

² In telegram 85973 to Islamabad, May 17, the Department instructed the Embassy to augment the President's May 7 letter to Yahya by expressing concern that the continuing refugee flow from East Pakistan into India was not only creating a humanitarian problem but also posed a threat to regional stability. In the Department's view the refugee problem would continue until the reestablishment of more normal conditions in East Pakistan and until there was some movement toward an accommodation with the Bengali opposition. The Embassy was instructed to encourage a statement by the Government of Pakistan to the effect that it would welcome the return of refugees and would grant a general amnesty to those who had fled to India. (Ibid.)

³ Ambassador Farland addressed the question of the distribution of relief assistance in East Pakistan in telegram 4872 from Islamabad, May 19. He noted that there was a history of foreign personnel serving in East Pakistan identifying with Bengali political aspirations, and added that Yahya's government did not want to be in a position of carrying out military operations in East Pakistan while foreigners took credit for relief work. Farland felt that international agencies could monitor relief operations without having to distribute food and other supplies. (Ibid., SOC 10 PAK)

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 51.

⁵ On May 21 Sisco sent telegram 89635 to Farland in Karachi where he was scheduled to meet with Yahya on the following day. He encouraged Farland to urge Yahya to make the type of public statement cited in footnote 2 above. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK)

long conversation which ensued, I discussed with Yahya, among other subjects which are reported by septels, the urgent matter of East Pakistan refugees in India.

2. This subject was introduced by my comments to the effect that the continuing influx of refugees from East Pakistan into India currently appeared to be the single most likely cause of escalation of Indo-Pak tensions. I pointed out that GOI's current estimates indicated that there were now over two and a half million East Pakistani refugees in India and that the total was being swelled by approximately one hundred thousand additional refugees per day. I noted that, while these figures might well be subject to further scrutiny, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees representative, having recently completed survey of the refugee situation, had termed the refugee problem as he saw it to be "monumental" and one which required a major international relief effort.

3. After further general discussion of the subject, I pointed out to Yahya that the USG is very much concerned by the continuation of the refugee flow from East Pakistan into India for two reasons: (a) the broad humanitarian aspects of the matter; and (b) the threat to regional stability which the refugee presence and current daily increase thereto poses. I made note that the possibility of communal disorders in the refugee camp areas is a very real and pressing danger. The conversation continued with my observation that without the creation of normal conditions in the East, a renewed sense of physical security among the Hindu community,⁶ and a patent movement with substance behind it toward a peaceful political accommodation, it could be reasonably expected that the refugee problem will continue. I added that we have been urging restraint on the Indians, emphasizing the need to depoliticize the refugee question. It is our impression that the Indians want the people to return to their homes and are deeply concerned about the potentially harmful impact of the refugee influx, especially on West Bengal.

⁶ Farland also took up with Yahya on May 22 the "sensitive issue" of the reported mistreatment of Hindus in East Pakistan by the Pakistani Army. Farland warned that if such reports were accurate, publication in the United States of accounts of the persecution of Hindus in East Pakistan would make it difficult for the Nixon administration to continue to support Pakistan. A greater danger, Farland said, was the reaction of India to the grievances Hindu refugees were undoubtedly airing in West Bengal. Farland warned that the mistreatment of Hindus in East Pakistan would strengthen the hands of those in India who favored military action against Pakistan. Yahya responded that Farland had apparently been listening to some "overly provocative comments" broadcast by the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting System. Farland said that his information came from the Consulate in Dacca which had received the reports from "authenticated sources." Yahya assured Farland that if Hindus were being mistreated "it was not taking place under government policy or government sanction" and he would rectify the matter. (Telegram 1187 from Karachi, May 22; *ibid.*, POL 23-9 PAK)

4. With this as background I strongly urged that the President take the constructive step of personally issuing a statement to the effect that GOP was seized with the matter of international humanitarian relief assistance; was actively involved in improving food distribution in East Pakistan; was attempting to effect political reconciliation through the East wing; and would seriously welcome the early return of refugees, a welcome enforced by the grant of general amnesty to those free of capital crime who had fled to India. I stated that coupled with measures toward peaceful accommodation with Bengalis and the return to more normal conditions in East Pakistan such a statement, emanating from President himself, could serve as an important element in encouraging refugees, including Hindus, to return to their homes in the East. It would also testify to the GOP's good intentions with regard to finding a resolution to the refugee problem. Also I made note of the fact that by putting the above courses of action in one general statement he would have real impact thus helping GOP world-wide position much more dramatically than dribbling out various actions on piecemeal basis. Yahya was left well aware that this suggestion was made with idea in mind of helping him improve his and his government's whole public posture throughout the world.

5. Having said this, I indicated that the USG would be interested in any views that the GOP might have on how the refugee flow could be checked.

6. President Yahya said that he tended to disagree with GOI's current estimate that there were now over two and one-half million East Pakistani refugees in India, but that the GOP was aware of the fact that a substantial number of people had crossed the border and that the problem was both real and substantial. He went on to argue however that over the past three or four years there had been an influx of "refugees" into East Pakistan in a number approximating a half a million people and that this movement had neither been admitted by India nor bemoaned by the world press.

7. President Yahya stated that he appreciated fully the USG's concern in the refugee flow for the reasons which I had stated. He was defensive, however, concerning my observed possibility of communal disorders in the refugee camp areas, saying that GOI made so little of communal disorders that it had found it convenient not even to answer his government's notes of protests. Also, while discussing this subject, President Yahya reiterated the GOP's version of India's involvement in the secessionist movement and in armed infiltration into East Pakistan.

8. I again told President Yahya that I was aware of his government's position but that irrespective of the causes, the problem existed and the refugee flow must be checked. He agreed that ramifications

which could ensue from this situation were patently of great seriousness, and he indicated that he recognized the validity of my observations. He alluded to his comments made earlier in the conversation (reported septel⁷—President Yahya's observations on Pakistan political situation) and said that an earnest effort at peaceful political accommodation would be undertaken; this, he observed, should have an ameliorating effect on the problem. He added that he hoped the United States would continue to urge restraint on India since the arms and ammunition supplied to infiltrators, both Indian and Bengalis, and the training being given in guerrilla warfare in camps along and just inside the Indian border, all combined to prevent a return to normalcy.

9. Regarding the issuance of a statement as suggested (see para 4), President Yahya first asked what I thought of his comments issued in the morning press.⁸ I told him that, in my opinion, they lacked substance regarding the approach to the principal question, and that the thrust appeared to be directed primarily towards an attack on India. I then reiterated the key points of my suggestion and again urged it upon him. President Yahya indicated that I had [made] my point and that he would think seriously upon it.

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⁷ Document 53.

⁸ A statement issued by Yahya on May 21 encouraged refugees to return to their homes in East Pakistan where, he assured them, law and order had been restored. Yahya accused India of exploiting the refugee problem in order to justify interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. (Telegram 5044 from Islamabad, May 22; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK)

55. **Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹**

May 23, 1971, 2:30 p.m.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

K: Yesterday, Mr. President, I didn't have a chance to talk to you about it, because we were both in transit. We have reports that the Indians are massing troops at the Pakistan border—

P: Which one, East or West?

K: East. And I asked Alex [Johnson] let Keating tell the Indians that whatever the problem is and while we were keeping our hands off and while we were willing to help humanitarian efforts, we were strongly opposed to military action.

P: We certainly will; if they go in there with military action, by God we will cut off economic aid.

K: And that is the last thing we can afford now to have the Pakistan government overthrown, given the other things we are doing.

P: And also they have got to know that if [*sic*] what is in jeopardy here is economic aid. That is what is in jeopardy.

K: And there is absolutely no justification for it—they don't have a right to invade Pakistan no matter what Pakistan does in its territory. Besides the killing has stopped.

P: It has quieted down.

K: Oh yes. It may not be a tenable situation in the long term, but again that is not for India to decide.

[Omitted here is the remainder of the discussion, which is unrelated to South Asia.]

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 396, Telephone Conversations, Home File, May–Nov 1971. No classification marking. President Nixon was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger called from his home in the Georgetown section of Washington.

56. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon¹

Rawalpindi, May 24, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

I appreciate greatly the constructive and friendly contents of your letter² of May 7, 1971. I am also grateful to you for receiving Mr. M.M. Ahmad and listening to him on my behalf. He has informed me of the courtesy and the understanding shown to him by you personally and by your colleagues, particularly Secretary Rogers and Dr. Kissinger.

2. I greatly value and welcome the sentiments of friendship and assurance of your personal support for the renewal of our national development effort and the resumption of normal economic activity throughout Pakistan. This is characteristic of your Government's readiness to come to our assistance whenever needed.

3. It is also a matter of great satisfaction for us to know of your sympathetic comprehension of our manifold problems and difficulties. In particular, it is gratifying to learn that you share our view that it is to no one's advantage to permit the situation in East Pakistan to be internationalised and that any foreign intervention in this situation could create new problems and compound the difficulty of securing an ultimate settlement.

4. I take this opportunity, Mr. President, to reaffirm my resolve to transfer power to a civilian government at the earliest possible [time]. For this purpose, I have initiated, once again, consultations with political leaders and elected representatives of the people and I hope to announce at an early date the outlines of my further plans. I have no doubt in my mind that with the support of the responsible leadership in the country, we would be able to resolve the present constitutional impasse.

5. Mr. President, our plans for national reconstruction cannot materialise so long as India follows a policy of open and constant interference in our internal affairs. It was not a matter of mere coincidence that the present crisis in Indo-Pakistan relations started when Pakistan was at the threshold of ushering in a democratically elected government. By arranging a hijacking incident, India sought justification for its decision to ban overflights of our aircraft. Thus, a situation was

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking. Sent under cover of a letter from Ambassador Hilaly to Saunders on May 27. (Ibid.)

² Document 41.

created which not only imposed a heavy financial burden on Pakistan but also made the task of a political settlement between the two wings of our country more difficult. Thereafter, India has persistently attacked the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan. The secessionist elements in East Pakistan were encouraged and assisted by India. The Indian Parliament, in an unprecedented move, officially extended sympathy and support to these elements. The question of “recognising” the rebellious movement has also been under consideration of the Indian Government. Infiltrators and saboteurs from across the border have violated our territory and indulged in activities to dislocate and destroy East Pakistan’s economic and industrial life, including the vital communications system.

6. It is most unfortunate that due to disturbed conditions and for other reasons, a large number of people left their homes in East Pakistan and crossed into India. Their migration has created a human problem which should be treated as such. There is no justification whatsoever for exploiting human misery for political gains. I have, therefore, in a public statement urged the law abiding citizens of East Pakistan who were compelled to migrate, to return to their homes and resume their normal duties. They would not only be welcome but would be afforded necessary protection and assistance by my Government.

7. I am afraid, however, that I cannot extend a welcome to those persons who committed murders, indulged in rape and arson, destroyed private and public properties and looted Government treasuries and food stores. No Government can condone such crimes against the people and the State.

8. Mr. President, it hardly needs reiteration that the problem of our relations with India is a major factor in the processes leading to the early resumption of normal life and economic reconstruction in East Pakistan. It is not only in regard to the refugee problem but also in respect of the banning of overflights, encouragement to infiltrators and anti-state elements, and other such matters, that India must exercise restraint and adopt a constructive approach. If Mrs. Indira Gandhi could be persuaded to show a more helpful attitude, there is no reason why the political climate of the sub-continent should not register an immediate and welcome improvement. Such a development is most desirable from our view point as this would enable us to devote all our attention and energies to tackling various problems including the question of refugees which demand immediate solution.

9. As I have stated above, the refugees pose a human problem which has to be settled on that basis. At the same time I feel that it is not an isolated development and stems from other issues which I have mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. Any initiative, Mr. President,

that you might find possible to take in solving the refugee problem and the related issues would be an act of historical significance.

With warm personal regards,
Yours sincerely,

A.M. Yahya Khan

57. Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson and Richard Kennedy of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, May 25, 1971.

SUBJECT

WSAG Meeting on India–Pakistan, Wednesday,² 4:00 p.m.

Background

You are aware that there are some disturbing indications that India and Pakistan are moving closer to the brink of a new war. Neither side really wants a war at this point but they are drifting in this direction.

The situation on the ground shapes up like this:

—For the past several weeks mortar barrages and small arms fire have been exchanged frequently across the East Pakistan–India border. The substantial Indian army forces in the area are on high alert and the situation appears very tense in the border areas.

—Intelligence reports indicate that on the West Pakistan–India border the Indians are taking military preparatory measures such as dispersal of fighter aircraft in the potential combat area and perhaps the movement of additional combat troops and armor into forward areas. The Pakistanis reportedly have their forces in forward positions along the border also.

—Mrs. Gandhi reportedly has ordered her army to prepare a plan for a rapid take-over of East Pakistan and is said to be particularly

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, India–Pakistan, 5/26/71. Secret; Exdis. Sent for action.

² May 26.

interested in an “Israeli-type lightening thrust” that would present the world with a fait accompli.

—The Indians have launched a major diplomatic and public relations campaign to promote domestic and foreign appreciation of the mounting economic, social and political problems posed by the massive continuing influx of more than three million East Pakistani refugees. The latest manifestation of this was on Monday³ when at the opening session of Parliament Mrs. Gandhi warned that Pakistan must provide “credible guarantees” for the return and future safety of the refugees and that unless the great powers take action to remedy the situation, India will be “constrained to take all measures that might be necessary” to safeguard its own well-being.

—There is strong and mounting public pressure in India to take direct action against the Pakistanis over the refugee problem. The West Pakistanis for their part are still tending to blame most of their problem in East Pakistan on the Indians.

There are essentially three underlying causes for this situation:

—Continuing military repression, economic dislocation and lack of political accommodation in East Pakistan.

—The very heavy flow of Bengali refugees into India which is imposing a mounting economic, social and political burden on India.

—Indian training of and cross-border support to Bengali guerrillas. Some Indian paramilitary forces may even have conducted small-scale operations within East Pakistan.

Purpose of Meeting

There are three basic reasons for calling a WSAG meeting at this time:

1. To focus high level bureaucratic interest on a developing major problem in Asia. (It is just dawning on most of the bureaucracy that we might soon be faced with a major blow-up in South Asia.)

2. To make sure that any actions we might decide to take to prevent further escalation are well thought out within the context of a more general plan. (There will be an inevitable tendency by State to rush into a series of tactical maneuvers to defuse a potential crisis without a clear idea of where they are collectively leading us.)

3. To begin to consider the situation that will face us if war were to break out between India and Pakistan.

³ May 24.

Paper

At tab "Contingency Study" is State's first cut at a "Contingency Study for Indo-Pakistani Hostilities."⁴ The most relevant sections are:

- "Steps to Prevent Escalation" on pages 5–6.
- "Actions in the Event of Escalation" on pages 7–8.

These are so short and boiled down that it would serve no purpose to summarize them here. *You will want, however, to read these sections to see how far thinking has gone at State.*

Talking Points for Opening Meeting

The best way to open this discussion would seem to be to get a fix of the major elements of the situation:

1. You might open by asking Mr. Helms for a characterization of Indo-Pakistani relations at this point and his assessment as to where developments seem to be heading and why. (He will be prepared to answer both these questions.)

2. Having heard the CIA assessment, you might next seek the Group's consensus on the likelihood that India and Pakistan are drifting toward a new war. This will provide the basis for determining how far we might wish to go in defusing a potential crisis.

Talking Points for Discussion

1. Theoretically, there are a number of diplomatic and other actions the US could take in an attempt to prevent further escalation (see pp. 5–6 of State paper). We all can think of these. The real problem is determining the basis for selecting one over another and in formulating a general strategy to accomplish our objectives. Does anyone have any thoughts on how to do this?

2. *A peaceful accommodation between East and West Pakistan* appears to be at the heart of the problem of the deterioration in Indo-Pak relations. If this were accomplished, Indian public opinion would tone down and the refugee flow would stop and might even be reversed. Therefore, what might we do, that we are not already doing, to encourage this process?

3. What actions might be taken on the *Indian side of the equation*? It seems to me this is just as delicate a situation in terms of longer range US interests as with the West Pakistanis since it would be easy to destroy our relationship with the Indian Government and have nothing to show for it.

4. The *Chinese* are potentially a major factor in this situation. Is there anything we can do, perhaps through the British Canadians or

⁴ See footnote 3, Document 51.

French, to encourage them to act with restraint? Or is this not even worth exploring in view of the Chinese relationship with the West Pakistanis and rivalry with India?

5. In the short run at least *we share a strong interest with the Soviets* in avoiding another Indo-Pak war. The Soviets have very little clout in Islamabad but they do have a so-called “special relationship” with New Delhi. Is it possible and desirable to encourage the Soviets to play a peacemaking role? Or would some sort of consultation and joint, or at least parallel, action with the Soviets be more in our interests?

6. Is there a peacemaking role here for U Thant who appears genuinely concerned about the situation and perhaps would be inclined to adopt a more open political role? What about the Security Council, especially in view of the potentially constructive Soviet attitude, or is this more than our relationship with the Paks will bear?

7. We need to think ahead about the situation that would arise if war does break out between India and Pakistan. What would our position be, say, if the Chinese began harassing India in the Himalayas? What could we do to stop the fighting?

Summary

We need to further develop and refine our thinking. This could be done by asking State to develop an expanded contingency paper that would include:

1. Alternative scenarios for attempting to halt the drift toward war in South Asia.
2. A hard and more detailed look at how we might respond to the outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan.

58. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, May 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Possible India–Pakistan War

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK. Secret. Drafted by Quinton on May 25 and cleared by Schneider.

The situation in East Pakistan is evolving to the point where we now believe it possible that it could touch off a war between India and Pakistan. In the event of such a conflict, the possibility of Chinese pressure on India along their border, followed by increased Soviet military assistance to India, cannot be excluded.

Three things have created the danger of war: continued military repression, economic dislocation and lack of political accommodation in East Pakistan; the very heavy flow of refugees to India (over three million, according to the Indians) which is imposing a very great burden on India; and Indian cross-border support to Bengali guerrillas.

The possibility of war introduces a new and greater threat to US interests in South Asia. The threat is likely to remain as long as the East Pakistan conflict remains unresolved. We agree that President Yahya is not likely to take steps to bring about a political accommodation until he realizes, himself, how essential it is. We cannot force him to this realization and therefore we are not imposing political conditions on our assistance. We believe, however, that we should avoid taking actions which might ease the internal pressures on him to take such steps on his own accord.

We are engaged in a series of actions in regard to both Pakistan and India, designed to reduce the danger of conflict between the two. A list of actions already taken is attached.

We have been emphasizing three key points to the Pakistanis, both here and in Islamabad. First, it is essential that they get international relief activities started up in East Pakistan. Pakistan seems to be on the point of agreeing to this. Second, it is equally vital that they restore peaceful conditions in East Pakistan and persuade the refugees in India to return. Pakistan has acknowledged the need to do so and President Yahya has issued a somewhat contentious public announcement welcoming "bona fide Pakistan citizens" back. Third, we have continued our emphasis on the need for political accommodation, but with little result so far.

We have pursued three courses with regard to the Indians. First, since the refugee burden seems to be India's major problem now, we have taken a number of steps to encourage India to manage this problem by getting international assistance rather than by taking direct action against East Pakistan as some Indians are urging. Partly because of our actions U Thant is getting an effective international assistance program underway. We are already helping and will be stepping up our assistance. Second, we have taken up with the Indians their cross-border support to guerrillas and have privately cautioned them against direct action. Third, in order to persuade the Indians that a solution to the East Pakistan problem can be achieved without their direct military intervention, we have confidentially briefed them on the positions we are taking privately with Pakistan.

We have prepared contingency plans in the event that there is an outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan.

William P. Rogers

Attachment

ACTIONS TAKEN

India

A. Allocated \$2.5 million to refugee relief. These funds used to feed 300,000 refugees and contribute \$500,000 to UNHCR.

B. Encouraged and supported UNSYG and UNHCR in organizing international refugee relief program.

C. Recommended approval of proposal to provide four C-130s for airlift of refugees from Tripura to Assam and of relief supplies from Assam to Tripura.

D. Briefed the Indians on what we are doing to get relief operations started in East Pakistan and to encourage political accommodation.

E. Urged Indians to use restraint in relations with Pakistan; warned them against direct action.

Pakistan

A. Pressed GOP to request the UNSYG to coordinate large program of international relief assistance for people of East Pakistan; GOP has just sent such request to UNSYG.

B. Initiated contingency planning under Interdepartmental Working Group for US contribution to relief program; we contemplate PL-480 food aid, financing of inland water transport charters and support for US voluntary agencies.

C. Urged Yahya to restore peaceful conditions in East Pakistan, to stop repressive action against the Hindu minority and to encourage return of refugees.

D. Urged Yahya to seek political accommodation with Bengalis, and to make comprehensive public statement of his plans for this and for restoration of economic normalcy.

E. Arranged to send USDA port specialist to East Pakistan to help assess and recommend regarding alleviation of crucial port congestion, storage and internal distribution problems.

F. Urged Yahya to improve port and inland distribution facilities to permit distribution of relief and other commodities to the populace.

G. Emphasized to GOP need for maintaining restraint toward India in these tense circumstances.

59. Editorial Note

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger discussed developments in South Asia in the Oval Office of the White House the morning of May 26, 1971. Kissinger opened the conversation by referring to the letter that had recently been received from Prime Minister Gandhi (Document 46). Answering the letter, Kissinger said, would give the President the opportunity to “bring pressure on her not to take military action.” He added that he had talked to the Pakistani Ambassador who said that President Yahya would appreciate a letter from Nixon to give him an opportunity to respond with a litany of all the things he was doing to resolve the unrest in East Pakistan. Kissinger said that he and the Ambassador had it all worked out: Nixon would write that he hoped the refugees would soon be able to go back to East Pakistan and Yahya would respond that that was exactly what he wanted. Nixon could take credit for trying to pour calming oil on troubled waters. “You can tell the Indians to pipe down, and we’ll keep Yahya happy,” Kissinger said.

The conversation turned to what they saw as India’s role in fostering an insurgency in East Pakistan. Nixon said that “the goddamn Indians” were promoting another war. Kissinger agreed: “They are the most aggressive goddamn people around.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, May 26, 1971, 10:38–10:44 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 505–4) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 135.

60. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting¹

Washington, May 26, 1971, 4:35–5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Ruff. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room.

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

U. Alexis Johnson

Christopher Van Hollen

Thomas Thornton

Defense

David Packard

James S. Noyes

Brig. Gen. Devol Brett

CIA

Richard Helms

David Blee

Thomas Karamessines

JCS

Gen. William Westmoreland

Lt. Gen. John W. Vogt

NSC Staff

Samuel Hoskinson

Mark Wandler

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

(1) State will rework its paper² on (a) what the U.S. might do to avoid the outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan, and (b) what we can and should do if hostilities begin;

(2) Defense will double-check the status of all military items scheduled for shipment to Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), will you give us a quick rundown on the current situation?

(See attached briefing read by Mr. Helms using map.)³

Mr. Kissinger: How long will Parliament stay in session?

Mr. Van Hollen: For several months.

Mr. Kissinger: (referring to map) What are those four divisions in the center of India?

Mr. Helms: Those are their reserves.

Mr. Kissinger: And the red line is where the Pakistani troops are?

Mr. Helms: Yes.

² Reference is to the "Contingency Study for Indo-Pakistani Hostilities"; see footnote 3, Document 51.

³ The map was not attached. Based on his attached notes, Helms told the group that tension between India and Pakistan had led to talk of war, particularly in India. The CIA assessment, however, was that India did not want war and that the Gandhi government had decided, for the immediate future, to rely on diplomatic rather than military action. The irritants that had created the tension, including the flow of refugees into India from East Pakistan, were expected to continue and increase.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you think the Indians really want in East Pakistan? Do they want the situation to quiet down so the refugees can return? Do they see this as an opportunity to weaken Pakistan? Or don't they know what they want?

Mr. Van Hollen: The Indians want, first, a cessation of the civil strife in East Pakistan so as to stem the flow of refugees. Second, they want a moderate, independent regime in East Pakistan. They're concerned that over a period of time the radical element there may take over and link up with radicals in India.

Mr. Kissinger: They're aiming for an independent Bangla Desh under moderate leadership?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Mr. Van Hollen: Until March 25, India saw its interests served by a united Pakistan in which the Bengali element would be dominant. When the Pakistani military moved into East Pakistan, India's estimate of their own best interests shifted, and they now favor an independent Bangla Desh under moderate leadership.

Mr. Kissinger: Is India prepared to take military action? What is the civil strife situation in Bangla Desh?

Mr. Van Hollen: The Pakistani military has control of the urban centers and they have moved forces to the India-Pakistan border. But they have no effective political control.

Mr. Kissinger: Does anybody have political control?

Mr. Van Hollen: No; there is no effective political counterforce.

Mr. Kissinger: Do the Bengalis have any alternative political structure?

Mr. Van Hollen: Not really.

Mr. Kissinger: From this limited point of view, then, the Pakistani operation has had limited success.

Mr. Van Hollen: There are an increasing number of attacks on Pakistani military forces and some interdiction of roads and other communications. In the last two weeks we have seen more indication of some counteraction by the Bengalis.

Mr. Johnson: I notice the paper⁴ refers to a "lightning attack" by India on Pakistan forces. I don't see how this kind of an attack could be successful. It would be bound to turn into a drawn-out war. Pakistan would probably attack on the west, as well, and India would be engaged in the two-front war. There's also the uncertainty of what China would do in this situation. According to Dick's (Helms) report, the Indians are taking a very sober attitude. That's encouraging.

⁴ Reference is to the contingency study cited in footnote 2 above.

Mr. Helms: The Indian military seems to be taking a serious, responsible view.

Mr. Kissinger: And the rainy season is approaching. This is not a good time for any military operation.

Mr. Van Hollen: Fifty percent of East Pakistan is under water during the monsoon season.

Gen. Westmoreland: General Manekshaw, the Indian Army Chief of Staff, is in the U.S. and was in to see me the other day. Also, you know, I visited there not too long ago. The Indian politicians seem eager to intervene in East Pakistan, but their position has apparently been modified and they now seem to have a somewhat more sober perspective. General Manekshaw gave the credit to the military for this sobering influence.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Westmoreland) What do you think of India's capability?

Gen. Westmoreland: In a showdown they could defeat the Pakistani Army.

Mr. Kissinger: In the East and the West?

Gen. Westmoreland: I don't think Pakistan would attack in the West because they wouldn't want to take on India on two fronts. Pakistan's logistic and supply support are marginal and their staying power is only about three or four weeks. Also, India would be fighting with interior lines of communication. India could mount a lightning attack, seize an area and resettle the refugees there. They would have the manpower to sustain that kind of operation but, of course, this would lead to direct confrontation.

Mr. Kissinger: What would be the advantage to India in seizing a limited area in East Pakistan?

Mr. Van Hollen: The only point would be in the context of the refugee problem. An attempt to obtain *liebensraum* for the refugees would relieve the domestic pressures and would be a little more acceptable to international opinion.

Mr. Kissinger: But they would get in a scrap with 55,000 Pakistani troops. They couldn't achieve their objective until they had defeated them. By that time the issue would have been settled. I know nothing about Pakistan, but if India should attack, the practical outcome would be India's defeat (if Chinese Communist or other forces should come in) or, more probably, an independent Bangla Desh. Those 55,000 Pakistani troops wouldn't let India seize part of their territory on which to settle refugees.

Gen. Westmoreland: The only feasible Indian objective would be seizure of an enclave to assist them in resettling the refugees.

Mr. Kissinger: But there's no viable area of East Pakistan where they could settle three million refugees. It's already overcrowded. Suppose that were their objective? How would they do it?

Mr. Van Hollen: The Indians could say that the influx of refugees constitutes intervention in internal Indian affairs. In order to relieve this situation, the refugees must return to East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: The Indians are not that unsubtle. Suppose that were their objective; what part of East Pakistan could they seize? Suppose you had the staff assignment to select an area; what area would you choose where you could resettle three and a half million refugees, even assuming Pakistan did not resist? India can't achieve this objective; they would have to proceed to something else. Whatever their justification might be, it would inevitably become a full-scale conflagration.

Mr. Van Hollen: The area is not as important as the political-military gesture. I agree, it would result in an all-out conflagration.

Mr. Johnson: We recognize that.

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose Yahya wrote the President a letter saying he was willing to take the refugees back and guarantee their safe passage. Would this ease the situation?

Mr. Johnson: Yahya's public statement yesterday sounded more forthcoming. He indicated he was willing to take the refugees back if they were bonafide citizens of Pakistan and had not committed crimes.

Mr. Helms: The way the Pakistanis have been beating up on the Hindus, the refugees would have to be convinced they wouldn't be shot in the head.

Mr. Johnson: Eighty percent of the refugees are Hindus. (Ambassador) Farland raised this with Yahya and got an emotional reaction. He denied the Hindus were being persecuted but said he would look into it.

Mr. Kissinger: Before (Indian) Ambassador Jha went back he indicated that it would help India if we could write to Mrs. Gandhi to tell her that we were receiving some assurances from the Pakistanis. Would it be possible to elicit something from the Pakistanis based on the President's personal relationship with Yahya?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yahya's public statement was helpful, but the refugees won't return until there is some political accommodation and they are sure the Hindus won't again be the target. We shouldn't think of their return in the short run.

Mr. Kissinger: We have two questions: (1) what can we do to avoid military action, and (2) what should we do if there is military action?

Mr. Johnson: With regard to the first, the refugees are the immediate incitement to military action. The only cure for the flow of refugees is some political accommodation in East Pakistan with the

West Pakistan Government to calm the situation. We have a good dialogue going with Yahya—he seems quite responsive to Ambassador Farland. His public statement yesterday reflects his talks with Farland. We can assume Yahya’s objective is the same as ours—to calm things down politically. He is moving in this direction as much as he thinks he can, but it is important to keep our dialogue going.

We also have the problem of relief to East Pakistan. We now have a letter to U Thant⁵ which provides an international umbrella. As soon as the letter is published and U Thant issues his appeal, we are ready to respond within the hour. The same thing is true on the Indian side. We are encouraging an international umbrella over the relief problem in India and are prepared to respond quickly. We have already provided some aircraft to airlift some of the refugees.

Mr. Van Hollen: The President had already agreed to \$2.5 million for refugee relief. We are proposing an increase of \$15 million in the draft letter to Mrs. Gandhi. We’re now feeding 300,000 refugees.

Mr. Kissinger: The President has approved the letter to Mrs. Gandhi.⁶

Mr. Johnson: That should improve the situation.

Mr. Kissinger: The President wants the whole question of possible Indian military action looked at, including ways in which we might discourage any such action, including some penalties. How might we do this?

Mr. Johnson: We have already said it to (Ambassador) Jha, and (Ambassador) Keating will repeat it to the Foreign Minister. As Dick (Helms) has reported, the Indians are under no illusions as to our attitude. We will continue to follow up on this.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we review the bidding? What can we do both positively and negatively to avoid the outbreak of hostilities, and what can and should we do if hostilities begin?

Mr. Johnson: We have circulated a paper, but I would like to substitute some revised pages for the present draft.

Mr. Kissinger: Your paper indicates we might formally suspend all military programs with India and Pakistan. We don’t have a program with India, do we?

Mr. Van Hollen: We have a small military sales program.

Mr. Johnson: Our paper wasn’t clear on the question of who would be initiating military action. There would be no question if military action were initiated by Pakistan.

⁵ On May 22 Agha Shahi, Pakistani Permanent Representative to the United Nations, sent a letter to Secretary-General U Thant requesting humanitarian relief assistance for East Pakistan through the United Nations. (Telegram 1394 from USUN, May 26; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, SOC 10 PAK)

⁶ Document 62.

Gen. Westmoreland: Sometimes you can't tell who initiates military action.

Mr. Johnson: But it needs to be spelled out. I want us to do some more work on this paper.

Mr. Kissinger: Yes, let's rework the paper, and then we will tack a discussion of this on the end of another subject in an early meeting.

Mr. Packard: I suggest we just sit tight on military sales to Pakistan. We have nothing of consequence going to them any time soon except for some spare parts for MK-14 torpedoes which are going out this month.

Mr. Kissinger: I have talked to the President about this. He believes we should go ahead with spare parts for ongoing programs, but should try to delay any larger shipments. I understand we have some open-ended spare parts items which would take some positive, affirmative action to stop. Most of these are not relevant to the present situation. Stopping these could be construed as a positive hostile act. On anything bigger, though, the President would like to delay and to have another crack at it before shipment.

Mr. Van Hollen: You know Congress has asked to be consulted if any shipments are made, and we agreed. When I testified on this on the Hill recently, Senator Javits asked that we keep in touch with them on this and we agreed.

Mr. Kissinger: None of us knew about that commitment.

Mr. Van Hollen: We sent a memorandum⁷ to you.

Mr. Packard: I'll double-check the current status of the shipment of any items.

Mr. Kissinger: The President is eager to avoid any break with Yahya.

Gen. Westmoreland: What about the C-130 aircraft (for refugee airlift)?

Mr. Johnson: We're going ahead with those. The telegram⁸ went out last night.

Mr. Kissinger: The President approved this.

Gen. Westmoreland: I'm skeptical about this operation. They can only handle 1200-1400 a day.

Mr. Johnson: This involves only the refugees in Tripura—a total of about 500,000.

Mr. Van Hollen: And we've made it clear that other countries, including India, are involved.

⁷ Not found.

⁸ See Document 45.

Mr. Kissinger: Is this being done under the UN?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't have much going to Pakistan in the way of spare parts, do we?

Mr. Packard: The torpedo spares are the only things I remember.

Mr. Van Hollen: I think there are also some aircraft engines for training aircraft.

Mr. Packard: I'll double-check the list.

**61. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the
Department of State (Eliot) to the President's Assistant for
National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹**

Washington, May 27, 1971.

SUBJECT

Planning for Food Relief in East Pakistan

We have already taken initial steps to ensure that food is available in India for refugees from Pakistan. Beyond this, however, looms the potentially much greater problem of food shortages in East Pakistan itself, which normally must import two million tons of food annually. There is now sufficient food either in stock or awaiting shipment to East Pakistan, but the critical problem is distribution. We believe that about 1.5 million people in the area hit by cyclones last November are now in dire need of food, and there is likely to be a food shortage throughout the province unless the Government of Pakistan mounts a large-scale relief program within the next few months. An Interdepartmental Working Group has been set up to coordinate all aspects of our contribution to relief work in Bengal but we recognize that neither we nor any outside donor can be of more than marginal help in meeting the problem.

This memorandum outlines in broad terms the likely dimensions of the food problem in the East; the steps that we are considering to

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, SOC 10 PAK. Confidential. Drafted by T.P. Thornton (S/PC) on May 26 and cleared by Weiss (S/PC), Van Hollen, Spengler, Damsgaard (AID), and Cochran (INR).

help Pakistan meet the problem; and the difficulties that we are likely to encounter.

Food Availability

Neither we nor the GOP knows just what the current food situation in East Pakistan is. Aside from the cyclone-affected area (discussed below) there was enough grain on hand at the beginning of March to see the region through mid-June, had the consumption and distribution situations been normal. The situation has been far from normal, however, and because of distribution problems, there may have been very little draw-down. In fact, the GOP still assumes stocks on hand in the 600,000–700,000 ton range. This would mean, of course, that people throughout the provinces are already experiencing food shortages.

We have taken steps to get our few remaining AID people in Dacca out into some of the most crucial areas, and the GOP has informed us that it is urgently assessing the situation and its future needs. We hope that in a few weeks we will have a better picture of what problems have to be dealt with. In the interim we are endeavoring to fill the food-grain pipeline to India to capacity so that some of this grain could be diverted to East Pakistan if needed, or used to feed refugees in India.

In addition, we are prepared to resume shipments promptly to East Pakistan of 170,000 tons of Title I wheat under the existing PL-480 Title I program and to sign an agreement for a further 150,000 tons of Title I foodgrains for rehabilitation of the cyclone disaster area. We are also willing to move ahead on a new annual PL-480 agreement, as requested by Pakistan recently. We will proceed with these actions as the GOP deals with some of the matters under its control—viz. alleviating the port congestion and distribution problems, establishing shipping schedules to return to East Pakistan the food that has been diverted to Karachi, and resuming food shipments to the cyclone-affected areas.

Offloading and Distribution Problems

With regard to the province as a whole, the most critical problem is getting food off the ships, through the port, and on to distribution points inland. Port operations are resuming only very slowly because (a) the inability to move goods out of port cities has saturated available dockside storage and (b) much of the stevedore force has fled their jobs in fear. Because of port congestion, some 200,000 tons of PL-480 wheat alone has had to be diverted from East to West Pakistan in the past months. (In addition, another 250,000 tons from non-US sources are stored in West Pakistan awaiting shipment to the East.)

The blockage in distribution out of the port areas results from several causes. Labor shortage and the army's policy of commandeering civilian vehicles have been significant contributors; the major constraint, however, is the disruption of the only road and rail routes out

of Chittagong. Some three-quarters of East Pakistan's grain imports are normally carried on these routes which are expected to be inoperable for up to six months.

In theory, there are enough ships of proper configuration in Pakistan to move the grain via inland water routes. However, many of these ships have been deserted by their crews, some have been sunk by Bengali nationalists, and others have been taken over by the military. When the monsoon breaks later this month, water transport will become much more difficult, thus restricting the operations of coastal ships (and, incidentally, substantially impeding port operations as well). In addition, Bengali insurgent operations have made some of the inland water routes insecure.

This complex of offloading and distribution problems must in the first analysis be addressed by the Government of Pakistan itself. We may, however, be able to assist Pakistan in procuring additional coastal shipping if that is necessary. We have established that an apparently adequate amount of charter shipping is available in nearby areas on about one week's notice, and there are various devices by which we and other foreign donors could assist Pakistan in arranging and paying for charters. In addition, we are urgently following up a Pakistan government offer to have a US port specialist from the Agriculture Department go to East Pakistan to assess the problem and make recommendations.

The Cyclone Area

The food situation in the cyclone-affected areas is especially severe. The stocks on hand there at the beginning of the fighting must be exhausted and we know of no significant GOP resupply effort underway or planned. The few boats that have been made available to carry food are being used to supply the Dacca area. Recent reports state that half of the three million people in the cyclone-stricken area are very short of food. In these devastated areas there is no winter crop to be harvested. Monsoon weather will make access to some of the area nearly impossible and to the remainder at best difficult. (In normal years, food is brought in before the monsoon to tide the region over during the bad weather.) We hope to get AID personnel to the area soon to survey the situation.

Financial Resources

Lacking any clear picture of the extent of the problem, we cannot at this time predict what US resources may be needed. We are fortunate, however, in still having available the \$7.5 million (plus \$100 million in local currency) authorized for rehabilitation in the cyclone area. Since we expect the greatest problem to be there, these funds can be drawn on as required. When we have a fuller picture we may need to

ask for additional authorizations; at the present time, however, we see no basis for requesting additional funds.

Political Problems

A major impediment to efficient food distribution may come from the political situation in East Pakistan:

—the GOP is clearly not well informed on some aspects of the supply and transportation situations and we have reason to believe that it is painting an overly rosy picture.

—the civil administration in East Pakistan is in disarray. Many officials have not returned to their jobs and lines of command are broken. West Pakistanis have been brought in as replacements and their presence may be resented by the Bengalis.

—the GOP intends to use food distribution to strengthen its political image. Many potential donors fear that the government (and especially the army) may discriminate in food distribution on political grounds unless there is some impartial monitoring.

On the positive side, the army appears as of now, at least, to have adequate control of most of East Bengal to ensure reasonable security to food shipments; also, we will probably not be faced, as we were in Biafra, with the problem of dealing with two separate governments or of getting food to large areas not under the more or less effective control of the central government.

In addition, the GOP has made a formal request to the UN, released by Secretary General U Thant on May 26, for East Pakistan relief and has agreed to the sending of a UN representative to help assess requirements and coordinate supplies from abroad. Initially it has requested 30 river craft as soon as possible and 250,000 tons of food-grains over the next six months. Although the GOP delayed making this request—apparently because it feared that a UN representative in East Bengal might not restrict his attention to relief matters but delve into possible violations of human rights—it now seems to be headed in the right direction in securing international assistance.

Prodding of Pakistan on issues that might be interpreted as political runs the risk of being counter productive. We believe, however, that we have been able to contribute significantly to improving Pakistan's position through the President's letter,² the visit of M.M. Ahmad to Washington, and the May 22 meeting between President Yahya and Ambassador Farland.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.

² Apparent reference to the letter sent by Nixon to Yahya on May 28; see Document 63.

62. Letter From President Nixon to Indian Prime Minister Gandhi¹

Washington, May 28, 1971.

Dear Madame Prime Minister:

Your recent letter² was of very great interest to me. I fully share your concern at the loss of life which has taken place as the result of developments in East Pakistan, at the dislocations which the flow of refugees is causing for India, and at the dangers for the political stability of the area which are implicit in the present situation.

We share your government's hope that peace and stability can be restored in the sub-continent and that all the countries of the area can develop democratic systems of government consistent with their own traditions and history.

The United States Government has not been a passive observer of these events. We have had under active and continuous review two elements of the situation which we regard as particularly urgent: the human suffering and dislocation which has taken place and the basic political cause of this suffering and dislocation. The public focus of our attention and activity has been upon the urgent relief problems which have arisen in East Pakistan as a result of civil conflict there and which have been created in India by the refugee flow. We have actively supported over the last two months a variety of actions to promote an international humanitarian relief effort. We have discussed these matters on several occasions with your representatives as well as with representatives of the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations.

I am happy to see that these efforts have borne fruit. As you know, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees is in the process of mounting and coordinating a relief effort in India in close cooperation with your government. The UN Secretary General has appealed to the world community for emergency relief assistance. In April I authorized \$2.5 million for refugee relief, \$500,000 of which was contributed in response to the Secretary General's appeal. We have further decided to provide an additional \$15 million in food and cash to help the UN High Commissioner with refugee feeding and other assistance and to support the program already initiated by United States voluntary agencies under

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). No classification marking. The text of the letter was transmitted to New Delhi on May 28 in telegram 95110 for delivery to Prime Minister Gandhi. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 US/NIXON)

² Document 46.

which 300,000 refugees are being fed. We have also agreed to your government's request to provide four C-130 aircraft to move refugees from Tripura to Assam and food supplies from Assam to Tripura. We stand ready to assist in other ways.

Let me emphasize again that I fully realize the dangers which this massive movement of people have created. I recognize the very great burdens which India has to bear. I know that the international response to the Secretary General's appeal will only blunt the economic impact of the influx of refugees on your plans for the future. Certainly we will keep this fact in mind as we plan our economic assistance programs.

In regard to the basic cause of this human suffering and dislocation, my government has also been active. We have chosen to work primarily through quiet diplomacy, as we have informed your Ambassador and Foreign Minister. We have been discussing with the Government of Pakistan the importance of achieving a peaceful political accommodation and of restoring conditions under which the refugee flow would stop and the refugees would be able to return to their homes. I feel that these approaches were at least in part behind President Yahya's press conference on May 24 and especially his public acceptance of international assistance, offer of amnesty to the refugees and commitment to transfer power to elected representatives. We will continue this effort.

I am also deeply concerned that the present situation not develop into a more widespread conflict in South Asia, either as a result of the refugee flow or through actions which might escalate the insurgency which may be developing in East Pakistan. The problems involved in this situation can and should be solved peacefully. As you know, in recent months we have been impressed by the vitality of Indian democracy and the strength of purpose which your government has shown in meeting the complex social and economic problems which India faces. India's friends would be dismayed were this progress to be interrupted by war. As one of Asia's major powers, India has a special responsibility for maintaining the peace and stability of the region. I hope and trust that India, in the face of what I recognize to be very trying and difficult circumstances, will continue to act with maximum restraint.

I very much appreciate your kind comments on my daughter's engagement. I know she and her fiancé appreciate your expression of happiness at their engagement.

With warm personal regards,
Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

63. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya¹

Washington, May 28, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

Your letter of May 24² was of very great interest to me. The situation in the Subcontinent has been much on my mind and it is most useful to have your views. Ambassador Farland has also sent me a full report of his recent conversation with you and this, along with our discussions with Mr. M. M. Ahmad, has given us a better understanding of the problems you are facing.

I am pleased to know that you found my letter³ satisfactory and that you have responded so positively to suggestions we have made in an effort to be helpful in these difficult circumstances. In that same spirit of friendship and understanding, I wish to inform you of our present views and concerns.

Let me say first that I was gratified to learn of your statesmanlike decision to accept formally the assistance of the United Nations in organizing an international humanitarian relief effort for the people of East Pakistan and of your letter to Secretary General U Thant confirming that decision. I have also noted with satisfaction your public declaration of amnesty for the refugees and commitment to transfer power to elected representatives. I am confident that you will turn these statements into reality.

I feel sure you will agree with me that the first essential step is to bring an end to the civil strife and restore peaceful conditions in East Pakistan. Then full-scale efforts can go forward within an international framework to help your government provide relief assistance to the people who need it. In this respect, we are particularly concerned about the people of the coastal area who were affected by the cyclonic disaster last November. The people of the United States and other friendly countries, and international organizations, have endeavored to assist these people in the past, and I can assure you that my government and countrymen are already prepared not only to resume humanitarian relief efforts in this special area but to extend them to the rest of East Pakistan under the aegis of the United Nations in accordance with arrangements now under discussion.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking. Transmitted to Islamabad on May 28 in telegram 95111 for delivery to President Yahya. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 US/NIXON)

² Document 56.

³ Document 41.

While this is being done, it will, of course, be essential to ensure that tensions in the region as a whole do not increase to the point of international conflict. I would be less than candid if I did not express my deep concern over the possibility that the situation there might escalate to that danger point. I believe, therefore, that it is absolutely vital for the maintenance of peace in the Subcontinent to restore conditions in East Pakistan conducive to the return of refugees from Indian territory as quickly as possible. I urge you to continue to exercise restraint both along your borders with India and in your general relations with that country. We are counseling the Government of India to do the same.

It is only in a peaceful atmosphere that you and your administration can make effective progress toward the political accommodation you seek in East Pakistan. You have my heartfelt wishes for success in achieving that much desired objective.

With warm personal regards,
Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

64. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 3, 1971, 4:20–4:50 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Kenneth Keating, US Ambassador to India
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

After an exchange of pleasantries, Ambassador Keating asked Dr. Kissinger to “tell me what you know.” He said that he had been emotionally upset about developments in Pakistan, but wanted to leave emotion aside and discuss the issues themselves.

Dr. Kissinger said he thought it would be useful to explain the President’s views on what has happened in South Asia. He has felt that

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 546, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. III, Sept 70–30 June 71. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on June 4. The meeting was held in Kissinger’s office at the White House. The time of the meeting is from Kissinger’s appointment book. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

it is “premature to move on the Paks.” We certainly will use our influence to do whatever we can to help solve the current humanitarian problems. But the President has felt that we should give President Yahya a few months to see what he can work out. As the President sees it, if we approach the Pakistanis emotionally now, we would not gain anything and we might lose what ability we may have to influence the situation.

Our judgment, Dr. Kissinger continued, is that East Pakistan will eventually become independent. This, he felt, is the Ambassador’s judgment too. The problem is “how to bell the cat.” The President has chosen to do it gradually.

In all honesty, Dr. Kissinger pointed out, the President has a special feeling for President Yahya. One cannot make policy on that basis, but it is a fact of life.

Dr. Kissinger said that one of the President’s main concerns is that India be discouraged from military action. Just to give the Ambassador the flavor of the President’s feelings, he recalled that ten days ago when we had received reports that India might be considering military action the President had said he would cut off economic assistance if India moved. “But we don’t have to think in those extreme terms.” The Pakistanis are already up against a very difficult situation, and our policy is to “give the facts time to assert themselves.”

Dr. Kissinger concluded his comment by saying that he knew that if he were in New Delhi watching all of these things at first hand, he would not be so detached in his observations.

Ambassador Keating said that, apart from the humanitarian aspects of the problem and the four million refugees, he had wanted to talk about military and economic assistance to Pakistan. He said he felt that military aid is “just out of the question now while they are still killing in East Pakistan and refugees are fleeing across the border.”

Dr. Kissinger interjected that the President’s view was to hold up on the one-time exception [military package for Pakistan]² and to give those spare parts not relevant to the situation. The Ambassador said that he had seen the proposed policy decision memo in the State Department and noted that it included non-lethal military equipment and spares. This, he felt, would mean ammunition. The Ambassador felt this would “bring terrific criticism on the President’s head.” He said he recognized the special relationship with President Yahya—although he did not understand it—but explained that State was writing a reply on military assistance which would suggest limiting it to non-lethal

² All brackets in the source text.

items. But even that, he felt, would cause criticism of the President. He said he felt "very strongly about military aid."

He said he wanted very much to "see the President succeed." He had "defended the President's Vietnam policy up and down India." He just thought "that to take on this additional burden is an unnecessary burden just out of loyalty to a friend."

Having said that, he felt that on the merits it is wrong to resume military assistance as long as the killing continues in East Pakistan. Dacca is reasonably quiet, although only half the normal inhabitants are there. The Pakistani army is now concentrating on the Hindu population. At first the refugees crossing into India were in the same proportion of Hindu and Muslim as in the whole East Pakistani population. Now, 90% are Hindus.

As for economic aid, the Ambassador continued, no one can complain about continuing PL-480 food into the cyclone area, although there is a problem in getting the ships unloaded. As for other aid, the press had reported that the US, the World Bank and other consortium members were going to bail Pakistan out economically. Press reports made it sound as if this would be done unconditionally. The Ambassador said he thought that certain conditions should be attached to any further economic assistance: (1) the killing should be stopped in East Pakistan; (2) the refugee flow should be stopped and a process should be started which would permit the beginnings of a refugee return to East Pakistan; (3) steps should be taken to achieve a political settlement. He said he just did not know how or whether this could be done.

Dr. Kissinger interjected that the Pakistanis do not know how a political settlement can be achieved either. The Ambassador said that the West Pakistanis seem intransigent about Mujibur Rahman, "who is a tin god in East Pakistan."

The Ambassador explained that there are two reasons for India's concern:

—When Mujib's landslide victory was achieved with platform plank of better relations with India, Indians thought that sounded pretty good and got their hopes up for a Pakistan which would have a dominant political element in it espousing that policy.

—The Indians are also concerned about the deep ties of the West Bengalis with the East Pakistanis.

Dr. Kissinger said there was a third Indian concern—that with the passage of time radicals would take over the resistance movement and would eventually cause more trouble for India. He said he understood the Indian point of view. Ambassador Jha is one of the few ambassadors "with whom I have any social contact." He said he had had lunch with Ambassador Jha about March 15. The Ambassador, speaking for himself, said that his government, he felt, preferred Pakistani unity at that time.

Dr. Kissinger continued that we have a difficult gradual process ahead of us while the situation ends up “where you [Ambassador Keating] want it.” We want to buy time for this to happen. We have no illusions that West Pakistan can hold East Pakistan and we have no interest in their doing so.

Ambassador Keating noted that, if there is to be an independent Bangla Desh, we would like to have friends there, too. Dr. Kissinger said that we also want to maintain good relations with India but that we do have a “management problem” over the next few months.

Ambassador Keating described his good relationship with Foreign Minister Swaran Singh. He described him as “straight, honorable, a very fine man—a Sikh.”

Dr. Kissinger said that he had played with the idea of going to the Korean inauguration and then going to Vietnam and perhaps to India after that. If he did—and he felt there was very little chance he could actually get away for this long—he would be in India around July 5. He asked whether Ambassador Keating felt it would be useful for him to talk to some people there. The Ambassador replied that he should see Mrs. Gandhi and Foreign Minister Singh.

The Ambassador continued that he has been impressed with the real majority which Mrs. Gandhi won in the election earlier this year. She has a real opportunity to move India forward now if she has the will. There are definite signs of India’s wanting better relations with the US. Just to give one example, in the field of business and foreign investment, the government had called representatives of Union Carbide and Remington Rand in and told them to move ahead with major expansion for which they had applied. Export licenses, they were told, would follow quickly. The new Minister of Industrial Development is very different from his predecessor. Ambassador Keating had had a discussion with him the likes of which he had not had since going to India. The Minister had noted that India favors the public sector (although only half of the proportion of GNP in India comes from the public sector compared with that in the US) but India definitely wanted private foreign investment.

The Ambassador noted that “we are on the threshold of better relations with the one stable democracy in that part of the world.” They are making real progress and want to be more friendly with us.

The Ambassador concluded by quoting the Prime Minister who said that India is a democracy like the US, not an authoritarian country. So there is no need for the US to worry about India’s relationship with the USSR.

Dr. Kissinger wound up the conversation by going back to the earlier subject of conversation and noting that “we agree with your assessment.” The problem is how to get through the next three months. We are not going to rush into anything on the military assistance side.

The Ambassador said that there would be a consortium dealing with the aid question. He hoped that some conditions could be set for any resumption of economic assistance. We have to have some way that our aid is not used to suppress East Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger said that he would put the Ambassador's views to the President. He said that he would be seeing the Ambassador during the week that Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh is here. He also said that the President would want to see the Ambassador during that week. Ambassador Keating said that he wanted to see the President, too.

65. Editorial Note

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger discussed Ambassador Keating and his approach to the crisis developing in South Asia in a conversation in the Oval Office of the White House on June 4, 1971. Nixon said that he had seen Keating at a social function the previous evening and agreed to meet with him later in the month. That opened a discussion of the extent to which Nixon and Kissinger felt that Keating had effectively become an advocate of the government to which he was accredited. Nixon said that he told Keating that the United States should not become involved in an internal conflict. He was skeptical about Keating holding to that line: "What the hell does he think we should do?" Kissinger responded: "He thinks we should cut off all military aid, all economic aid, and in effect help the Indians to push the Pakistanis out."

Nixon and Kissinger took exception to Keating's outlook, with Kissinger observing that it was important to buoy up Yahya for at least another month while Pakistan served as the gateway to China. Nixon said: "Even apart from the Chinese thing, I wouldn't do that to help the Indians, the Indians are no goddamn good." He noted that it seemed as though every U.S. Ambassador who went to India got "sucked in," Keating included. Kissinger said that it made no sense to follow Keating's advice and get involved in the conflict in East Pakistan. "If East Pakistan becomes independent, it is going to become a cesspool. It is going to be 100 million people, they have the lowest standard of living in Asia, no resources. They're going to become a ripe field for communist infiltration. And then they're going to bring pressure on India because of West Bengal. So that the Indians in their usual idiotic way are playing for little stakes, unless they have in the back of

their minds that they could turn East Pakistan into a sort of protectorate that they could control from Calcutta.” Nixon concluded that all the Indians had in mind was to damage Pakistan. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, June 4, 1971, 9:42–9:51 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 512–4) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 136.

66. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State¹

Islamabad, June 5, 1971, 1123Z.

5530. Subj: General Refugee Situation. Ref: Islamabad 5528.²

1. I met with President Yahya Khan at his office in Rawalpindi on Saturday, June 5 at 1200 hours. During the 50 minute conversation which ensued I discussed with Yahya, among other subjects which are reported by septels,³ the general refugee situation and the multitudinous problems which it presented.

2. I introduced this subject by underscoring President Nixon’s satisfaction with the May 24 statement⁴ which Yahya had issued. Noting that Washington was encouraged by GOP’s plan to set up refugee reception centers in East Pakistan,⁵ I expressed the hope that these

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, Geneva, Karachi, Lahore, New Delhi, and USUN.

² In telegram 5528 from Islamabad, June 5, Farland reported that he began his meeting with Yahya by conveying a copy of President Nixon’s letter of May 28. Yahya reacted positively to the letter and agreed that a restoration of conditions in the east wing which would be conducive to the return of refugees from India was essential and should be effected as soon as possible. (Ibid., POL 15–1 US/NIXON)

³ Telegram 5532 from Islamabad, June 5, reported on Farland’s discussion with Yahya of the international relief efforts Yahya had agreed to countenance, and the measures that could be taken to try to prevent famine in East Pakistan. (Ibid., SOC 10 PAK)

⁴ In a press interview in Karachi on May 24, President Yahya renewed his appeal to East Pakistani refugees in India to return to their homes. He announced an amnesty for all except those who had committed serious crimes. (Letter from Hilaly to Van Hollen, June 1; *ibid.*, REF PAK)

⁵ On May 31 the Government of Pakistan announced that it was setting up 20 reception and relief camps in East Pakistan to facilitate the return of refugees. (Ibid.)

centers would quickly be activated. I also pointed out that there had been a most favorable reaction to his indicated willingness to repatriate all except "criminals" who, presumably, would be but a very small percentage. In this connection I expressed my belief that it would be most helpful if he would specifically indicate that Hindus would also be welcomed back, suggesting that this could be done by emphasizing publicly that all bona fide refugees regardless of religious origin could and should return to their homes. I suggested that this type of pronouncement would be favorably received by the GOI and should also have a salutary impact on world opinion. Yahya's immediate answer was to the effect that his May 24 statement was all inclusive and that there was no differentiation between Muslims and Hindus. He added, however, that he had no objection whatsoever in making a statement as suggested, and that he would most certainly do so. After thinking aloud for a few moments as to the timing of such a statement, he said he felt that it most appropriately could be incorporated into his major radio address to the nation which was being formulated and which would be broadcast soon.

3. I went on to note that the flow of refugees continued and that this flow is symptomatic of the serious situation in East Pakistan. I pointed out that the Embassy continued to receive reports of Hindu villages being attacked by the army, that fear is pervasive, and that until this situation changes the refugees will continue to cross over into India. And I reiterated the USG's concern that at some point the Hindu exodus, if not checked, could lead to a military clash with India. I said that the continued massive flow of refugees remains the most explosive aspect of the East Pakistan situation. Observing that the USG had urged restraint on the GOI, I said that nevertheless a heavy responsibility still rests on Pakistan. Realistically speaking, I observed that one could hardly expect the flow to cease until the level of military activity by the army is reduced and repressive measures against the local population, especially the Hindus, was ended.

4. While in no way admitting definite Hindu repression, Yahya said that he was equally seized with concern over the refugee situation and realized all of its ramifications and its potential for the direst of developments. He declared that in a continuing effort to alleviate the problems generally, to minimize the outward movement of East Pakistanis, and to restore a climate of normalcy, he had already sent specific orders to East Pakistan and in addition had dispatched a number of officers charged with the carrying out of these specifics: both actions he thought would have a salutary effect on the situation. He said every effort was being made to seal the borders and to expedite the return soonest of those persons dislocated by the conflict. He added that most assuredly he would give this matter his continuing

attention. He concluded his comments by saying that his information indicated that the outflow had substantially decreased and that conversely many were moving back into East Pakistan and that processing of those individuals for onward movement to their homes had already begun.

Farland

67. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 7, 1971.

SUBJECT

Relief Assistance for East Pakistan Refugees

You will recall that your recent letter² to Mrs. Gandhi included informing her that we would be providing an additional \$15 million in relief assistance for the almost 4 million East Pakistanis who have so far fled to India. Now the paper work has caught up with this action and you are being asked by Secretary Rogers [Tab A]³ to sign the determination which would complete the legal requirements for transferring \$5 million in Foreign Assistance funds to refugee relief so your decision can be implemented. The determination is to the effect that it is "important to the national interest" to use these funds this way. In view of our interest in alleviating the tensions caused by this large refugee problem, this is a reasonable finding. The Office of Management and Budget concurs [Tab A].⁴

State has also sent over a suggested White House press release [Tab B]⁵ although he does not indicate his thoughts on the desirability of making the announcement here rather than at the State Department. I understand, however, that the Department simply thought you might

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 370, Subject Files, Presidential Determinations, 71-11-72-09/71. Confidential. Sent for action.

² Document 62.

³ All brackets in the source text. Attached as Tab A but not printed was a May 29 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon.

⁴ OMB Director George Shultz concurred in the attached but not printed June 2 memorandum to Nixon.

⁵ Attached but not printed.

prefer to take full credit through a special White House announcement as has been done with other major relief programs. As I see it, from a strictly foreign policy point of view it does not really make much difference but, on balance, I would prefer letting State do it. This will be a complex and difficult program, and I think you should not dramatize White House responsibility for it now.

You may at this point be interested in a balance sheet of the major actions that have been taken so far on the relief and related problems.

In response to the situation *in India*:

—Of the initial \$2.5 million in relief assistance to the refugees that you authorized, \$1.5 million has gone to feeding programs by U.S. voluntary agencies and \$500,000 has been contributed directly to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist in meeting immediate needs for shelter, medical aid and other non-food supplies.

—Of the additional \$15 million, \$10 million will be devoted to satisfying about half of the estimated food needs for around 2.5 million refugees over the next three months. This will be coordinated through the UNHCR but administered through US voluntary agencies, international organizations, and Indian relief agencies.

—We have encouraged and supported U Thant and the UNHCR in internationalizing the refugee relief program.

—Informed the Indians that in response to their request through the UNHCR we are willing to provide four C-130s for the airlift of refugees from overcrowded border areas and to deliver relief supplies to the remaining refugees.

—Briefed the Indians on what we are doing to get relief operations started in East Pakistan and to encourage political accommodation.

—Urged the Indians to act with restraint toward Pakistan and have warned them against taking direct action against the source of the refugee problem.

With *Pakistan* we have:

—Encouraged acceptance of U Thant's representative as the coordinator of a large program of international relief assistance for the people of East Pakistan.

—Urged President Yahya to restore peaceful conditions in East Pakistan, to look into reports of actions against the Hindu minority and to encourage the return of refugees. He has made one statement guaranteeing safety for those non-criminals who return.

—Encouraged Yahya to create a political situation that will permit restoration of economic normality.

—Urged that the port and inland distribution facilities be repaired to permit distribution of relief and other commodities to the populace

and to this end have arranged to send a US port specialist to East Pakistan to assist.

—Emphasized the need for maintaining restraint toward India.

*Recommendation:*⁶

1. That you sign the determination [at brown signature tab] to transfer \$5 million from Foreign Assistance Funds to use for refugee relief.⁷
2. That you approve announcement by the State Department.

⁶ Haig signed the approval option on Kissinger's behalf for the President and put a checkmark to approve the announcement by the Department of State. On June 8 the Department announced that the United States planned to allocate an additional \$15 million for relief assistance to East Pakistani refugees in India. (Department of State *Bulletin*, June 28, 1971, p. 823)

⁷ On June 7 President Nixon signed Presidential Determination No. 71-15. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 370, Subject Files, Presidential Determinations, 71-11-72-09/71)

68. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Irwin to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Pakistan: Economic Aid Prospects

Over the last three weeks, we have been able to put ourselves in a reasonably good position for dealing with the situation in Pakistan. M. M. Ahmad returned from his Washington visit with an understanding of our desire to be helpful and of the need for Pakistan to come up with a credible program that we and other donors could support.

Ahmad was also fully exposed to our humanitarian concern for the millions of people affected in East Pakistan. He visited the UN Secretary General in New York before he left the U.S., and as a result of

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK. Secret. Drafted by Deputy Assistant AID Administrator Curtis Ferrar (AA/NESA), and Alexander S.C. Fuller (NEA/PAF) and cleared by Spengler, Townsend Swayze of the Office of South Asian Affairs (AID/NESA), Van Hollen, and Sisco.

our strong initiatives, fully supported by the British and others, the Pakistan Government has requested an international relief program. UN Assistant Secretary General Kittani is now in Pakistan to work out the modalities for the relief effort under United Nations auspices.

With our encouragement, the IMF and the IBRD have sent a joint team, some of whose members are already at work in East Pakistan. After assessing the evolving circumstances on the ground, the team will seek to assist Pakistan in working out a program of measures necessary to avoid economic collapse. Such a package will undoubtedly include trade, fiscal and monetary reforms, already overdue before March 25, as well as specific new measures arising from problems caused by the civil disorder, Pakistan's unilateral debt moratorium, the loss of East Pakistan production and exports, and the lack of business confidence in the West.

If a viable program can be worked out, it will probably include support for Pakistan in the form of an IMF drawing and regularization of the debt moratorium on a short term basis. While it is recognized that the Bank and Fund would not expect from the Consortium² a normal year's aid pledge there may be an appeal for a lesser amount of special bilateral financing as part of a short term financial package to supplement an emergency Fund drawing. The Bank/Fund team will make its first, informal report to a restricted Consortium meeting in Paris on June 21.

In summary, Pakistan has been accorded a favorable opportunity to come forward with a program the Consortium and the donors can support. Indications are, however, that the Pakistan Government will have severe difficulties in formulating a credible program. The picture emerging from our reporting shows:

—a population still largely cowed and fearful of Army action: people are hesitant to return to work in government and private offices and factories. The Hindu population has suffered strong persecution, and many have fled the country. The total number of refugees in India is now over four million.

—evidence of increasingly organized and effective insurgency, including guerrilla disruption of transport and commerce, and intimidation of those who cooperate with the Martial Law Administration.

—failure so far of the political initiatives taken by President Yahya to achieve any substantial response in East Pakistan.

—a continued low level of law and order, and partial breakdown of the local government apparatus, outside of the main towns where the army has achieved some security.

² Reference is to the Pakistan consortium; see footnote 5, Document 42.

—lack of effective action to deal with the food distribution problem in spite of expressions of concern from the Government in Islamabad. There is still no one in charge of this question in the East Wing, and no effective priority on the use of water transport for moving food.

—imminent food shortages in some areas. We have been pressing the Government of Pakistan to permit us to have access to the cyclone affected districts. When access is finally achieved, we may discover that some starvation will already have occurred.

As a result, the economy of East Pakistan is still stagnant. The provincial government is barely functioning. Peace and normalcy have not returned. There has been a consistent disparity between the official Pakistan Government expectations, and the facts as they emerge. The gap may be widening.

Work on humanitarian programs goes forward as the situation allows. Hopefully Mr. Kittani will establish a framework within which effective relief can be extended on a broad scale. The next major decisions on the economic program will arise in the context of the report of the IMF/IBRD team late in June. We are not sanguine, however, that a viable and soundly based economic program will emerge at that time.

John N. Irwin II

69. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 11, 1971, 1:03–1:56 p.m.

Lunch Conversation Between Indian Ambassador Jha and Mr. Kissinger

The purpose of the conversation was to prepare for the meeting of Foreign Minister Singh and also to prevent Indian military action against Pakistan while the Chinese channel was being maintained.

I opened the conversation by telling Jha that we understood the suffering that was caused in India and the sense of concern that India

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 150, India, 21 May 1971–21 Dec 1971. Secret. Drafted by Kissinger. The memorandum is dated June 1, but it is apparently a typographical error. According to Kissinger's appointment book, the luncheon meeting took place on June 11. (Ibid., Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

would naturally feel. I also told him that if India took unilateral military action, it would have to mean the end of any assistance on our part. It would turn the issue into an international problem involving China, the Soviet Union and other great powers, in which the Bengal problem would soon be submerged.

Jha made a very eloquent defense then of the Indian position. He said six million refugees had already entered India. They were in the most heavily-populated states, in the states with the most heavy radical element. They could shift the voting balance in Bengal, for example, entirely in the direction of the Communists. It was a matter in India of its internal stability—there was nothing that the government wanted to do less than to go to war, but something had to be done.

I asked him for a solution. He replied that it wasn't enough to offer for the refugees to come back while new refugees were being created all the time. What was needed was a political conversation and a political solution, which he personally believed were unlikely except on the basis of independence for East Pakistan. He thought we could stop economic aid to Pakistan or suspend it as an interim measure.

I said that the President had a special relationship to Pakistan which enabled him to use his influence behind the scenes much more effectively. But I said that I remembered very well a conversation he had with me at Kay Graham's² house in which he said that at some point India and the United States would have to see how to bell the cat. I was prepared to have personal contacts with him in a channel going from the President to the Prime Minister if they could give us four or five months to work on matters. Ambassador Jha said he thought that this was feasible. I told him that to show our goodwill we would immediately review the aid request to see whether we could substantially increase the refugee aid.

² President of the Washington Post company.

70. **Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State**¹

New Delhi, June 11, 1971, 1222Z.

9162. Pass White House and Ambassador Keating.

1. You will have seen from our refugee sitreps that number of refugees is now 5.4 million and that rate of flow is increasing. This should be evidence enough that no matter what noises President Yahya may make about restoration of normalcy, he has not yet done anything to effectively impede reign of terror and brutality of Pakistan army, the root cause of the refugee exodus.

2. I believe the United States, whether we like it or not, bears very heavy responsibility for the continuing deterioration of the situation. Unless forceful and effective action is promptly undertaken to stem the refugee flow, the GOI will be forced into an act of desperation to halt a situation that is clearly not of India's making.

3. Our responsibility to act in this situation is the concomitant of our role as the principal contributor and acknowledged leader of the Pakistan consortium. We are the key factor in all of Yahya's calculations for the immediate future. Despite his apparent lack of realism in recognizing the facts of life in East Pakistan, it is difficult for me to believe he does not perceive that the mainstay for the survival of his government is the continued flow of support and resources from the USG. To hold this card in our hand without playing it seems to me to be indefensible in the present situation.

4. There may be those who think the Soviets have a similar responsibility to our own. I believe the Soviets see their long-term interest of expansion of communism in both countries as being served by a continued deterioration of the situation, at least so long as it can be confined to its present dimensions (i.e., China does not become involved). The Soviets' role appears to be one of making sounds that will be receptive to Indian ears but effectively doing nothing to bring pressure on Pakistan. Their basic motivation in providing an airlift for refugees in India is in order not to permit the U.S. to make major capital at their expense by our responsiveness to the Indian request. As the fabric of society in both countries continues to be assaulted by the manifold political, economic and social pressures borne by this crisis, the present situation would appear tailor-made to lead to an expansion of communism in the subcontinent. Presumably, Soviets will be

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis.

concerned when they get clear signals that India has reached end of her rope but by then it will probably be too late.

5. But of more immediate concern is the specter of a major outbreak of communal disturbances in India. There is increasing reason to conclude that in certain areas of eastern India where the impact of the refugee presence is most severely felt, the flash point for protracted violence may be close at hand. Should this occur, it will be extremely difficult for the GOI to prevent a Hindu–Moslem confrontation from spreading throughout the country. More than any other aspect of present situation, I believe it is this factor which weighs most heavily in the Indian Government’s efforts to find a solution to the refugee problem.

6. I most strongly recommend that the time is overdue for us to utilize all leverage available to pressure the GOP into halting without further delay the terror and repression by the army in the east wing. Under present conditions, for us to call on India to show restraint amounts to putting the shoe on the wrong foot.

Stone

71. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, June 14, 1971.

SUBJECT

Aid to India

You asked what could be done to assist India with the refugee problem, presumably as a means of helping to reduce mounting pressure on Mrs. Gandhi to take more direct action against Pakistan. The following attempts to answer that question within the context of what we have already done and the magnitude of the problem.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 596, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. III, Sept 70–30 June 71. Secret. Sent for information. Kissinger initialed the memorandum indicating he saw it.

The Problem

From all indications the East Pakistani refugee problem in India is taking an enormous toll on the Indian economy and could seriously set back development.

Best estimates at this time of the total annual economic costs for supporting the refugees is upwards of \$400 million—an amount beyond the Indian government's means. This includes not only direct costs for food, medicine and shelter but also significant indirect costs such as increased inflation, increased Indian unemployment, diversion of health, transport and other services, and the spread of cholera.

High as it is, the economic cost could be dwarfed by the social and political costs to India. The Hindu-Muslim communal problem is potentially explosive in India and the law and order situation, already bad in some border areas, could deteriorate even more, especially in volatile West Bengal.

The issue therefore is what the US can do that might help Mrs. Gandhi resist pressures to take direct action against Pakistan.

What the US Has Done

In addition to counseling restraint to both India and Pakistan and encouraging the Pakistanis to take measures to reverse the refugee flow, we have taken the following major concrete actions:

—Of the initial \$2.5 million in relief assistance authorized by the President, \$1.5 million has gone to feeding programs by US voluntary agencies and \$500,000 was contributed directly to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist in meeting immediate needs for shelter, medical aid and other non-food supplies.

—Of the additional \$15 million recently authorized by the President, \$10 million is being devoted to satisfying the food requirements of about half the estimated food needs for 1.25 million refugees for about three months. This assistance is being coordinated through the UNHCR but administered by US voluntary agencies, international organizations, and Indian relief agencies. The remaining \$5 million is being devoted to non-food aid and is being provided as direct grants to meet the specific needs of the refugees as they are being identified by UNHCR, including such items as shelter, transportation facilities, medicines, medical equipment and clothing. About \$850,000 of this amount is being set aside to finance the airlift by 4 C-130s of refugees from Tripura.

—We have encouraged and supported U Thant and the UNHCR in setting up and internationalizing the refugee relief program. So far other countries have contributed about \$32 million to the relief effort including about \$12 million from the Soviets.

—All this is against a background of the normal FY 1971 AID program for India which has so far included \$176 million in program and project loans and \$150 million in PL-480 food aid.

What More Can the US Do?

There are several actions that the US could take to meet further India's need for assistance in supporting the refugees.

1. *Increased refugee aid.* Our embassy in New Delhi has recommended that we meet about 40–50% of the screened total requirements for an estimated 4 million refugees for an average of 6 months. This would be broken down as follows:

Food	\$44–49.0 million
Cotton (for tents, camps, clothing, bandages)	1.7 million
Special items (such as further airlift, field hospitals, etc.)	5.0 million
Program Grant (to in part offset import requirements)	10.0 million
Total	<u>\$65.7–\$70.7 million</u>

This would all be in addition to our normal aid programs for India but could probably be squeezed out of the normal budget for FY 1972.

2. *Economic aid supplement now.* An increase of \$25 million in FY 1971 India loan program. State and AID will shortly be proposing such an increase using funds to be made available from the program originally planned for Pakistan. This would bring the Indian loan program up close to the original level we planned but were earlier unable to fund fully. It would ease some the strain on the economy and hopefully public pressure on Mrs. Gandhi.

The main argument against this move is what it would look like to the Pakistanis. The answer to that argument is that the Pakistani program has been disrupted and we have to pick it up where it is now, starting with the recommendations of the World Bank team at the end of this month. That means we will be dealing mainly with FY 1972 money—\$90 million requested of Congress, plus some \$35 million that would for the moment continue to be held for Pakistan, plus PL-480 at a level to be determined in response to need.

If this were done, it would have to be explained to the Pakistanis in terms of (a) our need to put our own resources to full use at the end of the fiscal year and (b) our determination to work with Pakistan in the consortium with FY 1972 money as soon as the World Bank/IMF and the Pakistanis can present a framework for new lending.

The AID point is that this will keep available all the truly development assistance Pakistan will be able to handle. Of course, it would

be possible to give Pakistan more to pay its debts, for instance, but neither AID nor Congressional criteria are likely to make that kind of aid feasible. Therefore, AID would argue that all the aid that can be probably justified will be available.

You will receive a separate memo on this subject.

3. *The commitment for at least part of next year's program loan could be made earlier than normal* in the fiscal year. AID is earmarking \$220 for India in the pending legislation but realistically expects that they will have to cut this down to around \$170 million by the time the money is actually appropriated by Congress. An early commitment would indicate our responsiveness to India's special needs this year and would, at least temporarily, increase the flow of aid during the most critical period.

4. *Our normal PL-480 program could be speeded up.* During the current fiscal year we have provided about \$150 million of PL-480 and another \$150 million is under consideration now for the next fiscal year. Normally these agreements are signed late in the calendar year and, as with program lending, an earlier commitment would have the effect of increasing the flow in the pipeline temporarily during the critical period.

5. Congress could be asked to make a *special appropriation* for assistance to the East Pakistani refugees. There is considerable support already for such a move. Using contingency funds we might be able to get through the next six months with a special assistance program for India but beyond that we would probably have to go back to Congress. There might be some merit in doing this soon to demonstrate our seriousness to both the Indians and Administration critics.

Conclusions

Only 1, 2 and 5 above would amount to a net increase of aid, but they could be substantial.

What the Indians would really like is one of two political acts:

—They would prefer to have us press Yahya to release Mujib to set up a government in East Pakistan. They feel the mere release would have an electric effect in stopping the refugee flow.

—Failing that, they would like the refugee camps moved back into East Pakistan under international auspices.

72. Editorial Note

When President Nixon met with Ambassador Keating at the White House on June 15, 1971, Keating gave an upbeat assessment of prospects for improved relations between the United States and India. He noted that his relationship with Prime Minister Gandhi, which had always been pleasant, had become more cordial since her electoral victory. He characterized her as a woman with a "weight off her mind." She no longer had to try to govern without a working majority and as a result, he found it easier to deal with her.

In the context of briefing Nixon in advance of his meeting with the Indian Foreign Minister, Keating painted a grim picture of the situation in East Pakistan. He suggested that Nixon could put pressure on Pakistan to stop what he described as genocide in East Pakistan by withholding economic assistance. Keating pointed to the flood of five million refugees into India and said that the problem was growing at a rate of 150,000 a day. The strain on India was tremendous, and Keating said that the situation was further inflamed by what he described as a deliberate policy by Pakistan to drive out or kill the Hindus in East Pakistan. His assessment of the Indian response to the problem was that India wanted the killing stopped and a climate created in East Pakistan which would allow the refugees to return to their homes. In his view, India had adopted a moderate position and was seeking a political solution to the building crisis. Keating did not believe a political settlement would emerge until Yahya Kahn's government was prepared to deal with the Awami League leaders who had been outlawed. He said that, in his opinion, "the old Pakistan is through." Keating indicated that he was aware that Nixon had a "special relationship" with Yahya, but he still wanted to endorse a recommendation that would be coming to the White House from the Department of State that some of the scheduled economic assistance for Pakistan be diverted to help India deal with the refugee problem. Kissinger observed that Pakistan could be expected to react negatively if money was taken from its budget and given to India. Nixon, who had earlier noted that the United States was helping to feed 300,000 refugees in India, said that more money to deal with the problem would have to be found.

Nixon responded to Keating's assessment of the situation in South Asia by indicating that he wanted to maintain good relations with India: "We'll play a friendly game with the Indians." But he made it clear that "it would not be in our interest" to contribute to the collapse of Pakistan: a collapse, he noted, that might occur within the next 6 months. "We do not want to do something that is an open breach with Yahya." He added that he did not want to "allow the refugee problem to get us involved in the internal political problems" of the subconti-

ment. Nixon agreed with Keating that it was important to try to prevent armed conflict between India and Pakistan.

After Keating left the Oval Office, Nixon and Kissinger discussed their conversation with him. They reacted in particular to Keating's suggestion that economic assistance earmarked for Pakistan be diverted to India. Nixon said: "I don't know what the Christ we are up to." Kissinger suggested that the question of additional assistance for the refugees could be managed without involving Keating or the State Department: "I've talked to the Indian ambassador . . . I said you want to have a direct communication through him with Mrs. Gandhi. That we need three or four months to work it out. We will find them some money, we will gradually move into a position to be helpful, but we've got to do it our way. Just to shut them up." Kissinger advised Nixon to tell Foreign Minister Singh that "we have great sympathy, but they must be restrained. And we'll try to find some money but we cannot take it out of the Pakistan budget." Nixon agreed that assistance to Pakistan could not be diverted to India: "They must be out of their goddamn minds." Kissinger added: "It would be considered such an insult to Yahya that the whole deal would be off." He was referring to Pakistan's role as intermediary in the contacts that were developing with China. Nixon's concluding reference to Yahya was "it just may be that the poor son of a bitch can't survive." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation among Nixon, Kissinger, and Keating, June 15, 1971, 5:13–5:40 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 521–13) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 137.

73. Editorial Note

President Nixon met at the White House on June 16, 1971, with Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh. Ambassadors Jha and Keating were also present, as were Henry Kissinger and Joseph Sisco. Before the arrival of Singh and Jha, Kissinger briefed Nixon on the upcoming meeting. He recommended a combination of sympathy and firmness in dealing with Singh. Kissinger said: "I've told Yahya that he had a personal channel through me to you. I am just trying to keep them [the Indians] from attacking for 3 months." Returning to his advice on how to deal with Singh, Kissinger said: "You could say that you are directing that \$60 million be made available for refugee support after July 1." He anticipated that Foreign Minister Singh would be delighted. He

added: "You will see whether you can get \$20 million from other programs this month." Kissinger further advised Nixon to tell Singh that "overt pressure on Pakistan would have a counter-productive effect, and that you are working with Yahya in your own way."

President Nixon's meeting with Foreign Minister Singh began at 3:08 p.m. After an initial exchange of greetings, during which Nixon conveyed his congratulations to Prime Minister Gandhi on her electoral victory, Singh outlined the "tremendous problem" created for India by the influx of often destitute refugees from East Pakistan. He said that problems growing out of the influx impacted on India politically as well as economically. "In this situation, we seek your advice." He expanded at length on the building crisis and observed "obviously some political settlement is needed." Singh warned that unless something was done, and done quickly, dangerous instability would develop on the subcontinent.

Nixon asked Singh how he saw "the historical process working." Singh observed that it appeared that Pakistan was reaching "the point of no return." Nixon asked Singh to outline an outcome that "would be in India's best interest." He asked if India envisioned "an independent country" in East Pakistan. Singh replied: "We have no fixed position on that."

Nixon assured Singh that India's position was being well represented by Ambassador Jha and sympathetically reported from India by Ambassador Keating. Hence, Nixon said, "I am keenly aware of the problem." He indicated his familiarity with the problems of poverty and instability that plagued the subcontinent, as well as the problems posed by population pressures. He said: "What we feel is one thing, what we can do is another." Nixon noted that his administration was in regular contact with the Government of Pakistan, but added "the question is how we can discuss this matter with them . . . in a way that will maybe, may bring about action that would lead to amelioration of the situation." He suggested to Singh that "the best course of action we think as a government is for us to, is for you to have confidence, and I want you to convey this to the Prime Minister on a completely off-the-record basis, you must have confidence that one, I am acutely aware of the problem. . . . Therefore, I will use all the persuasive methods that I can, but I must use them in the way that I think is the most effective." He reiterated: "I am aware of the problem, I shall try to use my influence as effectively as possible."

Turning to the specific problem of the refugees, Nixon said that he was considering various options in attempting to help deal with the situation. He noted that there were only 15 days left in the fiscal year and added that it would be possible to provide \$20 million to India before July 1. He said that after July 1 the United States would be able

to provide an additional \$50 million for refugee assistance, subject to Congressional approval. "I realize that that does not get at the long-range problem. The long-range problem is how do you stop this inflow of people. How maybe you'd start having them turn around and start outflowing them." . . . "You brought to my attention when you met me. The Prime Minister, and Ambassador Keating all brought to my attention, and I am convinced of the seriousness of the problem. I will try to find methods that I think will be effective. . . . It must not be in a way that appears that we're, that what has happened here is that the United States is inserting itself into basically an internal situation." Nixon emphasized that the parties involved must arrive at their own solution, rather than have one imposed on them. "In the meantime," he said, it was important "to keep as cool as possible, in terms of charges and counter-charges. . . . You can count on our financial assistance to the extent that we are able."

Singh expressed his appreciation for the financial assistance offered by Nixon. He reverted, however, to the question posed for India by the continuing flow of refugees. The fundamental question he said was how to stop it. Nixon replied that he was aware that "the funds, while essential, [deal] with a temporary problem." He recognized that it was not possible to "buy the problem away." "The problem is going to go away only as the deeper causes are resolved. And I am aware of that. How we get at those deeper causes is very sensitive problem." Nixon went on to say: "I don't think anything, however, certainly at this point, would be served by any indication of the United States putting public pressure on Pakistan. That I know would be wrong if we want to accomplish our goal." He suggested that quiet diplomacy would be much more effective. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation between President Nixon and Indian Foreign Minister Singh, June 16, 1971, 2:58–3:41 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 523–2) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 138.

74. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India¹

Washington, June 17, 1971, 0029Z.

107733. Subject: India–Pakistan; Indian Foreign Minister's Meeting with Secretary. Following is Noform, FYI only, unclassified and subject to revision on review.

Summary: During meeting between Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh and Secretary on June 16, there emerged substantial consensus on estimate of situation in East Pakistan and in regard to objectives which should be sought in order to resolve problem of East Pakistan refugees. There were some differences, however, in regard to specific actions which might be taken in pursuit of these objectives, particularly in regard use of economic assistance.

1. Meeting between Secretary and FonMin Swaran Singh was attended by Indian Ambassador Jha, Minister Rasgotra, and External Publicity Director, S.K. Singh, on Indian side; and Ambassador Keating, Assistant Secretary Sisco, Van Hollen and Schneider on U.S. side. Secretary led off substantive discussion, stating with emphasis how much USG appreciates and in fact congratulates GOI for manner in which it is currently dealing with an immensely difficult problem. Said India was doing well, was acting with restraint. U.S. will do whatever it can to cooperate with India. We were doing our best to keep India informed in complete confidence regarding everything we were doing because we wished to help India at a difficult time.

2. Swaran Singh replied that India wishes to cooperate with U.S. on exactly this basis of confidence. Said U.S. has as much information about situation in East Pakistan as GOI, therefore no need for lengthy presentation on his part. Secretary interrupted Swaran Singh saying, to the contrary, he would appreciate FonMin's own account of situation.

3. Thereafter Swaran Singh presented reasoned and restrained analysis of situation and presentation of GOI view. Started with description of Yahya's deliberate decision to hold elections as part of process forming constitution. Mujib was elected within context of his six-point proposal for East Pakistan autonomy. Thus, Awami League activities were entirely within context of constitutional process started by Yahya himself. Swaran Singh observed many foreign governments

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on June 16, cleared by Deputy Executive Secretary Robert C. Brewster, and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to Islamabad, USUN, Dacca, Calcutta, Kathmandu, Colombo, US Mission Geneva for Kellogg, London, and Paris OECD for MacDonald.

seemed to be bothered by “secessionist” aspect of East Pakistan situation. He observed that it was only after Pakistan military became engaged that new situation, outside of context legitimate constitution formation process, was created.

4. Briefly and unemotionally Swaran Singh described “disaster” which had resulted from military action. Explained death totals were in six figures. Refugee flow was now touching six million. Said this easy to write on paper but must be seen to be believed.

5. FonMin stated Pak army had considered it could clean up situation in East Pakistan in 72 hours, but in fact East Pakistan has not yet returned to normal. Although Yahya made statement 22 May that refugees could come back, in three weeks since an additional two million have crossed into India. GOI therefore questions sincerity Yahya’s statement.

6. Presenting Indian assessment of situation, Swaran Singh said it clear military action cannot resolve East Pakistan problem. It will simply harden attitudes. Therefore, first requirement is that military action come to end. Next requirement is that movement of refugees to India must stop. Even Pak military have capability of stopping flow. Next, all of refugees in India must return to Pakistan. If this is to take place, there must be restoration of peace and confidence in East Pakistan. India feels Pakistan military must be instructed it their responsibility to see that citizens do not leave East Pakistan. Thereafter more basic problem of restoration of peaceful conditions remains. Bland statement as refugees welcomed back is not enough. Something more must be done on the ground.

7. Swaran Singh explained that India believes a political approach to East Pakistan problem is required if confidence is to be restored. This approach should involve establishment of system which reflects will of people. Civilian regime which derived its authority from Pak military would not suffice, nor would one consisting of break-away elements of Awami League not representative of Mujib. GOI considered it important to influence GOP to see that it is in its own interest create such government which reflects aspirations of people. GOI believes there is some prospect that if GOP selects proper course, unity of Pakistan can be maintained.² Does not believe six points are inconsistent

² On June 21 David Schneider, Country Director for India, sent a letter to Galen Stone, the Chargé in New Delhi, in which he assessed the impact of Foreign Minister Singh’s visit to Washington. Overall, he felt the Foreign Minister had made a positive impression, and that people in the Department of State were surprised by Singh’s moderate approach to the crisis in East Pakistan. “What particularly impressed the Secretary, Joe Sisco and others was that, according to Swaran Singh, the Government of India had not hit on any one exclusive solution for solving the East Pakistan problem. It admitted of the possibility of a political accommodation within a united Pakistan. We welcomed this here because it meant that the U.S. and India could operate within the same basic strategy.” (Ibid., NEA/INC Files: Lot 77 D 51, 1971 New Delhi Correspondence)

with unity. GOI does not advocate any particular political solution which might be autonomy under 6 points, federation, confederation or independence. This up to Pakistan to decide upon, but India does wish to end conflict which both weakens Pakistan and causes refugee burden for India.

8. Swaran Singh described at some length Indian desire concentrate on social objectives following Mrs. Gandhi's sweeping victory. Refugee influx was major setback and inflicted social and political strains in addition to economic drain. FonMin emphasized new, unsettled, unstable element in area which already beset with political problems. Indicated fear that instability in East Pakistan and Eastern India could contribute to general problems of Southeast Asia, possibly creating situation similar to Viet Nam. If international community does not join with India and heed warning now, trouble may be much greater in future.

9. Concluding his presentation, Swaran Singh asked how long India could go on waiting helplessly while events in East Pakistan continued to unfold and refugees poured into India. Said he had heard from Indian Embassy that U.S. was already engaged in diplomatic efforts to help. He wondered how far U.S. had succeeded. Can India contribute its views regarding recent events? Does U.S. believe there is some hope for future? U.S., because of world position, has special responsibility. In a sense Washington was only important visit on his tour.³ Other stops had merely been on the way. FonMin had not come with any fixed ideas. Wanted U.S. advice on how to proceed.

10. Responding to Swaran Singh's presentation, Secretary said we view East Pakistan question in large measure as Swaran Singh had described. Problems such as this one, however, were frequently beyond any power's ability to bring about solution at one point in time. We are prepared to play responsible helpful role but we have no simple, easy solution. Perhaps best course would be to discuss what we could do to improve situation as we have already been doing with India, UN, UK and GOP.

11. Secretary said we had already had many discussions with Pakistan in regard to the need for political solution and we had become increasingly insistent. Like India, we have no formula to offer. We agree there should be less repression in East Pakistan and we will try to get GOP to create peaceful conditions in which refugees can return.

³ Washington was Singh's final stop on a 10-day tour of major capitals, including Moscow, London, Paris, Bonn, and Ottawa, undertaken to reinforce the seriousness with which India viewed the situation in East Pakistan. (Memorandum from Rogers to Nixon, June 15; *ibid.*, Central Files 1970-73, POL 7 INDIA)

12. Sisco referred to efforts by UNHCR Sadruddin to make possible reversal of flow of refugees. Wondered what short-run measures such as those being examined by Sadruddin might be helpful to deal with refugee flow. Would it be possible to seal border? Swaran Singh replied GOI quite prepared cooperate with Pakistan on such measures but it doubted GOP genuinely interested in stopping flow. Described deliberate steps being taken by Pak army to expel Hindus.

13. Saying GOI prepared cooperate with any effort designed to bring about return of refugees, Swaran Singh cited as one possibility UN administered refugee camps inside Pakistan. Sisco commented what little we know about Sadruddin's thinking is in this general direction, i.e., UN presence in reception centers. This seems to us to be promising idea. Swaran Singh remarked that if such camps were in existence, at least refugees en route to India could be supported there. Secretary commented this was good suggestion. We prepared to do what we can to assist in this general area. Jha pointed out fear was only one factor deterring refugee return. It important they be able to get back their homes and property. Sisco said this was point we would make to Sadruddin and GOP at appropriate time.

14. Sisco noted Indian emphasis on political accommodation. Asked how "Bangla Dosh" leaders' insistence upon independence as only solution relates to this. Swaran Singh replied GOI has carefully avoided committing itself to any particular solution. It has not recognized Bangla Dosh nor decided that Bangla Dosh must be separate entity, but one cannot expect East Bengalis to abandon idea of independence until they see real possibility of an acceptable alternative. Welcoming this view, Secretary stated we can urge Yahya to try to work out political solution but we cannot urge him to accept separatism. We can only advocate solution which has some prospect for success and point out to Yahya difficulties which he would face if he did not seek accommodation.

15. Secretary raised subject of economic assistance and indicated our experience had shown us it could not and should not be used for political leverage. Swaran Singh argued that in case of Pakistan our giving aid constitutes interference in that it strengthens military regime. He urged U.S. to "postpone" aid until GOP takes corrective political action. Secretary replied U.S. could not withhold aid for political reasons. U.S., however, will not give aid unless it actually reaches intended recipients. We will not permit it to be used by the military, nor do we intend to increase aid to Pakistan, but we do not accept view that if a country takes political actions with which we disagree, we should cut off our assistance. To do so would be inconsistent with traditional non-interference policy India has favored. Furthermore, our aid gives us influence and withdrawal of aid would deprive us of that influence.

Swaran Singh replied that account should be taken of Pakistan economic plans and how current situation affects them, applying aid criteria. In regard humanitarian aid, India is not opposed, but would hope there could be assurance such aid would not strengthen military. The Secretary agreed with latter point. Secretary said we had made no military shipments and want keep this under careful review.

16. Later, at working lunch, Sisco made clear U.S. has not rushed in with aid for Pakistan. It has been very careful. There has been substantial holding operation in regard aid and in other areas as well. U.S. is being very careful about aid and will continue to be infuture.

17. Also, at lunch, Swaran Singh made only allusion to possible alternate course by GOI. Said India was pursuing international diplomatic route but he was fearful situation might be created in which GOI would have to use some means other than persuasion. He wanted GOP to be clearly aware of risks involved.

18. Summing up situation Swaran Singh said time may be running out but GOI believes there is a chance for political accommodation within unified Pakistan. India has long wished to get away from atmosphere of confrontation with Pakistan. Although this effort has been set back, this is still Indian objective, and achievement does not depend upon emergence of independent East Pakistan.

19. Also summing up during working lunch, Sisco remarked USG view very close to that of GOI as we have demonstrated by word and deed. We will do everything we can to help India deal with refugee burden. We recognize this assistance is only a palliative, an interim step. The answer is political accommodation. Neither U.S. nor India has a blueprint for solution. Whatever differences there may be in our analyses, we both agree Pakistanis must work out own settlement. Secretary remarked there no substantial difference of view between U.S. and India.

Rogers

75. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India¹

Washington, June 17, 1971, 2303Z.

108624. Subject: Swaran Singh Visit; Additional U.S. Assistance.

1. During meeting with Swaran Singh June 16, the President indicated that because of refugee burden U.S. would try to find additional \$20 million in assistance this fiscal year and would find \$50 million more soon after July 1.² We are working out details regarding composition this assistance and how much may be development lending. We are urgently preparing message providing details re assistance and guidance for discussions with Indian officials.

2. This message intended to alert you to new US offer in event Swaran Singh reports it to GOI or Indian delegation at Paris Consortium or news leaks to press. You should not on your initiative discuss with Indian officials prior receiving further guidance.

Rogers

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on June 16; cleared by Saunders at the White House, and in draft by Farrar (AID/NESA), and Louis A. Wiesner (S/R); and approved by Van Hollen. Also sent to Paris OECD for MacDonald.

² On June 24 the Department of State spokesman announced that the United States would provide India with an additional \$70 million in refugee-related assistance. (Telegram 113886 to New Delhi, June 24; *ibid.*)

76. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon¹

Islamabad, June 18, 1971.

Your Excellency:

I am addressing you to invite your attention to the rapidly mounting threat to peace and security in the sub-continent. In the last few days belligerent statements have been made by the Indian Prime Minister and her Cabinet Ministers which amount to a threat of war. The latest of these is a statement in the Indian Parliament by the Indian Prime Minister on 15th June, relevant extracts of which are attached.² It makes it obvious that the speaker is determined to exploit the presence of displaced persons in India to aggravate a tense situation and justify military intervention in East Pakistan. Should Indian leaders be allowed to continue on this course, consequences would be disastrous not only for the sub-continent but for the entire region.

Notwithstanding the fact, that since independence Pakistan has received millions of refugees from India, a large number of whom still remain unsettled, the Indian Government has spared no effort at this juncture to exploit the presence of Pakistani displaced persons for a political end. These persons should be enabled to return to their homes, and my Government has taken adequate steps to ensure this. We have as you must have learnt, associated the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to advise and assist us in implementation of this objective. The U.N. High Commissioner, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, has personally visited some of the reception centers we have established to welcome returning displaced persons, and satisfied himself that adequate facilities exist to receive them. Relief and rehabilitation arrangements within the province of East Pakistan are also to be provided by the U.N. and a representative of the Secretary-General has already reached Dacca to co-ordinate activities in this field with the provincial government. There is welcome news that thousands have already returned and more would be doing so, if only India would stop discouraging and hindering their return movement. It is most unfortunate that this humanitarian question should be cynically turned into political propaganda by India, and that the Indian Government should

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking. Although undated, a note on the letter indicates that the text was sent by telegram from Islamabad to the Pakistani Embassy on June 18. A copy was sent to Kissinger on June 19 under cover of a letter from Hilaly, who indicated that he was also sending a copy to the Secretary of State. (Ibid.)

² Attached but not printed.

use the problem of the displaced persons, as an instrument of pressure on Pakistan to impose a political government of Indian choice in East Pakistan. No government could yield to such blackmail.

As I have repeatedly stressed, war would solve nothing and we do not want a conflict with India. It remains our earnest hope that India will not resort to a conflict. The danger is that through constant repetition of threats, Indian leaders may succeed in creating an atmosphere and mood in their country which could inevitably lead to a conflict. In recent days the Indian army has indulged in numerous aggressive activities from across the border and there are confirmed reports of increasing concentration of Indian forces. There have also been reports by neutral observers of establishment of camps in India to train saboteurs to infiltrate into East Pakistan.

Your Excellency, it is in this serious situation and in the interest of preserving peace, that I would request you to use your influence with India to persuade her to desist from actions, which could lead not only to a breach of peace but as a result of that, to unforeseen consequences which could affect the world community.

Your personal interest in the maintenance of peace in the sub-continent and in the security and progress of Pakistan is a very important factor to which I attach great importance. Now, when considerable progress has been made on our side for receiving back displaced persons, I find that Mrs. Gandhi is unfortunately not willing to permit them to return to Pakistan, except in circumstances of her own choosing. I am confident that your advice to her, not to compound our difficulties, will make a profound difference to the prevailing situation. I have also made a commitment to announce my political plans for the country on 28th June. But unless India is restrained, my efforts would be seriously affected.³

With my warm personal regards,
Yours sincerely,

A.M. Yahya Khan

³ Henry Kissinger summarized this letter in a July 2 memorandum to President Nixon. He felt that the letter was intended to make certain that Pakistan's "side of the story" was being heard in Washington in the wake of Foreign Minister Singh's visit. He concluded of the letter that: "Like the Indian presentation, it is a brief for a position, and the truth probably lies somewhere between the two." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan, (1971))

77. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan¹

Washington, June 22, 1971, 0029Z.

110978. Subject: Communication concerning recognition of Bangladesh.

1. Department has received document² dated "Mujibnagar", April 24, 1971, addressed to President. Document requests immediate USG recognition of "sovereign independent People's Republic of Bangladesh" and establishment of diplomatic relations between USG and Bangladesh Government which it says "exercising full sovereignty and lawful authority within the territories known as East Pakistan prior to March 26, 1971." Document signed by Syed Nazrul Islam, "Acting President," and Khandakar Moshtaque Ahmed, "Foreign Minister." Also attached are "Proclamation of Independence" dated April 10, 1971, proclamation by "Acting President" Islam continuing East Pakistan laws in force in "Bangladesh", and purported cabinet of Bangladesh Government including "President" Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Document mailed regular international air mail from West Berlin, postmarked May 26, 1971 with no return address.

2. Method of transmittal naturally raises question, but if document genuine (and we have no reason to think it is not) it is first formal request from officials of Bangladesh movement for USG recognition and has sensitive political implications. US of course continues to consider East Pakistan part of State of Pakistan which we recognize, and to counsel GOP with whom we maintain diplomatic relations to develop political solution to present troubles. Document, however, makes it difficult for us to continue to take public line that we have never received any request for recognition of State of Bangladesh.

3. Department is taking following actions: (a) no acknowledgement will be made of document; (b) document will be recorded by Records Services Division, OPR/RS, which routinely logs all communications received in Department; this step involves no determination of nature of communication by Department; (c) NEA/PAF will retain document routinely in office files; (d) we will continue to say "We consider the territory of East Pakistan to be part of the State of Pakistan";

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15 PAK. Confidential; Limdis. Drafted by G. Jonathan Greenwald (L/NEA) on June 17; cleared by Spengler, Deputy Legal Adviser J. Edward Lyerly, and Donald J. Simon (A/OPR/RS); and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to New Delhi, Calcutta, Dacca, and Karachi.

² Not found.

(e) if we are asked whether we have ever received a request to recognize Bangladesh, we would answer: "We have received through international air mail a letter mailed from Berlin without return address which purported to ask for recognition of the 'People's Republic of Bangladesh'. It would be inappropriate for us to take any action with respect to it since we consider the territory of East Pakistan to be part of the State of Pakistan."

Rogers

78. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 25, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Supply for Pakistan

Attached is a study covering a recommendation from Secretary Rogers² that all shipments of military equipment be temporarily suspended until it can be determined what remains in the pipeline. This recommendation is in reaction to press stories and Congressional criticism of shipments that have left the US in recent days.³ One more ship is known to be loading.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 574, Indo-Pak War, South Asian Military Supply, March 25–August 26, 1971. Secret. Sent for action. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² A June 23 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon was attached but not printed.

³ On June 22 *The New York Times* reported that two Pakistani freighters were preparing to sail from New York with cargos of military equipment for Pakistan. Ambassador Jha called on Under Secretary Irwin on the same day to warn that if the report were true, the shipment of arms to Pakistan would have an unfortunate impact upon relations between the United States and India. Irwin replied that no export licenses for military equipment had been issued since March 25. He speculated that the ships carried arms and munitions authorized before March 25. (Telegram 112954 to New Delhi, June 24; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 12–5 PAK) The Embassy in New Delhi reported on June 23 that news of the arms shipments had come to Foreign Minister Singh as a "shock and surprise" after his trip to Washington. (Telegram 9984 from New Delhi; *ibid.*) News of the arms shipments prompted angry scenes in both houses of the Indian parliament. (Telegram 10110 from New Delhi, June 25; *ibid.*) On June 27 the Indian Embassy delivered a note to the Department of State formally protesting the shipments and urging that steps be taken to prevent the shipments from reaching Pakistan. (Telegram 10211 to New Delhi, June 27; *ibid.*)

The Secretary poses three options:

1. *Continue present policy.* This would retain under administrative hold those items still under US Government control but would allow to continue shipments of items which have already passed to Pakistani control or which were licensed before the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan.
2. *Suspend further export of all military items.* This would, in effect, be a formal embargo, and no one urges this now.
3. *Suspend all shipments temporarily while we review items still in the pipeline.* The purpose would be to screen out those items which could have military significance in East Pakistan or cause trouble on the Hill.

Secretary Rogers recommends Option 3. The attached study recommends Option 1—continuing present policy—with an urgent study of what is in the pipeline and an accurate explanation to the Congress of what our policy is.

The rationale for this recommendation is that a temporary suspension would convey the wrong political signal to the Pakistanis—it would look like an embargo. Also, temporary suspensions have a way of becoming permanent, and we could become locked into a full embargo. Approving this recommendation would require meeting critics head-on with the argument that a total suspension would be counterproductive in our effort to work with Pakistan in helping to resolve the present problem. The recommendation is spelled out on the last pages of the attached.

Attachment

Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon⁴

SUBJECT

Military Supply for Pakistan

A relatively low point in scheduled military equipment shipments to Pakistan has, by coincidence, helped keep military assistance from becoming a pressing issue between us and the Pakistanis since the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan March 25. Knowing the sensitivity of this issue in the Congress, the Pakistanis seem to have chosen not to press it.

⁴ Secret; Exdis. Sent for action. The attachment is dated by hand and is not signed.

On the US side, we have deliberately avoided imposing the kind of formal embargo that was declared during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. What has been done is to establish a series of internal Executive Branch controls that permitted us to hold any dramatic shipments without putting ourselves in the box of a publicly proclaimed embargo which would be difficult to reverse. The WSAG felt that close control was warranted in view of the strong public and Congressional outcry here in reaction to the reports of killing in East Pakistan. It was thought that the appearance of insensitivity could result in restrictions to the Foreign Assistance Act that could have prevented our being helpful, if possible, with economic aid, which is more important than our military sales.

Under these in-house measures:

—No Foreign Military Sales items from US stocks under direct Defense Department control have been released since early April.

—No new licenses for Munitions List items have been issued since early April, either under the Foreign Military Sales program or for export through commercial channels.

—No action under the one-time exception (300 APCs and about 20 aircraft) approved last fall was scheduled for this period and it is in suspense.

But shipments in the following categories have not been held:

—Items under the Foreign Military Sales program which had been turned over to the Pakistanis in the US prior to early April. The Pakistanis normally make their own shipping arrangements for items like these under their control.

—Items under the Foreign Military Sales program which Defense Department had contracted out to commercial suppliers before early April.

—Items purchased by Pakistan through normal commercial channels for which licenses had been issued prior to early April. These licenses are valid for one year.

The rationale for this approach was that (a) an in-house hold could be made to appear to the Pakistanis for a time as simple administrative sluggishness while (b) an effort to reach out into the commercial market or to stop export at Customs would have the appearance of an embargo. Since we wanted to avoid the political signal which an embargo would convey, it was decided not to try to control any items which had already passed beyond US Government control.

Now opponents of the military assistance and sales policy who have been particularly upset by the reports of brutality from East Pakistan (e.g. Senators Church, Kennedy and Mondale) have attacked a policy that allows any military items at all to be shipped to Pakistan.

A story in the *New York Times* Tuesday⁵ on two Pakistani ships that left New York in recent days triggered a letter⁶ to you from Senator Church urging that one of them be intercepted in US or Canadian waters.

The criticism has been compounded by the fact that State in its press and Congressional briefings has stressed the items that have been held by Executive Branch action without acknowledging those items beyond US administrative control which we had chosen to let go. Critics have—perhaps honestly, perhaps with malice—interpreted Administration policy as a policy of embargo. Consequently, a first point of criticism has been that the departure of these ships constitutes a violation of that supposed embargo. Now that some are coming to understand our actual policy, they are claiming that the State Department at best was misleading. They are beating the “credibility” issue again.

This news story has also caused a reaction from the Indians. So far this is in proportion, but it could well grow to the point where the progress made during Foreign Minister Singh’s visit could be undercut.

There are two separate issues involved with military supply for Pakistan:

—The first is whether to confirm and to explain publicly (or at least to Congress) with greater accuracy our present policy or whether to tighten further our control over shipments to Pakistan. Your options are set out below.

—The second is whether to begin, in addition, to release equipment still under US Government control. I had prepared a memo for you on this, but I will hold that momentarily until this present problem is sorted out. If you were to release more, it would probably be best to wait in any case until the current flap dies down.

On the current problem, Secretary Rogers in the attached memorandum suggests three options:

Option 1: Continue present policy. This would mean that equipment up to a value of \$34 million might still be legally shipped from the US by the Pakistanis. Because of long delays in reporting procedures through commercial channels and other technical factors, those who work with this program say the real figure is probably considerably less, perhaps only half.

The *advantage* of this approach would be that it would continue to avoid the unfavorable political signal to Pakistan that would result from revoking licenses already issued or from stopping at the docks

⁵ June 22.

⁶ Not found.

items already under Pakistani title. This would be done without becoming involved in the supply of amounts of equipment that could have major military significance, although some of the items would be useful spares or support equipment.

The *disadvantage* would be that any military shipments to Pakistan would be subject to sharp Congressional (and Indian) criticism. This could add momentum to the already active movement in the Senate to amend the Foreign Assistance Act to prohibit economic aid to Pakistan until the political problem is settled.

Option 2: Suspend the further export of all Munitions Control items for which licenses were granted prior to early April. In effect, this would seem to be to impose a full embargo.

The *advantage* would be fully meeting Congressional and Indian concerns and lessening the danger of Congressional restrictions on economic assistance to Pakistan.

The *disadvantage* would lie in the negative political signal to Pakistan. Their concern would be less over the military items themselves than over the sign of diminished US support.

Option 3: Issue a temporary suspension of any further matériel for which there are valid outstanding licenses while we review those items still in the pipeline. The purpose would be to screen out those items which could have military significance in East Pakistan or cause major problems with Congress. This might result in a decision to release some innocuous spare parts while withholding ammunition.

The *advantage* of this approach would be that it would tighten control and permit us to be selective in what goes without imposing an embargo.

The *disadvantage* would be that temporary suspensions have a way of becoming permanent and we could become locked into a total embargo. The political signal to Pakistan is not what you want. I feel this disadvantage provides the most compelling argument.

Secretary Rogers recommends Option 3. If you select Option 1—continuing present policy—he urges a more precise briefing to press and Congress. In the course of this it would probably be necessary to meet the argument for embargo head-on and to say that the Administration does not feel that a formal suspension would be useful.

Recommendation: A prompt decision is desirable in order to permit a firm response to critics. I recommend that you:

—approve Option 1, which is to continue present policy rather than to authorize even a temporary suspension on items beyond US control;

—instruct State and Defense to prepare the most complete possible list of (a) those items still in the pipeline and (b) those items scheduled for release from US stocks in the rest of 1971;

—authorize an accurate explanation of our policy to members of Congress and to the press with the instruction that this (a) avoid restricting your future flexibility and (b) maintain the position that overall military supply policy toward Pakistan is under review.⁷

Once your decision on this is made, you will receive a memo looking to the larger military supply question.

⁷ President Nixon initialed his approval of the recommendation.

79. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India¹

Washington, June 26, 1971, 2258Z.

115314. Subject: East Pakistan Refugees; Discussions with UNHCR Sadruddin.

1. Following is Noform, FYI only, uncleared and subject to revision on review:

Summary: During discussions in Washington June 24 with the Secretary, and Assistant Secretary Sisco, UNHCR, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, indicated grave consequences which could flow from presence of East Pakistan refugees in India. He described his efforts to obtain a UNHCR presence in East Pakistan and India in order to facilitate return flow of refugees. Said that GOP had agreed to his presence in Dacca and he believed he could obtain Pakistani agreement to presence in refugee reception centers. GOI, however, had categorically refused to accept UNHCR presence beyond New Delhi. Sadruddin, who was quite critical of Indian policies regarding refugee return, said Indian refusal appeared result from GOI desire protect cross border infiltration from international view. UNHCR believed some return flow possible on basis restoration of peace, even before political accommodation, but Indian cooperation, which thus far not forthcoming, would be essential. Sadruddin also expressed concern regarding possible Soviet objection to UN operation of sort he is planning. Department

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted and approved for transmission by Schneider and cleared in substance by Van Hollen. Also sent to US Mission Geneva and repeated to USUN, Islamabad, Dacca, Calcutta, and London.

encouraged Sadrudin continue his efforts and it was agreed we would keep in close touch in future. End summary.

2. Sadrudin started off hour-long discussion with Secretary and Sisco June 24 by expressing his great concern that unless quick political solution to East Pakistan situation could be found, there might be a new Viet Nam in South Asia. There was polarization between Bengalis and Punjabis, with no sympathy between the two elements. Extremists in East Pakistan—Naxalites—are using fear against a “foreign army” to strengthen themselves. Result could be extended guerrilla warfare. Sadrudin explained India was quite worried about this. The Inner Cabinet had decided not to recognize “Bangla Desh,” not to go to war with Pakistan but to provide complete support for the “Mukhti Fauj.” Consequently India does not wish there to be UN presence on East Pakistan border. It desires international relief but does not wish to have foreigners wandering about border areas.

3. Discussing return flow of refugees, Sadrudin said he thought some East Pakistanis would return if they had an element of guarantee. Sadrudin has already received GOP approval for UNHCR presence in Dacca. He believes he can get agreement to presence in refugee reception centers, but to do this he may have to have Indian agreement to presence on Indian side border. He considers some refugees would return with simply a return to peace in East Pakistan, if only because of the “continuous squalor” of Indian refugee camps. Expressed concern, however, about inconsistency of Indian policy. On the one hand, India complains about presence of six million refugees and insists they must return and on the other hand it imposes conditions (negotiations with Mujib, etc.) for their return. Speaking of “Indian escalation,” Sadrudin referred to possibility of Indian “preventive aggression” and said resulting conflict would place regional and great powers in very difficult situation, comparable to Middle East. Said there was also danger that international community would be left with indefinite burden of supporting refugees.

4. UNHCR said India was not following a logical pragmatic path. It says it does not want escalation and refugees must return, but it seems uninterested in repatriation. It is important that India not insist upon political solution as prior condition for return of refugees. By political solution, India appears to mean return of Mujib. While India confronted by burden of refugees and possible communal problems, it is in excellent international position. Pakistan is weak, substantial international assistance is being provided, and there is great sympathy for India. India has succeeded in bringing US and Soviet Union together in an airlift. Consequently, there is every reason for India to be moderate in regard to refugee return. Yet Foreign Secretary Kaul was adamant against any UN presence in India along East Pakistan border. It seems obvious India wishes to keep very close control of border area.

5. Sisco commented it very important we make major point to Indians in regard to UN role and presence. This would contribute to stopping refugee flow and reversing it. It is essential that there be no East-West conflict regarding the UN role. We want financial support for this UN activity from many nations, including Soviets. We would hope Soviets would support and use their influence on the Indians because of the danger to their interest of a prolonged impasse regarding refugees.

6. Sadruddin said we must be sure Soviets will not attack UN role regarding refugees as they have in past regarding Congo and Korea. Asked what their position likely to be in Fifth Committee regarding financing. Sisco commented Indian attitude likely to be the key. If Indians see UN role as in their interest, then Soviets likely support.

7. Sisco inquired about Sadruddin's view of Yahya. Sadruddin replied pressures on him very great. He must make all decisions. He is not happy about army actions in East Pakistan and agreed that actions against Hindus were unfortunate. He covers army, however. Sadruddin emphasized importance of his maintaining relationship with Yahya. He is only person of importance in Pakistan. Because of what UNHCR has done to maintain this relationship, he has come under attack in India. GOI, however, conveyed apologies.

8. Sadruddin reported that in 28th June speech² Yahya will say those elected members of Awami League who are not "criminals" should come forward and lead people of East Pakistan so that he can hand over power to them. He will announce Turkish type of constitution providing for substantial army control. Sadruddin feared this would not be enough. He should withdraw army. Yet he cannot do so in border areas so long as India supporting infiltration. If India accepted UN presence, then perhaps Yahya could withdraw troops. Said it important keep pressure on India to moderate its position on refugee return; control Bangla Desh elements; and stop infiltration. If Indians wanted to crack down on latter they could.

9. Sadruddin said he had spent day with SYG in New York. SYG had said he would talk to Malik and tell him UN presence in East Pakistan was necessary. UNHCR did not know whether he would speak similarly about need for presence in India. This because SYG concerned Malik will say this depends upon Indians.

10. Sadruddin said when he met with Mrs. Gandhi she was very "hawkish." She sought to impress him with seriousness of situation saying "we may have to resort to other means." Secretary said Swaran Singh had used term "special measures" or "another option" when he

² The text of President Yahya's June 28 speech was transmitted to the Department in telegram 6477 from Islamabad, June 28. (Ibid., POL 15-1 PAK)

was in Washington. Secretary had replied that if he meant military means, we thought this would be very great mistake. Swaran Singh then backed away from this implication.

11. UNHCR said India was taking position it was controlling and coordinating relief. There was no need for UN presence or presence on part of other foreigners. Foreign teams were not welcome. This was causing problems in UK.

12. Sadruddin concluded by stating East Pakistan situation is greatest challenge to confront UN which had become involved largely because of US urging. Unfortunately, UN was quite weak administratively. He expressed concern that UN may not be able to meet challenge unless it can get help. UNHCR organization already over-extended. British press has been highly critical of UN. SYG does not have specific plan in mind. Sadruddin spoke of UN's recruiting new personnel, including persons from Eastern Europe.

Rogers

80. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Selden) to Secretary of Defense Laird¹

Washington, June 28, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Supplies for Pakistan

As I reported to you, the President has provided us with an interim decision on the future of our military sales shipments to Pakistan. The decision as written approves a policy option "to continue present policy as it is", outlined in a State memorandum to the President to which we were not privy (see my memo, same subject dated 24 June 71, Tab A).²

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 091.3 1971. Secret. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates Laird saw it.

² In this memorandum to Laird, Selden summarized the June 23 memorandum to Nixon in which Rogers recommended a temporary embargo on military shipments to Pakistan; see footnote 2, Document 78.

The NSC staff has clarified the somewhat laconic decision statement (Tab B).³ While the old sales policy—the provision of spare parts for both lethal and nonlethal equipment—remains technically in effect, we are to continue the informal hold on matériel *directly controlled by Defense*. The President understands that under these procedures a considerable flow of material will continue under export licenses for commercial shipments (both FMS and direct government-to-industry) validated before 25 March. Public statements on the matter are to indicate (a) that no embargo has been imposed and (b) that the intensive review of the military supply policy continues.

The White House decision memorandum also directs that we prepare “the most complete lists possible” of items being held and scheduled for release during the remainder of this calendar year. To this end we are subjecting our files to renewed scrutiny assisted now by detailed reports from both State’s Office of Munitions Control and the Customs Service. We are also tasking the Services to provide necessary additional data. Suppliers operating under FMS contracts will also be queried though no instructions are being issued that would curtail direct shipments to Pakistan’s agents.

We continue to differ strongly with State over *modus operandi* with respect to our relationship with Pakistan. State has recommended a limited term total ban on military shipments. I strongly believe that an announced embargo, however temporary in nature, will transmit a signal so damaging to our relations with Islamabad as to render them irretrievable for the indefinite future. Similarly, I believe that a policy modification that would limit Pakistan to procurement of spare parts only for its nonlethal equipment would have an almost equally negative effect.

It has been argued that our economic aid program, which I presume would be continued, is far larger and more important to Pakistan’s development and well-being than is our small military sales program. While in extrinsic terms this is indisputable, it fails to address the fact that Pakistan’s restoration of anything approaching normalcy depends entirely on the stability of a martial law regime. Its success, in turn, depends on a reasonable maintenance of morale and discipline in the armed forces. The vision of the almost half of its inventory of equipment still of U.S. origin becoming useless would almost certainly destroy what morale and discipline now remains. As a concomitant Pakistan might fall entirely within China’s orbit.

³ On June 25 Haig sent a memorandum to Brigadier General Robert Pursley, Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, in which Haig conveyed the decision made by President Nixon on June 25 on military supplies for Pakistan; see Document 78.

A secondary consideration behind the basic foreign policy issues in importance, nevertheless an important one for Defense is the monetary cost of suspension or cancellation of any significant portion of the current program. We have in process as much as \$40 million in undelivered matériel under contracts going back over the last several years (including 300 APCs covered by the one-time exception). Cancellation or diversion of this large a program would have considerable impact on the Defense budget.

Armistead I. Selden, Jr.

81. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State¹

Islamabad, June 28, 1971, 1440Z.

6487. Subj: East Pakistan Refugees: Kellogg Discussion with Pres. Yahya.

1. Summary: In discussion with Special Assistant Kellogg² June 28, Pres. Yahya voiced sharp concern over GOI general intentions and specifically whether it would allow refugees to return to East Pakistan. Expressed earnest desire that refugees return, offering full cooperation with UN. Yahya defensive about current situation in East Pakistan. He was skeptical about bona fides of streams of apparent refugees whom Kellogg had seen moving inland on Indian side of border. Yahya urged that Kellogg go to East Pakistan to see for himself, and Kellogg agreed to do so. End summary.

2. Special Assistant Kellogg, accompanied by Ambassador and DCM, had 45-minute meeting with Pres. Yahya June 28 on refugee problem. Kellogg noted he had just visited several refugee camps and also had seen streams of refugees, who had apparently just come out of East Pakistan, on the Jessore–Calcutta road. Yahya expressed doubt, stating that some persons seem to move back and forth; visitors were given wrong information about actual closeness of border; and Yahya thought that large numbers of people could not now still be coming from Pakistan to India. Kellogg commented that he had spoken to

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, New Delhi, Geneva, USUN, and London.

² Frank L. Kellogg, the Secretary of State's Special Assistant for Refugee and Migration Affairs.

number of individual refugees, selected by him at random, albeit through interpreters. They were very largely unsophisticated agriculturist types and they could not merely have been repeating a story they had been told to relate. Moreover most stated they had been trekking up to 10 days.

3. Yahya launched into bitter attack on PriMin Gandhi and her government. He referred to statements in which Mrs. Gandhi reported to have said that refugees can't go back. "Indian Government says they won't let them go back." Some of the few refugees who have trickled back, he said, show wounds and say they were beaten up on main roads in India leading back to Pakistan. Kellogg interjected that none of Indian officials with whom he had spoken had indicated anything other than that India wanted refugees to return to East Pakistan as soon as possible. Kellogg noted enormous economic, religious, political and social pressures on India resulting from refugee influx, and GOI estimated that \$400 million would be required to care for refugees over six-month period. Yahya reverted to statements "she" had made. She does not want refugees to return to territory controlled by Pak Government. She wants political settlement of her choosing, and then she would turn refugees loose. Kellogg repeated that, from FonSec on down, none of Indian officials with whom he had spoken had said they wanted refugees to remain; nor had any referred to desire to see independent East Pakistan; "Bangla Desh" was never once mentioned to him. Meanwhile, if persons were continuing to leave East Pakistan and not returning in any appreciable numbers, Kellogg said, it would appear that they continued to be motivated by fear which caused them to flee in first place.

4. Yahya said he had been told by reliable Bengalis that the outflow had been halted. Kellogg should go and see for himself. There is no slaughter going on. Some armed opposition to the government was continuing, and it was meeting with armed response. How did those "thousands of arms" come into East Pakistan, Yahya asked. Pak forces had captured many weapons from Indian infiltrators. Some regular Indian army men (whom he acknowledged numbered only five) had been captured on Pak territory. Latter did not include large number of other infiltrators who came in to fight, blow up bridges, mine areas and then rush back to India when they see Pak military approaching. Shelling and firing continue from Indian side of border. Pak army has to fight back. When Awami Leaguers flew Bangla Desh flag over East Pakistan, it reflected direct collusion by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with GOI. Now Indian support was taking different form, Yahya said. "You have seen the refugee camps; you didn't see their training camps" (i.e., for East Pak resistance). Kellogg acknowledged that he had seen countless persons in refugee camps under squalid conditions, but he had not seen any training camps in India.

5. Kellogg said he had sense of urgency. Indian FonSec had also used that term, adding that "If refugees can't move back, something must be done." That set Yahya off on another outburst against Indians. Referring to the refugees, he said "I want them to come back." He asked whether GOI would do anything to help, such as pulling its army back from borders. Urging Kellogg again to go see for himself, Yahya said that it would be credible if he personally saw "many thousands" streaming out from East Pak side. Noting that Bengalis may look alike, Yahya said it would be easy to be misled by persons claiming to be refugees but who might actually be destitutes who had previously been living in India. Mrs. Gandhi, Yahya said, had instigated the current problems through clandestine plotting with Mujib. Her people plotted against Pakistan. They had armed the opposition. They had imposed a ban on overflights. Now India might be hopeful of getting large amounts of additional foreign aid, on pretext of refugee need, to help it cope with own existing problems.

6. Kellogg, attempting to get discussion back to urgent need to deal with refugee situation, stated that American people were deeply concerned over the suffering and that we were anxious to do what we could to help. Yahya retorted that it would be most helpful if India would stop giving support to armed resistance and would help get refugees started back. He said that impression might have been gained from foreign press that East Pakistan was burning. That is not so; it is not an inferno. East Pakistan is now open territory, Yahya said. Vast majority of area is quiet, although border areas remain unstable. Yahya referred to presence and action of Indian border security force and Indian army in border regions. Main support to resistance thus far had come from BSF. But if Indian army moved against East Pakistan, Yahya said matter-of-factly, "of course, fighting can't be limited to East Pakistan." He said Indians were maintaining 30–35 training camps and arming East Pak civilians in them. Responding to Kellogg's comment that Indian FonSec had said it was not in India's interest to have independent East Pakistan, Yahya said vehemently "Kaul is a damned liar. His actions don't tally with what he says." Yahya added that it is important to see what is actually happening. Pakistan's borders are being kept boiling. He said Kellogg should go to the border areas and see which way the firing was coming from. Then he could ask Kaul how the thousands of captured arms came to East Pakistan.

7. Yahya said he would like to get UN in to help bring back refugees. Referring to rhubarb in India over Sadruddin's statements there, Yahya said UNHCR had actually said that conditions are not normal but that they are returning to normal although it would take time. Yahya claimed that Sadruddin was criticized in India because he was Mussulman.

8. Ambassador referred to suggestion he had made to Yahya on June 24 that President appoint full-time high-level refugee coordinator. Yahya referred to appointment of H.R. Malik³ who would be working with “Kittani’s⁴ people.” He said another man would be working with UNHCR rep, but did not give any details and did not seem in mood to concentrate on that aspect.

9. Referring to fighting in border areas, Kellogg asked whether some persons were fleeing into interior of East Pakistan. Yahya said some had, and referred vaguely to number of Beharis whom government was looking after.

10. Ambassador used occasion to inform Yahya that USG had just authorized additional \$1 million for coasters that could help meet urgent transport needs not only in cyclone areas but elsewhere in East Pakistan. Also informed Yahya of authorization for \$4.7 million for variety of relief and reconstruction activities in cyclone area, to cover such needs as housing, shelters, and embankments. Ambassador pointed out that agreements would have to be concluded within two days, i.e. by end of fiscal year. Yahya expressed appreciation, although his mind was obviously focused primarily on problems with India which he recounted.

11. Reverting for at least third time near end of conversation of value of Kellogg’s seeing situation for himself in East Pakistan, Yahya asked that we inform FonSec Sultan Khan and have him arrange trip. Kellogg said he accepted Yahya’s suggestion, and Ambassador undertook inform FonSec soonest. (Ambassador did so in meeting FonSec about one hour later. FonSec assured that arrangements will be laid on. Kellogg and DCM are planning depart Islamabad June 29 and arrive Dacca morning June 30.)

12. *Comment:* Yahya was obviously in disturbed mood, and wished to focus only on urgency of what India rather than Pakistan must do to ease refugee problem. (In that regard he seemed reflect some of same concerns which Prince Sadruddin voiced in discussion with Secretary and Sisco June 24—ref State 115314.)⁵ In brief tete-à-tete following Yahya’s discussion with Kellogg, Ambassador found Yahya disturbed over report from Ambassador Hilaly concerning former Consul General Blood’s testimony before SFRC last week. Yahya was also disturbed over

³ H.R. Malik, chairman of the East Pakistan Agriculture Development Corporation, charged with responsibility for administering the distribution of food.

⁴ Ismat Kittani, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs, appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General to establish guidelines for United Nations assistance for East Pakistan in May 1971.

⁵ Document 79.

latest report of statement by FonSec Douglas-Home on need for political settlement prior to aid. This is day on which Yahya's most awaited speech is being made to nation on his plans for political accommodation and "transfer of power." We found him a very harried man.

Farland

82. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon¹

Islamabad, June 28, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

I was greatly encouraged by report given to me by Mr. M.M. Ahmed after his meeting with you in Washington last month. I deeply appreciate your continuing interest in our development and particularly your assurance that United States would not wish to do anything that would aggravate Pakistan's difficulties and United States would like World Bank and other members of Consortium to adopt a similar helpful posture.

2. The proceedings of the informal meeting of the Consortium held at Paris on 21st June have however come to us as a disappointment. The official communiqué issued after the meeting is bare and negative. The same day British Broadcasting Corporation and *New York Times* carried stories that the Consortium had decided to withhold further aid to Pakistan until the Pakistan Government reveals what sort of political settlement it envisages for East Pakistan. The veracity of the newspaper reports has been enhanced by a statement of the British Foreign Secretary that "there can be no question of new British aid to Pakistan until we have firm evidence that real progress is being made towards a political settlement".

3. All these developments have led to a strong and widespread public reaction in Pakistan. It is most unfortunate that all this should have happened at this juncture. It can only make more difficult the task of a political settlement.

4. In response to these developments I had no choice but to declare in unequivocal terms in my broadcast of today that external assistance with political strings will be unacceptable to Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). Secret. Sent to Kissinger on June 29 under cover of a letter from Pakistan Ambassador Hilaly which indicated that the text of the letter had been transmitted by telegram from Islamabad. (Ibid.)

5. It is important that the general impression about the present attitude of the Consortium countries to Pakistan is fully clarified. The adjournment of the Paris discussions without announcing a date to take up our requirements is being interpreted as a consequence of Indian pressure tactics.

6. I hope Mr. President that in view of the friendly relations between our two countries and your personal interest in Pakistan's integrity and well-being, you will prevent the present ambiguity and misunderstanding from becoming a source of further strains in Pakistan's relations with the Western world. This is something which we should in our joint interest try to prevent.

7. Your sympathetic approach to the problems that Pakistan is facing today and the understanding you have shown of our efforts to resolve the crisis in East Pakistan continue to be a source of strength to me. I hope Mr. President that your personal interest and support in this regard will be maintained.

With warm personal regards,
Yours sincerely,

A.M. Yahya Khan

83. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco)¹

Washington, June 29, 1971, 10:40 a.m.

S: I am going to send you over a copy of the bureaucratic talking papers² for your trip to India and Pakistan. I have written a personal chit on each one and said what I think you need to do and said it in direct language and what the problems are with India and Pakistan.

K: India wants to attack Pakistan.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 368, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² Briefing materials for Kissinger's trip to South Asia in July are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1072, Briefing Books for HAK's SEA and PRC trips.

S: India eating its cake and wanting it too. They are supporting the guerrillas. In East Pakistan. They call on Pakistan to put army in barracks but how can they with the guerrillas. Then they say the international community must give maximum support but they tell the refugees you cannot return to Pakistan until Yahya lets [omission in the source text]. When the High Commissioner went to Delhi (?) he tried to get them to insure a U.N. presence on border so the Pakistanis could cross and this would hurt their efforts with [omission in the source text] and get the Indians [omission in the source text]. The Indians turned him down. They said it would [not?] create tensions [*conditions?*] where people can return and feel they will not be hurt. Get the U.N. on Pakistan side of the line. That's fine. Indians keeping the pot boiling. It's difficult from the telegrams to get this and you won't get it from Keating.

K: Does the Secy. agree with you?

S: I don't know but it's true. On Pakistan side, one thing you have to get across. Yahya is trying. He is surrounded by the military and not entirely free agent. He made that speech yesterday and the emphasis is fine—wants the people back. Major weakness is that while announcing program on putting together a new constitution and people elected in provisional election will come in the assembly if free elections but he has barred Awami League. It's like telling Ted Kennedy not to be a Democrat. For him to maintain ban on Awami League there will be no political solution.

K: What about the AID program.

S: We tried to clarify the article³ on Sat.⁴ Made it appear that all consortium members had decided not to give aid. Not true. The World Bank representative gave a report but nothing done. A hardy defense in [omission in the source text] of Kennedy committee in favor.

K: Won't we run out soon? Won't we have to [omission in the source text].

S: It's key and we will have to do it.

K: When? I don't think India should tell [us?] how to deal with Pakistan.

S: A problem on both sides. When do you leave?

K: Thurs.⁵ night.

S: You will come away with one thing. The impression of how serious this situation is. I have the feeling that you people in the WH don't understand how serious it is.

³ Not further identified.

⁴ June 26.

⁵ July 1.

K: We know.

S: Not that it will explode in the end of the week.

K: No at the end of the monsoons, India will attack.

S: You have to be more pointed than Keating. Say we know you are supporting the guerrillas.

K: I will say that.

S: You will. There's too much kiss ass on this thing.

K: That's not my specialty.

84. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, June 30, 1971.

SUBJECT

Pakistan: Yahya's June 28 Address on Political Formula

Pakistani President Yahya Khan, in a long-awaited nationwide broadcast on June 28, outlined his plans for a conditional return to representative government within approximately four months. Yahya stated, however, that even after the promulgation of a new constitution and the convening of national and provincial legislatures, martial law would continue to be "at their disposal for a period of time."

Yahya has given up his original intention to have an elected constituent assembly adopt a constitution for him to "authenticate." Pakistan's new constitution will be written by a group of experts after consultation with political leaders and can be amended by the National Assembly, which would function as a legislature immediately upon being convened. This new constitution would follow the outline of Yahya's Legal Framework Order of 1970, i.e., an Islamic Republic, a federal state with adequate financial, administrative and legislative

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, NEA/PAB Files: Lot 77 D 91, POL 15-1, Head of State. Confidential. Drafted on June 29 by Joel M. Woldman (NEA/PAF) with the concurrence of Van Hollen. The memorandum is stamped June 29, but Sisco corrected the date by hand.

powers for the Center and “maximum” autonomy for the provinces. The new element would be a modified version of martial law to serve as a protective cover for the new government for an unspecified period.

Pakistan’s new political leaders would not include any representatives of the outlawed Awami League of East Pakistan under that party label. While reiterating the illegal status of the League, Yahya announced that Awami League members-elect of the national and provincial assemblies who had not disqualified themselves by secessionist activities would be eligible to participate in those bodies. Those Awami Leaguers who had disqualified themselves would be replaced through by-elections to take place this fall.²

In a strongly worded economic section of his address, Yahya called for national austerity and asserted that Pakistan would do without foreign aid rather than submit to political pressure to obtain it. At the same time, he thanked unnamed friendly foreign countries which had shown sympathy and understanding of the problems his government had been facing and trying to resolve and which had “given complete support to the action taken by the Government to maintain the unity and integrity of Pakistan.” He noted that such countries had warned others (i.e., India) against interfering in Pakistan’s internal affairs.

Yahya’s formulation for a political accommodation is highly conditional and its time-frame is imprecise. Its disqualification of many of the 440 Awami League members-elect and its probable unacceptability to most of the others means that most of those seats would have to be filled through by-elections in East Pakistan. A new political campaign in the East Wing will require adroit handling if existing tensions are to be reduced and a viable political settlement achieved. It is doubtful that promises of maximum provincial autonomy will be enough to satisfy the Bengalis, who have in effect again been reminded that their earlier electoral decisions are not acceptable to the West Pakistan establishment. Thus genuine political accommodation remains the crux of Pakistan’s internal crisis and Yahya’s speech offers little basis for optimism over his chances of early success under the terms and conditions he has prescribed.

² Sisco added a handwritten marginal comment at this point that reads: “Banning Awami League makes political accommodation almost impossible.”

85. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya¹

Washington, July 1, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your two recent messages² expressing your concern over indications of a mounting threat to peace in the sub-continent and stressing the importance of clarifying the stance of Aid-to-Pakistan Consortium countries toward future economic assistance to Pakistan.

I am very pleased that Dr. Kissinger will have an opportunity to discuss with you in Islamabad³ a number of questions that concern us both. He will deliver to you this letter responding to both of your recent messages.

Your message of June 18 conveying your apprehension of a growing threat to the peace of your region of the world has received my most serious consideration. This trend is of grave concern to all friends of Pakistan and India alike, and I sincerely trust that any such development can be averted through the exercise of good will and the forbearance by all concerned.

As you know, Foreign Minister Singh recently visited this country. He reflected deep concern over the rising refugee problem India faces and the burden which this problem is placing on the Indian economy and people. It remains our earnest hope that you and your government will succeed in your efforts to enable these refugees to return to their homes. For our part, we continue to urge the Government of India to exercise restraint, as we have in our discussions with you.

Your several recent statements welcoming the return to East Pakistan of all the refugees irrespective of caste, creed or religion and promising them full protection provide a necessary foundation along with the steps you have taken to facilitate their return and rehabilitation. We recognize, too, the significance of your initiative in seeking the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Your address to your countrymen on June 28⁴ setting forth the framework

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking.

² Documents 76 and 82.

³ Kissinger left Washington on July 2 for what was publicly described as a fact-finding trip to South Vietnam, Thailand, India, and Pakistan. The trip included a secret visit to China, undertaken during Kissinger's stop in Pakistan with the collaboration of Yahya Khan. Kissinger returned from Pakistan on July 11. Documentation on the China portion of the trip is in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume XVII, China, 1969-1972.

⁴ See Document 84.

within which you propose to proceed in restoring constitutional government and returning political power to the elected representatives of your people is also an important step.

The misunderstanding that has arisen over the meeting of the Aid-to-Pakistan Consortium in Paris on June 21 is regrettable, and the anxiety which it has caused in your country understandable. I sympathize with the statement you made in your address of June 28 disapproving of foreign aid if political strings are attached.

The Consortium meeting was an informal one. No decisions with respect to economic aid to Pakistan were sought, and none were reached. Furthermore, a common position was not developed whereby all members of the Consortium would jointly suspend future aid or withhold already committed assistance. The Consortium members are now awaiting the final reports of the World Bank and Fund Missions and also the completion by your government of a revised national development plan. As soon as resumption of national development programs is possible, we expect that a formal meeting of the Consortium, with Pakistani participation, will be called to review new aid requirements.

We wish to proceed with new agreements, subject to U.S. legislative criteria, as soon as adequate grounds are established for a resumption of economic development throughout Pakistan. In the meantime, we are extending new humanitarian relief aid to East Pakistan within the framework of the UN-coordinated program, and are urging others to contribute as well.

Please continue to let me know of any ways in which you feel we can help promote our common interests in safeguarding the peace of your region and the welfare of its people.

With personal regards,
Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

86. **Letter From President Nixon to Indian Prime Minister Gandhi¹**

Washington, July 1, 1971.

Dear Madame Prime Minister:

Dr. Kissinger is visiting New Delhi to discuss United States relations with India and in particular to seek your views on the problem caused by the movement of millions of refugees from East Pakistan into India. As I told your Foreign Minister when I talked with him in the White House on June 16, we are concerned about this problem not only because of its humanitarian aspects, but more importantly because it is a major international issue with implications for all of us. It is because of these implications and our concern for the peace and well being of Asia that we must all devote so much attention to encouraging progress toward a solution.

I hope that the assistance which we have been able to provide in support of the refugees and which has been discussed with your Foreign Minister will help to meet your most pressing immediate needs.

With regard to the need for actions which will make possible a reversal of the refugee flow, we have continued to emphasize that a return to peace and security in East Pakistan and a viable political settlement are crucial to restoration of a more stable situation in South Asia. Dr. Kissinger will also be talking to President Yahya about this subject and will be delivering a personal message from me. I think there has been some forward movement in this regard over the past several weeks, but there is a need for more.

It is hoped that the recent difficulties over the delivery of arms ordered by Pakistan prior to March 25 will not prevent us from working together to achieve the objectives of peace and prosperity in South Asia, which are in the United States' interest as well as in India's. I understand the nature of your Government's concern. You can appreciate the essentially restrictive nature of the interim actions we have taken since the civil strife began in East Pakistan. The United States must maintain a constructive relationship with Pakistan so that we may retain some influence in working with them toward important decisions to be made in that country, as we have in the past.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). No classification marking.

It was a great pleasure for me to have had the opportunity to discuss these issues with your Foreign Minister last month. I very much hope that we can continue to have frank exchanges of views on these matters and that you will be entirely candid with Dr. Kissinger in telling him how my government can be of assistance in resolving such complex and difficult problems.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

87. Evening Briefing Notes Prepared for the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 2, 1971.

Singh Conversation with Kosygin: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] discussions in early June between Indian Minister of External Affairs Swaran Singh and Chairman Kosygin resulted in a major political development for India. According to [*name not declassified*], Kosygin pledged support for the Indian guerrilla army operating in East Bengal, and, upon receipt of a formal request from India, the Soviets promised a guarantee of military protection to enable India to resist pressure from Communist China. Soviet policy makers, in [*name not declassified*] view, assume a divided Pakistan is no longer politically viable, and that an independent East Bengal is inevitable. [*name not declassified*] believes the Soviets are willing to concede West Pakistan to Chinese influence and to concentrate on backing India and the Bengali independence movement, probably with hopes of securing naval bases in East Bengal and great influence in the Indian Ocean area.

[Omitted here is an assessment of the report prepared by Samuel Hoskinson for Harold Saunders. Hoskinson found the report somewhat surprising but credible. As such, he concluded, it was disturbing: "The most disturbing aspect of the report is that, if Kosygin does come through on the guarantees against China, the Indians will feel much less inhibited about attacking East Pakistan."]

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Nov 1969–July 1971. No classification marking.

88. National Security Study Memorandum 133¹

Washington, July 2, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director, Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Contingency Planning on South Asia

The President has directed that a contingency planning paper be prepared concerning the U.S. position in light of possible developments in South Asia.

—The paper should include a description of present U.S. strategy and steps taken to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. Additional steps in pursuing this strategy that could be considered in coming weeks to prevent or lessen the likelihood of the outbreak of hostilities should be discussed and their pros and cons assessed.

—The paper then should discuss the options open to the United States should hostilities occur.

The study should be prepared by an Ad Hoc Group comprising representatives of the addressees of this memorandum and the NSC Staff, chaired by the representative of the Secretary of State. This paper should be submitted by July 12, 1971, for consideration by the Senior Review Group.

Henry A. Kissinger

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 365, Subject Files, National Security Study Memoranda, Nos. 104–206. Secret; Exdis. A copy was sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

89. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 3, 1971.

SUBJECT

Refugee Aid in India and Relief Assistance for East Pakistan

India

You have agreed in principle to the distribution of U.S.-supplied food to the East Pakistani refugees by Indian Government agencies, but have asked "what this means."

The U.S. voluntary agencies and international humanitarian organizations simply do not have the capacity to distribute on a timely basis all of the 105,000 metric tons of wheat being sent to the refugees. Only the Indian Government agencies experienced in food storage, handling and distribution and actually running the refugee camps can handle the size that this job has become. The U.S. voluntary agencies and international agencies will continue to play a vital role in supplementary feeding and in coordinating international contributions, but the main burden for distribution must now fall on the Indians themselves.

In terms of mechanics, this means that we will at least in part be replacing the substantial amount of food that the Indian Government has already distributed from its tight emergency and price control stocks and which the U.S. voluntary and international organizations have diverted from their important normal feeding programs in India. They have done this in order to move quickly to stave off famine among the refugees until emergency supplies from abroad actually arrive in India (there is a several week lag). The rest of the food will upon arrival go directly to the U.S. voluntary agencies, international organizations with feeding programs and to the Indian Government agencies for immediate shipment to and distribution within the refugee camps. The U.S., as part of its food agreement, will insist that the UN High Commissioner for refugees have access to distribution records.

There is, of course, also a political angle with the Pakistanis but as the magnitude of the refugee problem has become increasingly clear it has receded considerably. U.S. assistance has all been in response to

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71. Confidential. Sent for information.

several international appeals by U Thant and under the general auspices of the program established by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Moreover, the Pakistan Government has insisted that they only have the army distribute any food we put into East Pakistan and can hardly, therefore, complain about Indian Government involvement with refugee feeding.

In short, what this boils down to is that distribution in part through Indian official agencies is the only approach mechanically possible under the circumstances. We will keep the UNHCR and the voluntary agencies intimately involved and insist on the best safeguards possible under the circumstances.

Pakistan

At the same time, Maury Williams has reactivated the cyclone disaster committee of last fall to prepare for the contingency of large-scale food shortages in East Pakistan later this year.²

Facts on the situation are still incomplete, but these seem to be the main elements:

—People throughout East Pakistan are probably already experiencing food shortages and the situation in the cyclone-affected areas is especially severe.

—The most critical problem is getting food off the ships, through the port of Chittagong and on to distribution points inland. Port operations are resuming only very slowly, the road and rail transportation out of Chittagong is disrupted and, for a variety of reasons including Bengali insurgent operations, inland water transportation is unable to make up the difference.

—The political situation may also provide a major impediment to food distribution since the West Pakistanis are clearly not well informed about some important aspects of the food supply problem, civil administration is in disarray and food distribution will probably be used to strengthen the regime's political image.

—President Yahya has made a formal request to the UN for assistance and has agreed to the stationing of a UN representative in Dacca to help assess requirements and coordinate the sending of supplies from abroad.

—The US stands ready to resume shipments promptly of 170,000 tons of wheat under the existing PL-480 program, to sign an agreement for another 150,000 tons for the disaster area and to negotiate a

² The Consulate General in Dacca reported on July 6 that there was a serious threat of famine in East Pakistan, and that prospects for averting widespread hunger were not good. (Telegram 2507 from Dacca; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK)

new PL-480 agreement as soon as the food can be moved. The Pakistanis have requested 250,000 tons of food grains over the next six months. Right now, however, the limited pipeline is full and some 200,000 tons of PL-480 wheat alone has been temporarily diverted from East to West Pakistan. In addition, another 250,000 tons from non-U.S. sources are stored in West Pakistan awaiting shipment to the East.

So far we have provided about \$2 million in grant assistance for boats and foreign crews to be used for distributing food and other emergency relief supplies. Negotiations are also under way with the Paks on a \$4.9 million rehabilitation program for the area devastated last winter by the cyclone. This money is what still remains from the total of \$7.5 million appropriated by Congress for cyclone disaster relief.

90. Memorandum for the Record¹

New Delhi, July 6, 1971.

SUBJECT

Description of Kissinger–Haksar Talk

Dr. Kissinger met alone with Prime Minister Gandhi's personal secretary, P.N. Haksar, at 6:00 p.m. July 6 in New Delhi. The following represents Dr. Kissinger's brief description of the conversation after he returned to the Ashoka Hotel.

Dr. Kissinger said he had calmed Haksar down. Haksar had started critical comments of the US policy on arms assistance to Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger said he had told Haksar that if India were going into a paroxysm over this there was no way in which the US could respond. If the Indians could quiet down, the US would try to work quietly over the next few months to encourage a settlement of the refugee problem. Dr. Kissinger said that Haksar conceded that the US could not respond to a public furor. Haksar said that the government of India had a problem: It did not want to go to war but it did not know how not to go to war.

Later, Dr. Kissinger recalled that he had told Haksar that he thought the Indians were just making a lot of noise in order to set up

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1327, NSC Unfiled Material, 1971, 5 of 12. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Harold Saunders.

an invasion of East Pakistan. He said that he had suggested that he and Haksar talk about "ways not to have a war."

After further conversation with Haksar and Foreign Secretary Kaul, at dinner, Dr. Kissinger said his assumption is that they are playing power politics with cold calculations. This is quite different from the embassy's assumption that this is a genuine Indian feeling against our arms aid to Pakistan. He said that he had told Haksar that "we are men of the world." Haksar knows that aid does not make the difference. Even if the US shipped all \$29 million worth of military equipment, it would not make any difference in the situation. So let's stop yelling about something that does not make a difference and talk might.

91. Memorandum of Conversation¹

New Delhi, July 7, 1971.

PARTICIPANTS

Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India
P.N. Haksar, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
An Aide to Haksar
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
Kenneth Keating, US Ambassador to India
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

The Prime Minister and Dr. Kissinger met privately for the first 10–15 minutes. During this time, Dr. Kissinger delivered a letter² from the President. He later told Mr. Saunders that she had explained her political problems. She said that she does not wish to use force and that she is willing to accept any suggestions that the US may have. She told Dr. Kissinger how serious the situation was and said that India is not wedded to any particular political solution in East Pakistan. She also volunteered that India is not preventing the refugees from returning to East Pakistan, as the Pakistanis have charged. She is afraid of mounting Chinese influence in East Pakistan.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on July 12. The meeting was held in the Prime Minister's Office in New Delhi. The conversation was summarized in telegram 10864 from New Delhi, July 8. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger)

² Document 86.

During this private meeting, Dr. Kissinger said he explained the Nixon Administration's policy toward China. He said that it has been the policy of the Administration gradually to establish a relationship with Communist China. He said that there could be significant developments in the months ahead and that he wanted the Prime Minister to understand that these were not directed at India and that they derived from our global policy. They derived from the President's feeling—which India seems to have shared in the past—that a more normal world order and structure for maintaining world peace requires that China be drawn into the international community of nations.

At this point, the remainder of the party joined Dr. Kissinger and the Prime Minister.

Dr. Kissinger began this portion of the conversation by saying that he had been impressed by the intensity of Indian feeling in regard to the present situation. It is one thing to read about it, another to feel it first hand. There is a major problem: On the one hand, there is the possibility of the use of force in the present situation which could lead to a serious war. On the other hand, there is a political situation in Pakistan which must in some way be resolved so as to permit refugees to return to their homes.

The Prime Minister recalled that she had written the President about the urgency of resolving the problem created by the 6.8 million refugees who had come into India. She noted that, while the flow seems to be slowing, it is difficult to be accurate about the actual numbers because many are in private homes fearing that if they register formally, the Indian government will send them back across the border. The number of 6.8 million is the number of "registered" refugees.

Dr. Kissinger said that the US has no ideas at this moment. He said he would have to form a judgment in Islamabad on how President Yahya plans to proceed. He said he had read President Yahya's June 28 speech. He does not know whether President Yahya has any long-range ideas. We certainly would use what influence we have to encourage a solution. The whole point of our policy has been to retain influence in order to help create a situation which would enable the refugees to return. If this does not produce results, we will have to reexamine our policy. He said he could not promise how any re-examination of policy would evolve.

The Prime Minister said that a good part of the feeling in India is emotional. It is due to circumstances created by the refugees—the shortages and the rising prices and depressed wages.

Dr. Kissinger asked how much time was available before the problem became unmanageable. The Prime Minister said that the problem is unmanageable right now. "We are just holding it together by sheer will power." She said there are "hardly two people in Parliament who

approve our policy." Many parties in the Parliament are using this as a political lever.

Dr. Kissinger said he surmised that, after the Prime Minister's extraordinary electoral victory in March, the opposition is more frustrated than normal. Then Dr. Kissinger asked whether the settlement in East Pakistan must include Awami League leader Mujibur Rahman.

The Prime Minister said the settlement must be between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. This is not an Indo-Pakistani problem. India would not have been involved except for the refugees.

The Prime Minister then turned to Mr. Haksar and said that she had found the news alarming that the West Pakistanis were talking about errors in the past census. It appears that the West Pakistanis are trying to change the official picture of the entire population. Their idea seems to be to reduce the population and thereby to reduce the majority of the East Pakistanis in the total population of Pakistan.

There was a brief exchange on the political nature of a census, beginning with Mr. Haksar's comment that a census can produce political problems. Dr. Kissinger noted that the Lebanese Government had to maintain the fiction that the balance between Christians and Muslims is even.

Dr. Kissinger went on, saying that it is a tragedy that the refugee problem came about at this particular moment. It was the assessment of all of the US specialists in March that it was impossible that force would be used by the West Pakistani Government in East Pakistan.

Ambassador Keating broke a moment of silence by noting that Dr. Kissinger had met with Planning Minister Subramaniam and that the Minister had explained the dislocation in development plans which had been caused by the refugee influx. Prime Minister Gandhi responded that India had been through a "dark period" since 1962 culminating in the drought years of 1965-67. Now the government is in a situation where it could deal with those Indian problems.

Dr. Kissinger told the Prime Minister that the US would take a new look at the problem. The ability of the US to move events even with strong advice is extremely limited. Moreover, we do not know what the effect of the economic pressures inherent in the present situation will be. Mr. McNamara's judgment in the World Bank is that the pressures would begin to mount by September.

Mr. Haksar said that India's assessment is that Pakistan can last beyond that. Economies like Pakistan's have a remarkable capacity to retrench and to go on well beyond the time when Western economic experts feel they should have collapsed. The Prime Minister added "and they don't mind if the people starve."

Ambassador Keating noted that the foreign exchange situation seemed to have improved in Pakistan in recent days. Mr. Haksar used

the analogy of an octogenarian faster who nobody felt could live more than thirty days but who lasted for 69 days before he finally died.

Dr. Kissinger asked if it is true that Pakistan can survive economic shortages for a substantial period under present conditions, what can the US do? What is the point of cutting off economic assistance?

Mr. Haksar stated that the disbursements from earlier AID commitments already in the pipeline are still being made. Therefore, there is no diminution yet in the flow of economic assistance to Pakistan. Then, if the Pakistanis can anticipate new commitments through the consortium in September, there has not been present in this situation a concern in the Pakistani government that it will lose outside support.

Dr. Kissinger said that Pakistan, as of the present, can not anticipate new aid commitments in September. The IMF would not advance money without prompt commitments to development aid from the consortium countries.

Mr. Haksar said that there is unrest among the Karachi commercial/ industrial community. It is the assessment of Mr. Gus Papanak [a former head of the Harvard advisory group in Pakistan] that in a short time there would be a huge economic distress in Pakistan. [*Comment:* Although this seems to contradict Mr. Haksar's earlier statement, the implication seemed to be that the mere prospect of a diminution in the flow of economic assistance would have a psychological rather than an immediate economic effect on the communities in Pakistan who would have some political influence.]³

Dr. Kissinger, still probing the question of what effect the cut-off of assistance would have, said the limited number of arms now being shipped to Pakistan makes almost no difference in the military balance. What, therefore, is the actual effect of cutting off assistance?

Mr. Haksar replied that it is important to make clear that future aid is dependent on well-timed political developments. According to Peter Cargill, the senior World Bank expert on South Asia, President Yahya is "impervious to economic facts." Yahya either has no access to the real facts or he is deluding himself to avoid seeing the seriousness of the present situation. Haksar quoted the recent British parliamentary delegation under Mr. Bottomley to the effect that President Yahya is insulated from the real situation. He felt that the act of cutting off assistance, while it might not have an economic impact forcing Pakistan to take certain political steps, could have the effect of forcing President Yahya and others in Pakistan to face up to the costs of their present policies. This would be the purpose of cutting assistance.

³ All brackets in the source text.

Dr. Kissinger said he felt it was important to avoid "extreme measures" for another few months [in order to give present pressures a chance to operate in Pakistan].

The Prime Minister said that India does not want to take extreme measures. What India will do will be a question of how the situation develops and what it can do. It is true that the shipment of a few arms to Pakistan does not make much practical difference, but psychologically the US has made the situation more difficult.

The Prime Minister continued that Pakistan has felt all these years that it will get support from the US no matter what it does. This has encouraged an "adventurous policy." India is "not remotely desirous of territory." It is irritating to have the Pakistanis base the whole survival of their country on hostility to India. "If they really had the good of Islam at heart, they would think of the 60 million Muslims in India also."

Dr. Kissinger summarized by saying that he felt there were two problems:

—There is the immediate problem created by the influx of refugees. Intensity of Indian concern on this subject is greater than US concern because the dangers and pressures are naturally more immediate on India, despite the sympathy which the US feels.

—The other problem is how to put US-Indian relations on a more stable basis over a longer term. It is not logical that this fundamental relationship should be repeatedly jeopardized over a regional dispute.

Dr. Kissinger continued, recalling the period of the 1950s and stating that the US no longer bases its foreign relations on the assumption that a neutral nation like India is an opponent of the US if it will not align itself with the US in the global scheme.

The question now is how to stabilize relations. Dr. Kissinger said he could not conceive of India and the US having serious clashing interests on the global scale. A strong India is in the interest of the United States. The US will attempt to have as full a dialogue with India as India is willing to have.

Dr. Kissinger concluded by saying that the Prime Minister's visit to the United States, if she did see her way clear to come, could contribute to the on-going dialogue between the US and India.

The Prime Minister smiled and said that she would like to come but that she "could not breathe a word of it" now because she feared she would end up in a position where she would have to say no. Dr. Kissinger and Ambassador Keating acknowledged their understanding of this point.

Harold H. Saunders⁴

⁴ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

92. Memorandum of Conversation¹

New Delhi, July 7, 1971.

PARTICIPANTS

Swaran Singh, Foreign Minister of India
T.N. Kaul, Foreign Secretary
Mrs. Rukmini Menon, Chief, American Division, Ministry of External Affairs
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
Kenneth Keating, US Ambassador to India
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

Dr. Kissinger opened the conversation by saying, "As a point of honor, we owe you a discussion of events since your visit to Washington." The President had felt that the Foreign Minister's visit had been very successful. Then the story on arms shipments to Pakistan had appeared in the *New York Times*.² Dr. Kissinger said that when he had seen these stories, his reaction was the same as he imagined the Foreign Minister's had been. He had assumed that the reports could not be true.

He felt that it was important for the Foreign Minister to understand how the US position had evolved since the end of March. At that time, an immediate meeting had been held. Initially, it seemed a civil war of a peculiar nature in Pakistan, but we looked at the question of our arms shipments nevertheless. At that time, no orders had been placed under the one-time exception to our general embargo on the shipment of lethal equipment to the subcontinent. The US had felt at that time that the arms problem could be handled by administrative measures. We felt that it could be handled if no new licenses were issued and if there were an administrative delay on any existing undertakings. "We thought in the White House and at the top of the State Department that the matter had been taken care of."

Dr. Kissinger continued that he had not been aware of a category which included licenses issued prior to the beginning of April under which equipment had already left depots or was waiting on the docks. "None of us was aware of this category when we talked to you. We were very much surprised."

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on July 12. The meeting was held in Foreign Minister Singh's office in New Delhi. The conversation was summarized in telegram 10865 from New Delhi, July 8. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger) Kissinger also met on July 7 with Minister of Planning Chidambara Subramaniam. A memorandum of that conversation is *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US.

² See footnote 3, Document 78.

Dr. Kissinger said he was explaining this because whatever the outcome of the present tragedy, nations must not stoop to pettiness. Whatever we do, we will do above board with India.

Dr. Kissinger explained that we are now trying to get a catalogue of all pending orders and impending shipments. We want to see if we can make a distinction between various types of equipment, for example, equipment like aircraft engines which belong to the Pakistanis but which are in the US for reconditioning on the one hand and ammunition which is on new order on the other hand. We are trying to get a fix on the exact amounts and types of equipment which are involved.

Dr. Kissinger continued that the President's policy has been based on recognition that there should be a political solution in Pakistan. It recognizes that such a solution has to include the return of a substantial majority of refugees. The US wants to use its influence to this end in Islamabad.

US policy-makers had had to judge at the outset whether this objective was best achieved by a policy of confrontation with Pakistan or by preserving our relationship and attempting to use our influence. At some point, we will have to see whether the policy which we have chosen—trying to use our influence—has worked. In looking at the question of our military shipments, we will have to see whether they affect the military balance. However, there will be enough disagreement between India and the US without adding suspicion to it. Therefore, we are anxious to establish a basis of genuine understanding with the Indians.

The Foreign Minister said that, suspicions apart, what is the precise US policy?

Dr. Kissinger replied that no licenses had been issued after 1 April. He asked Mr. Saunders whether this was absolutely correct and it was agreed by all that there had been two licenses issued after that date but that they had been revoked, so the statement was essentially correct. Also, there had been no orders fulfilled on the one-time exception. Dr. Kissinger noted that this is a big step in the President's eyes because there has always been a personal relationship with the President of Pakistan and with the Pakistani people. Finally, nothing has been delivered out of US depots during this period. The only equipment available now consists of those items now in commercial channels, items which do not need licenses, items turned over to the Pakistanis before the beginning of April. The maximum possible in this category is \$29 million and it is probably substantially less.

The Foreign Minister noted that Dr. Kissinger had specified that no goods had left "military depots." He asked whether there were other depots.

Mr. Saunders explained that in a number of instances, equipment provided under foreign military sales credit was provided directly by the manufacturer. There is, therefore, equipment which is provided to the Pakistani procurement mission directly from manufacturers and would go to them without going through US depots.

Dr. Kissinger noted that since April 1, the Pakistanis could not buy new equipment which required a munitions export license.

The Foreign Minister asked how far back the licenses ran. Dr. Kissinger replied that the licenses were good for one year. He noted that it is relatively easy to find out what the licenses have been issued for. But it is very difficult to find out exactly what orders have been placed under the licenses that have been issued because that is a transaction often directly between the Pakistani procurement mission and a manufacturer.

Foreign Minister Singh said that the Indian government had been under the impression that no equipment would actually move to Pakistan. It would have been proper, if there was a loophole, that the Indian government be told this.

Dr. Kissinger replied that he agreed. He acknowledged that “we had all handled this issue too lackadaisically.” He said that he too had been under the impression that nothing could move. He had neglected to ask whether there were other categories of equipment which could move outside the scope of the administrative delays that had been applied.

The Foreign Minister asked whether the government should not have given the Secretary and the President this picture, whether or not the questions had been asked. “I would give Kaul the devil if this happened to me.”

Dr. Kissinger indicated that it is no consolation to either of us that the US has misled itself.

The Foreign Minister said that all this is peripheral, it is “no embarrassment to me,” but it is a serious blow to the relationship between our nations. We should not have to cross-examine each other on issues of this kind. Dr. Kissinger agreed that “we have to have confidence in each other.” Singh continued that events of the past few days had been very disappointing to him. After his meeting with the President, he said he had had a feeling that there had been moves to help India that had been directly traceable to the President’s attitude. Later, he said, he had not known how to proceed.

Dr. Kissinger said that the President had felt that he and the Foreign Minister had understood the general direction in which the US would proceed.

The Foreign Minister said he wished to be advised what the Indian government could say. Dr. Kissinger replied that he did not want

to give a quick answer for fear of risking further misunderstanding. What he would like to do, he said, is to go back to Washington and review the lists of pending orders that have been prepared. Then it will be possible to tell the Indians precisely where we stand. Dr. Kissinger repeated that he did not wish to make any rash statements that might prove later to be untrue.

The Foreign Minister asked Dr. Kissinger please to convey to the President that the Indian Government hopes that there would be a good review of military assistance policy. He said that the US would be the best judge of the methods to be employed but that the Indian government urges a revision of the present policy. India feels the continued supply of arms in the face of all that is happening is prejudicial to Indian interests.

Broadening the conversation, the Foreign Minister said that when he had talked with Secretary Rogers, the Secretary had said it is in the US national interest to continue the general policy the US has taken toward the present South Asian crisis. The Foreign Minister said he would like to know what Dr. Kissinger's definition of the US national interest in this situation is. The Foreign Minister said he did not see where India's interests conflicted with US interests in this region.

Dr. Kissinger replied, "neither do we."

The Foreign Minister said that, if there is no conflict in our respective interests, India would like to know what the content of US interests is. He felt that there had never been even a clear discussion on this important issue.

The Foreign Minister said he wished to elaborate. He said he could understand how, at the time of US containment policy, the US had an important interest in maintaining its intelligence facilities at Peshawar. Although India always took the view that the weapons supplied by the US for maintaining this facility could be used against India and could not be used against Communists, India understood these weapon shipments as a payment for necessary facilities. But now, Pakistan has changed, and the policies of the United States have changed. "It passes my comprehension what your interest in maintaining such a close relationship with Pakistan is."

Dr. Kissinger acknowledged that the Foreign Minister was asking a profound question. After a moment of thought, he replied that the general US view is that India is one of the pivotal countries in the world because of its size, position, form of government, example to other developing nations and as a force for peace and stability whose influence reaches beyond its own region.

Pakistan, on the other hand, is a regional country, smaller and of a peculiar religious origin that limits its appeal to other nations.

“Our commitment to the cohesion and vitality of India,” he said, “is very great.” The independence and strength of India is important to us. Unlike the other major powers from outside the region, the US has an essentially disinterested concern in developments in South Asia. The US has no political party there to which it has allegiance. The US sincerely believes that it is not involving itself in the internal affairs of the subcontinent.

There followed at this point a digression on the question of Pak-Indian charges of US involvement in Indian politics. Dr. Kissinger said that to the best of our knowledge, we are not doing anything. But if the Foreign Minister had a suspicion that we were, he would hope that the Foreign Minister would let him or the Ambassador know. The Foreign Minister recalled that he had had a long talk with Ambassador Keating on this subject and they had reached the understanding that they would talk if anything new came to the Foreign Minister’s attention. He said that he did not wish to be reckless in making charges of involvement.

Dr. Kissinger repeated that we were not aware of any US involvement, but it was always possible that some US official somewhere was operating from a mandate of some sort out of the past.

Returning to the main theme of the discussion, Dr. Kissinger continued, saying that the special US relationship with Pakistan had grown out of a period when the US believed that there were only two camps in the world. The US has now become more sophisticated. We do not think that the threat comes from the military direction which was seen as the threat in the 1950s.

Dr. Kissinger continued that the President believes:

1. That a war between India and Pakistan would be a disaster for both countries. It would risk that the subcontinent could become an arena for contention among outsiders. We prefer a political solution.
2. The President feels he has a certain equity in Islamabad which he could use in helping to achieve a political solution. If his equity is not what it appears to be, then we would have a new situation. We know that India cannot absorb 6 million refugees.

Foreign Minister Singh returned to the first point and asked what interests of the US would not be served if arms shipments did not continue. He said he hoped that the US did not feel that not giving arms would provoke a war.

Dr. Kissinger said that our judgment this week is that the amount of equipment in the pipeline will not affect the military balance in South Asia. The major problem is the symbolic effect of a cut-off.

Dr. Kissinger noted that the Indians wanted us to cut off shipments for the sake of the shock effect on Pakistan. The President, on the other hand, now thinks that trying to shock Pakistan in this manner would

put the US in the same category as a lot of other countries who are attempting to pressure Pakistan in this way. He felt that we could perhaps gain more by showing some sympathy and then attempting to encourage Pakistan to face hard decisions. If this policy does not produce any results, then we will have to re-examine it.

The Foreign Minister said he hoped that Dr. Kissinger would examine the full implications of President Yahya's statement of June 28. The comments on Mujibur Rahman were not helpful. The Minister said he understood Dr. Kissinger would be discussing a political settlement in Pakistan. He said he feared that a settlement along the lines of some sort of confederal relationship appeared to have been snapped by President Yahya's statement. It does not appear now that the constitution will be drafted by the elected representatives of the people. It is not clear what role there will be for the political parties. And it is not clear what role Mujib can play.

The Foreign Minister continued, saying that the real question is whether there is a chance for a political settlement. "I am very doubtful." The parliamentary delegation here from the UK headed by Mr. Bottomley—whom the Foreign Minister has known for a long time—said that it was convinced that Yahya does not know the whole story. He is not being told the facts about the situation in Pakistan. The Indians have the uneasy feeling that the international community under US leadership may be taking a course of following what fate has already decided.

Dr. Kissinger noted that he had no judgment about whether or not President Yahya's policies were based on a recognition of the real problems or not. This is one of the things he expected to learn in Pakistan.

The meeting concluded with Dr. Kissinger and the Foreign Minister chatting briefly alone.

Harold H. Saunders³

³ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

93. Editorial Note

Henry Kissinger's conversations in New Delhi on July 7, 1971, included a significant exchange with Defense Minister Jagjivan Ram. At Kissinger's request, Ram assessed the Chinese military threat to India. Kissinger observed that China might intervene on behalf of Pakistan

if there was a war between India and Pakistan. He assured Ram that the United States would take a grave view of any Chinese move against India. (Memorandum of conversation; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US) This memorandum is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 139.

Kissinger's assurance to Defense Minister Ram contrasts with a warning he purportedly gave to Ambassador L.K. Jha on July 17. According to Kissinger's appointment book, he met with Jha at the Western White House in San Clemente, California, on July 17. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) An account of this meeting prepared by Jha, cited by Seymour Hersh, indicates that Jha and Kissinger met alone. Kissinger apparently did not prepare a record of the meeting. According to Jha's report of the meeting, as summarized by Hersh, Kissinger conveyed the warning that if war broke out between India and Pakistan and China became involved on Pakistan's side, "we would be unable to help you against China." (Seymour Hersh, *The Price of Power*, New York: Summit Books, 1983, page 452) Intelligence information subsequently obtained from India supports Jha's account. Kissinger, however, denied issuing such a warning when Harold Saunders raised the question on September 7. Kissinger and Jha ultimately reached agreement on the nature of the exchange in a conversation on September 11; see Documents 110, 143, and 146.

94. Memorandum for the Record¹

New Delhi, undated.

1. In my first twenty-four hours in India, I have had full exposure to the strong Indian feelings about the heavy burden imposed by the

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 US/KISSINGER. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only; Nodis. Prepared by Kissinger. Sent by Haig to the Department of State's Acting Executive Secretary, Robert C. Brewster, under cover of a July 8 memorandum stating that it was for the exclusive use of Secretary Rogers, and that a copy had been sent directly to Rogers at the Western White House in San Clemente, California, where he was then staying. Another copy of the memorandum in the Kissinger papers shows a drafting date of July 7. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Top Secret Chronological File, Box TS 4, 1971 July) On July 8 Haig sent the memorandum to President Nixon, under cover of a memorandum summarizing the report. (Ibid., Geopolitical File, Box TS 58, Trips: HAK, Chron File July 1971)

refugees and against what they regard as continued US support for Pakistan. Most are still talking about the importance of a political settlement in East Pakistan, but I sense an increasing judgment that Yahya does not have the capacity to bring this off, certainly not on his present course. There seems to be a growing sense of the inevitability of war or at least widespread Hindu-Muslim violence, not necessarily because anyone wants it but because in the end they fear they will not know how to avoid it.

2. With Foreign Minister Singh, I began the conversation by saying I felt I owed him as a point of honor an explanation of developments in regard to arms shipments for Pakistan since his visit to Washington. I explained the evolution of our position since March 25. Only recently did it become apparent that there was one category of equipment not covered under these steps. I said that a list of this equipment was now being prepared and would be ready next week. We would review this. Singh asked that I convey to the President his strong urging that our arms policy be reviewed with an eye to ending all shipments. The Indians view these as prejudicial to their interests.

Singh then asked for a description of our view of US interests in South Asia today. To provide some measure of reassurance that we take India seriously, I drew this perspective: India is one of the pivotal countries of the world because of its size, position, form of government, example to developing nations and potential contribution to peace and stability beyond its region. Pakistan, which we have a special relationship with on several issues, is a regional country of more special character. I concluded by saying that our commitment to the vitality and cohesion of India is substantial.

As for our policy in the present situation, I said the President felt that an Indo-Pakistani war would be a disaster for both countries and would create the risk that the subcontinent would become an area for conflict among outside powers. The President has felt that he had certain influence in Pakistan which could be used to encourage the Pakistani Government to encourage political solution. We recognized that the Indians would prefer US to cut off assistance for the shock effect of that step, but the President had felt that we should do enough to maintain our influence.

To this, Singh responded that he felt that President Yahya's statement of June 28 had snapped the last chances for a political settlement. He is very doubtful that a political settlement is still possible. From reports he has from the British, he does not believe Yahya is being given the full facts about the situation and therefore does not have a realistic picture of what will be required for a genuine settlement. I said I had no judgment on this since I had not been to Pakistan but that I planned to make clear that the US favored a political settlement.

In a brief private session, he told me that India would not insist on a settlement involving the jailed East Pakistani leader, Mujibur Rahman, but would be satisfied if Pakistan could come up with a solution that is non-military and non-communal; i.e., is not biased against the Hindus.

3. With the Prime Minister, I took the same general line on India's importance without going into as much detail on the arms shipments. She explained her political problems: she does not want to use force and is willing to accept any suggestions. It is a question of how the situation develops and what can be done practically. She is concerned about Chinese influence growing in East Pakistan. I assured her the whole point of our policy has been to retain enough influence to urge creation of conditions that would permit the refugees to go back, although we would not promise results. I asked how much more time she thought there was before the situation became unmanageable, and she replied that it is unmanageable now and that they are "just holding it together by sheer willpower."

4. With both Prime Minister Gandhi and the Foreign Minister, I took a few moments privately to explain the background of the President's policy toward China over the past two years and to lay the groundwork for increasing contacts. I felt this was essential in avoiding future charges that, on an issue of vital concern to them we had not at least confided our general intent. In each case, I made clear that our moves closer to China derived from the President's sense of what was necessary for world peace, was in no way directed at India, and would in the long run benefit India. Nevertheless, we would, I said, take the gravest view of any unprovoked Chinese aggression against India. Singh sought assurance that the US would provide equipment in event of attack.

5. Indian press had emphasized demonstrations on arrival. Incidents minimal and isolated and Secret Service reports situation generally quiet. Any reports of conversations you see in press are from Indian sources. I have talked to no members of the press.

95. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to President Nixon¹

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

Dr. Kissinger's Talks with Mrs. Gandhi and Foreign Minister Singh

Some additional information concerning Dr. Kissinger's meetings with Mrs. Gandhi and Foreign Minister Singh has been provided in Ambassador Keating's reporting cables:

—In a brief initial private session Mrs. Gandhi explained her political problems, her desire to avoid the use of force and her concern about Chinese influence in East Pakistan.

—When asked how much time there was before the refugee problem would become unmanageable, Mrs. Gandhi said it already was "and we are holding it together by sheer will power." She added that practically no one in the Indian Parliament approved of her policy.

—Mrs. Gandhi said that India was not wedded to any particular solution to the conflict between East and West Pakistan. In fact, she said, it is not an Indo-Pak problem and that India would not be involved except for the refugees.

—Mrs. Gandhi asserted that the pattern of the past U.S.-Pak relationship has led the Pakistanis to expect U.S. support no matter what actions it takes. This, she said, has encouraged a "policy of adventurism" and it is irritating to have the whole survival of the Pakistani state based on antagonism to India.

—Concerning her possible visit to the U.S. in November, Mrs. Gandhi said she would like to come but could not "breathe a word of it now" or she would be placed in a position where she would have to say "No."

—In a relaxed, unemotional and cordial atmosphere, much of the same ground was covered with Foreign Minister Singh. He made an explicit effort to depersonalize the issue of our own shipments to Pakistan but did emphasize the blow to Indo-U.S. relations.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Geopolitical File, Box TS 58, Trips: HAK, Chron File, July 1971. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. The memorandum was sent to President Nixon on July 8 as an attachment to another memorandum from Haig summarizing Kissinger's visit to New Delhi. (Ibid.) A handwritten note in an unknown hand reads: "Don't send—pouch back."

96. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Rawalpindi, July 8, 1971.

PARTICIPANTS

Sultan Khan, Foreign Secretary
M.M. Ahmad, Economic Advisor to President Yahya
Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan to the US
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

The conversation began with Dr. Kissinger pointing to some newspapers on the table in the reception room where the conversation took place and saying that it was a pleasure to see newspapers that were not reporting criticism of him. He said that the stories in the New Delhi newspapers about his talks came from Indian sources. He did not have a single word with the press in New Delhi. Each person he talked to must have given his own personal version of what Kissinger had said. There had been a "horrendous storm" in the press against the US while he was in New Delhi.

The Foreign Secretary replied that this put the Government of Pakistan in distinguished company. It too is receiving a bad press. Dr. Kissinger said that the Government of Pakistan had not handled its press relations as skillfully as it might have. Not many people around the world, for instance, know that the Government of Pakistan had invited the United Nations to come and work in the program for restoring the East Pakistani refugees to their homes.

The Foreign Secretary replied that this had been widely released by the UN organizations involved. Ambassador Hilaly said that, despite the release of news, the newspapers do not print the news. Mr. Ahmad said that Pakistan would have to buy space to see that the news

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US. Secret; Nodis. The meeting was held at the President's Guest House in Rawalpindi. Kissinger arrived in Rawalpindi on July 8; he met with Sultan Khan and M.M. Ahmad in the afternoon and in the evening with President Yahya. Kissinger left Rawalpindi on July 11, stopped in Paris on July 12, and returned to the United States on July 13. Kissinger's visit to Pakistan provided the cover for a secret trip to China undertaken with the collaboration of Yahya Khan. Dennis Kux, the political counselor of the Embassy, writes that knowledge of Kissinger's primary objective in visiting Pakistan was limited to "practically only Ambassador Joseph Farland." Kissinger's cover story for his flight on July 9 from Pakistan to Peking was that he was suffering from "Delhi belly" or dysentery and had accepted Yahya's offer of a day of rest at the mountain resort of Nathiagali. (Dennis Kux, *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies*, Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1993, p. 321)

was appropriately reported. Ambassador Hilaly said that he had done that on one occasion in the US.

Shifting the subject, the Foreign Secretary asked, "How did they treat you generally?"

Dr. Kissinger replied that the Indians had treated him well except that everybody he had talked to had given his own version of what Dr. Kissinger had said to the press.

Dr. Kissinger said, "I do not consider it impossible that the Indians could take military action."

Mr. Ahmad said that the refugee issue must be solved by cooperative action. Dr. Kissinger asked whether the Pakistanis had indicated that the refugees could get their property back. Mr. Ahmad said that this had been done. There must be normalcy in East Pakistan, to be sure, but the return of the refugees would also require Indian cooperation. India had encouraged the exodus of refugees by publicizing stories about conditions in East Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger asked whether the Pakistanis had asked to talk with the refugees in the Indian camps. The Foreign Secretary said that India would not entertain such a proposal. If someone talks to the refugees, it will have to be someone from the UN.

The Foreign Secretary seconded Mr. Ahmad's point that Indian cooperation would be required. When Indians talk about unilateral military action, this is a disincentive to the refugees to return. No refugee is going to get himself in the middle of a battle.

Mr. Ahmad said that President Yahya was thinking of putting his own man in East Pakistan—a senior civil servant to oversee all action connected with the return of the refugees.

The Foreign Secretary noted that Mr. Kellogg (Assistant to the US Secretary of State for Refugees) had by his observations confirmed the view that India is preventing the return of the refugees.

Mr. Ahmad repeated that there has to be some action on the part of India.

The Foreign Secretary went on to give another example of how the Pakistanis are trying to paint the right picture of what will greet the refugees if they return, while the Indians are trying to create an unfavorable picture. The Secretary said that, for instance, Pakistan calls the centers for the returning refugees "reception centers," not "camps." Foreign Minister Singh uses the words "camps," connoting concentration camps. Now the Indians are spreading the word in the refugee centers in India that the property of the refugees had been taken away and re-distributed. President Yahya had wanted to make a strong statement against any unauthorized occupation of vacated properties. But his advisors had persuaded him not to because they feared India might seize on it.

Mr. Ahmad said that the problem needs to be defused quickly because it could pressure India into rash action.

Dr. Kissinger said it was not for him to advise. But he felt that if Pakistan could make a comprehensive proposal rather than dribble out bits and pieces of its action and if Pakistan could internationalize its response to the refugee problem by getting international observers in, these actions would help. He felt it was important to defuse the refugee issue so that it could be separated from the issue of the political structure of East Pakistan. Linking the two will only prolong the current situation which could lead to war. War would be a catastrophe.

The Foreign Secretary asked what Dr. Kissinger felt would be the Indian rationale for war.

Dr. Kissinger replied that 7 million refugees are an intolerable burden. They overload an already overburdened Indian economy, particularly in eastern India. The Indians see enormous danger of communal riots. He said he had asked the Indians what India would accomplish by military action. He felt that the answer is that what would be achieved is not the point—the Indians just feel they may have to “do something.”

The Foreign Secretary checked his understanding that the Indians are not clear in their objective. Dr. Kissinger replied that the Indians feel they would win any military confrontation.

Mr. Ahmad said that if India insists that the refugees will only go back on certain political conditions, that will not contribute to the return of the refugees.

Dr. Kissinger repeated that he did not presume to advise the Pakistanis but urged them to think about separating the issues.

The Foreign Secretary said that India will not allow that. India is linking the two issues by saying that the refugees will only go back under certain conditions.

Dr. Kissinger asked what would be the best international organization to involve in this situation—the UN High Commissioner for Refugees or some other? He realized that alternatives included an international group of neutral countries as observers. Then he concluded that a war on the subcontinent would be unthinkable.

The Foreign Secretary agreed that war would be terrible. No one in Pakistan is thinking of going to war.

Dr. Kissinger acknowledged that Pakistan would still face pressure on the issue of a political settlement.

Mr. Ahmad pointed out that Pakistan was already taking steps to involve the UN in East Pakistan. He pointed out that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees would be sending a team.

Dr. Kissinger said that his point was that approval of such steps as that should not be dribbled out piecemeal. This does not help the Pakistani public relations position.

Mr. Ahmad said he felt that a comprehensive package could be put together. For instance, a new senior civilian is scheduled to be appointed in the next "two or three days" to oversee refugee affairs.

Dr. Kissinger asked whether the military governor would be put under the new civilian appointee. The Foreign Secretary said that he would be the "refugee czar". He would not be placed over the military governor, but he would have control over everything in the refugee field. Mr. Ahmad added that the governors in all the provinces are military officers.

Dr. Kissinger said that the primary focus in the United States now is on the refugee problem.

Mr. Ahmad said that he felt that a comprehensive program on the refugee problem should be possible.

Ambassador Hilaly noted that the *Manchester Guardian* is urging the UK to take the refugee issue to the UN Security Council.

The Foreign Secretary said there is no evidence that India wants the refugee issue settled. For instance, in ECOSOC, India has been trying to get the issue inscribed on the agenda so that it could be debated there. Pakistan had opposed inscription but was quite willing to discuss the issue after the presentation of the report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. Ahmad asked, "But what if India does not cooperate?" Dr. Kissinger replied, "At least there would be a Pakistani program."

The Foreign Secretary said that what had been done so far had had to be piecemeal because of the way the decision-making process both in Pakistan and at the UN had evolved to date.

The conversation returned to the UNHCR. Ambassador Hilaly said that the Commissioner was beginning to talk about a political solution. This was playing into India's hands. Prince Sadruddin (the UNHCR) had been attacked by the British press, particularly the *Guardian*. Sadruddin seems to be back-peddling in concern over these press attacks.

Ambassador Hilaly said that he is trying to be U Thant's successor.

[At this point, the Foreign Secretary made a note on a paper he had in his pocket: "ECOSOC—announce package deal and invite India to cooperate."]²

² All brackets in the source text.

Ambassador Hilaly said, referring to India, “You found them all hawks?”

Dr. Kissinger said that he was “really shocked by the hostility, bitterness and hawkishness of the Indians.” [Sultan Khan also made a note of that phrase. It was repeated two days later to Mr. Saunders in the Foreign Ministry, so the Foreign Secretary must have debriefed.] He said he felt that this issue needs to be defused in the next few months. He acknowledged that some of the Indian feeling may have been put on for his benefit.

The Foreign Secretary recalled that this was the sense of President Yahya’s last message³ to President Nixon—that India was building a momentum toward attack which perhaps it could not stop. Mr. Ahmad referred to Neville Maxwell’s book on the 1962 war⁴ and commented how hysteria had developed and how each step produced a momentum for war.

The Foreign Secretary described efforts to hold a meeting between President Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi. The Shah had offered to provide neutral ground for an Indo-Pakistani meeting. Mrs. Gandhi had rejected it out of hand. The Shah was so angry that he has withdrawn the offer. Similarly, Podgorny and Kosygin had wanted to arrange a meeting in June of last year. It had been October before there was an Indian reply, and the reply was that a summit meeting was not appropriate at that time, that discussion should begin at the level of Secretary.

Ambassador Hilaly said, “The lady is unpredictable. She is maneuvering for a fight.”

Dr. Kissinger acknowledged that she may not be trying to settle the refugee question. However, time must be gained. The world must see that Pakistan is trying to settle the problem. The refugees today can be represented to the world by India as a cause of war. On the other hand, what kind of political arrangement Pakistan makes in East Pakistan cannot be presented as a justifiable cause of war.

The Foreign Secretary said that he did not feel that India would allow separation of these two issues.

Dr. Kissinger said he felt he was important to inject a civil presence into the refugee context.

Dr. Kissinger continued that he had talked to the US Mission in Islamabad.⁵ They feel that if Pakistan can make some effort to restore

³ Reference is to Document 76.

⁴ Neville Maxwell, *India's China War* (New York: Anchor Books, 1971).

⁵ A memorandum of Kissinger’s conversation on July 8 with the staff of the Embassy in Islamabad and the Consulate General in Dacca is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US.

normal administration, it would be helpful. He said that the AID Mission felt that there were four elements that should be a part of a favorable economic development program to present to the consortium countries. When he asked Mr. Saunders what these points were, it was suggested that perhaps they could be taken up in detail with Mr. Ahmad at the specialized talk on economic affairs that was scheduled for the following day.

[These four points were: (1) the importance of a program for East Pakistan development with special emphasis in the strategy for labor intensive rural work; (2) a greater nation-wide effort at resource mobilization; (3) exchange reform; (4) restoration of emphasis on development in the Pakistani government budget rather than on military spending. These points were mentioned by Mr. Saunders to Mr. Ahmad in two conversations the next two days. Mr. Saunders hoped the Pakistani government could work with AID and achieve an understanding on a satisfactory development program.]

Dr. Kissinger continued that the US would do what it could to help if Pakistan could put forward a plausible development program. That would be helpful on the refugee front as well. One of the arguments the Indians are making is that a big food shortage can be expected in September which will drive a whole new batch of refugees into India.

At this point, the Foreign Secretary suggested that the conversation conclude so that Dr. Kissinger could go and talk with President Yahya.⁶

Harold H. Saunders⁷

⁶ Kissinger met privately with Yahya on July 8 and apparently did not prepare a full record of that meeting. Telegram 6990 from Islamabad, July 11, which summarized Kissinger's conversation with Ahmad and Sultan Khan, concludes by noting that Kissinger covered much the same ground in his first conversation with Yahya. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1327, NSC Unfiled Material, 1971, 5 of 12) Kissinger included a brief paragraph on his meeting with Yahya in the report he prepared on July 9 for the President (see Document 97). In his memoirs, Kissinger summarized his conversation with Yahya as follows: "I had several conversations with President Yahya and Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan. I urged them to put forward a comprehensive proposal to encourage refugees to return home and to deny India a pretext for going to war. I urged Yahya and his associates to go a step further in the internationalization of relief by admitting the United Nations to supervise its distribution. And I recommended the early appointment of a civilian governor for East Pakistan. Yahya promised to consider these suggestions. But fundamentally he was oblivious to his perils and unprepared to face necessities. He and his colleagues did not feel that India was planning war; if so, they were convinced that they would win. When I asked as tactfully as I could about the Indian advantage in numbers and equipment, Yahya and his colleagues answered with bravado about the historic superiority of Moslem fighters." (*White House Years*, p. 861)

⁷ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

97. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)¹

Washington, July 9, 1971.

Talks in Pakistan have begun in cordial, low-key businesslike atmosphere with straightforward and unemotional discussion of what measures might help decrease tension between India and Pakistan generated by almost seven million refugees now in India. All those with whom I have spoken here seem to recognize the need to do something to defuse the issue. I have told them that all press accounts of my talks in India must have been based on Indian sources since no one on the American side talked to the press there, and the Pakistanis seem unconcerned.

Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan stressed the need for Indian cooperation in encouraging the return of refugees to East Pakistan. He expressed concern, echoing that in Yahya's last message to the President, that India step by step is building a momentum that could lead to war. I told him that, after being in India, I would not consider it impossible that India might take military action.

I told him of the bitterness, hostility and hawkishness I had found there. When he asked what would be the objective of such military action, I said that the action might be taken just for the sake of taking action in response to heavy pressure on the government to do something. Also, the Indians seem confident they would win in any confrontation.

Against the background, I emphasized the importance of attempting to defuse this issue over the next few months. One way to do this, I suggested, might be to try to separate as much as possible, at least in international eyes, the refugee issue from the issue of rebuilding the political structure of East Pakistan. If this were to be tried, it would seem important for Pakistan to put together a collection of major steps in one package designed to have important impact both on the refugees and on the world community and perhaps to internationalize the effort. Pakistan had tended to make public in bits and pieces the constructive steps it had taken. It might now wish consider packaging those steps so they would appear as a comprehensive approach toward solution.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Geopolitical File, Box TS 58, Trips, HAK, Chron File, July 1971. Secret; Sensitive. Kissinger sent his report to Haig for the President's information. On July 10 Haig sent the memorandum to Nixon under cover of a memorandum summarizing the report. (Ibid.)

The Foreign Secretary questioned whether India would permit separation of the refugee issue from that of political settlement with East Pakistan itself. However, he seemed very receptive to the idea of pulling together a comprehensive package. He emphasized again that Indian cooperation would be essential in the return of the refugees because Indian stories about conditions in East Pakistan and threats of military intervention discourage refugees from returning.

In my conversation with President Yahya, I described mood in India along much the same lines as above, and we discussed possible approaches to the present problem, including the possibility appointing new civil authority in East Pakistan to coordinate an energetic program for the return of refugees. I urged this and he said he would consider it and would discuss it further with me in our next talk.

The most interesting point to emerge from a talk with M.M. Ahmad, Senior Economic Adviser to President Yahya, was a new sense of the time framework for future economic assistance decisions. Ahmad no longer sees a foreign exchange crisis as imposing that framework by itself but rather the fact that Pakistan's unilateral six-month debt moratorium expires at the end of October and, if there is no new aid by then, would have to be extended. If it were, he felt it would cause a complete breakdown of Pakistan's relationship with aid consortium countries. He discussed interim aid measures which might help avert that contingency, and I shall weave them into our policy review when I return.

In response, I urged the importance of his providing the aid consortium with a serious development framework and said we would do what we could to help if Pakistan could help us by making the best possible economic case for assistance.

98. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to President Nixon¹

Washington, July 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Soviet Attitude on South Asia

Recent [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reports² provide some insight into Soviet attitudes toward India and Pakistan.

As you know, Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh visited Moscow on this way to Washington. [*1 line of source text not declassified*], his discussions there, especially with Kosygin, concerned Soviet assistance on the issue of East Pakistan. According to one report, Kosygin agreed immediately to provide small arms for the Indian-supported guerrillas operating in East Pakistan.³ Singh also asked for a guarantee of Soviet military protection if the Chinese made any threatening gestures to dissuade India from intervention in East Pakistan. Kosygin seemed favorably inclined, although he reportedly asked that Mrs. Gandhi make a formal written request.

These reports are a bit surprising since the Soviets have traditionally seen their interests in South Asia best served by stability, or at least they have not encouraged dramatic instabilities. They may well, however, have concluded that a divided Pakistan is no longer viable and that they may as well be on the side of "new realities." Soviet policy in South Asia has always been to support India, and since 1965 to gain a foothold in Pakistan. They may calculate that this balance is no longer tenable, and that in a crisis Moscow would have to oppose Pakistan. Assurances on the Chinese threat could be viewed as mainly psychological, if the Soviets share our judgment that the Chinese probably would not go beyond threatening noises and border incidents in support of the West Pakistanis.

The most disturbing aspect of this report is that, if Kosygin does come through with some guarantee against China, the Indians will feel much less inhibited about military intervention in East Pakistan.⁴

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 715, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XIV, 1 Jun–31 Jul 71. Secret; Limdis. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² See Document 87.

³ Nixon underlined this sentence from the word "provide" to the end and wrote in the margin: "K If this is true—Keating is to be *ordered* to protest strongly (privately at first)."

⁴ Nixon highlighted the first sentence of this paragraph and wrote in the margin: "Warn them that if they intervene RN will personally cut off all aid to India."

Despite all their brave talk about being able to defend against the Chinese and fighting on two other fronts against Pakistan, the Indians are still haunted by the 1962 humiliation. This could be why Foreign Minister Singh is reported to regard his Moscow visit as "a major political development" and Mrs. Gandhi is said to also be pleased.

We must bear in mind that these reports may be intended as psychological pressure to persuade us and Pakistan of Soviet support for New Delhi. It would be a major and radical break in Soviet policy to issue the Indians a blank check.

99. Editorial Note

The developing confrontation between India and Pakistan was one of the subjects discussed by Henry Kissinger and Chinese Premier Chou En-lai during Kissinger's trip to Peking July 9–11, 1971. South Asia was discussed extensively on July 10, the second day of conversations between Kissinger and Chou. The United States and China shared a mutual concern about developments in East Pakistan, and Kissinger and Chou both saw India's hand behind the Bengali resistance that threatened the control of Yahya Khan's government over the eastern wing of the country. Chou implied that China would intervene if India acted to undermine Pakistan's control over East Pakistan: "In our opinion, if India continues on its present course in disregard of world opinion, it will continue to go on recklessly. We, however, support the stand of Pakistan. This is known to the world. If they (the Indians) are bent on provoking such a situation, then we cannot sit idly by." Kissinger observed in response that, while the United States maintained what he referred to as "friendly relations" with India, the sympathies of the Nixon administration also lay with Yahya Khan's government. He was more restrained in projecting a U.S. response to military action by India in East Pakistan: "You know from President Yahya Khan the strong friendship we feel for him and his country. We strongly oppose any military action to solve the problems of East Pakistan. And if India takes military action in East Pakistan, we would strongly and publicly disapprove of it." (Memorandum of conversation, July 10; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1032, Files for the President, China Materials, Polo I Record) The full text of the memorandum is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972.

100. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Rawalpindi, July 11, 1971.

SUBJECT

Your Talk with President Yahya

In Your Absence

Following the postponement of your departure Saturday,² there was an increase in general *skepticism* in Islamabad about your illness. Prior to the news of postponement, Saturday morning's papers had focused in low-key front-page box on your indisposition and in larger story on my talks with Sufi and Ahmad. Sunday morning Pakistani papers simply print another box saying that you will be going on to Paris today.

The papers have carried the following on your *appointments in Nathiagali*: Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan has been with you the whole time. *General Hamid* flew up for lunch with you (Deputy Chief of Martial Law Administration and Chief of Staff who was also at dinner Thursday evening) *Friday. Saturday, Defense Minister Ghiasuddin Ahmad* is reported to have flown up for lunch. *In Islamabad*, I was reported to have called on Mr. Sufi,³ who explained the food situation in the East (he is Presidential adviser on food and agriculture), and on M.M. Ahmad,⁴ who explained plans for rehabilitation and development in East Pakistan.

The *main speculation* among the skeptics on your change of plans is that you have been playing some sort of mediation role between India and Pakistan.

What Yahya Will Say This Afternoon

The result of your first day's talks was an apparent Pakistani decision to produce a comprehensive package on the refugee question.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. V, 16 May–31 Jul 71. Secret; Sensitive.

² July 10.

³ Saunders' conversation on July 10 with M.H. Sufi, Presidential Adviser on Food, Agriculture and Kashmir Affairs, was reported to the Department in telegram 6984 from Islamabad, July 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, SOC 10 PAK)

⁴ Saunders' conversation with Ahmad on July 10 was reported to the Department in telegram 6985 from Islamabad, July 10. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. V, 16 May–31 Jul 71)

Hilaly told me yesterday afternoon that Yahya was holding a meeting this morning to put together a package for you to take back to President Nixon. Presumably that will be given to you at your meeting this afternoon⁵ with a request for US diplomatic support, both in the consortium capitals and in New Delhi.

The package, I surmise, will collect things that the Pakistanis were already considering doing:

—Yahya plans to announce appointment of a senior civil servant (sounds like a Bengali elder statesman) to oversee all elements of the refugee program. According to Ahmad, he would have to be responsible directly to the President and would have authority to order the military to desist from excesses. (Whether this is possible remains a question mark.)

—They may draw together and repeat all past statements on non-discrimination for Hindus, amnesty, property restitution and security.

—They might show some recognition of the food problem. Since they have asked us now to begin moving our PL 480 stocks again, they could look to that to dramatize that food is again moving through the ports. (They have been disappointed in the response of the international community to their appeal for help in transportation.)

—They could include the essence of Ahmad's interim development plan which would focus on East Pakistan development, mobilization of resources via taxation and exchange reform. (These are three of the four points emphasized by AID, the other being decreased emphasis on military spending which Ahmad seems to feel he cannot do right now.)

—They may call for Indian cooperation in all this.

Although I do not know exactly how they will formulate this package, what Hilaly and Ahmad were talking about yesterday seems okay as far as it goes. It is an effort to be responsive to your suggestion for a package to separate the refugee issue from the question of political settlement and hopefully to buy time.

Points for You to Stress

However, there are *two points to be made* when Yahya gives this to you:

1. First is the need for energetic follow-up. There has to be a sense of real movement not just the appearance of movement. This may require a hard prod at U Thant since the UN man in East Pakistan is moving much too slowly.

⁵ No record of Kissinger's conversation with President Yahya on July 11 has been found.

2. The real point will be much more difficult to make. You have suggested this package as a means of trying to separate the refugee issue from the question of final political arrangements in East Pakistan. However, Sultan Khan is right when he questions whether the Indians will let the Paks (or the US) get away with separating the two issues.

Recalling your talk with Foreign Minister Singh, you may wish to tell Yahya that the Indian leadership is not posing specific conditions for a political settlement and would accept any that is “non-military and non-communal.” (Presumably this means civil administration—the Indians would like establishment of elected government—and clear absence of bias against Hindus.)

Talking Points

You might make the above points this way:

1. You are glad to see the Pakistanis pulling their steps together in a package that can be presented as a comprehensive approach toward a refugee solution. It is important that this be followed up energetically.

2. You will recommend to the President that the U.S. support each of these steps diplomatically. One element in the U.S. response might be to resume food shipments.

3. It is also important that special attention be given to following up with a good presentation to the Consortium. You will do what you can with McNamara, but it will be tough going with him and with our Congress and public.

4. The key issue obviously is the terms of political accommodation. You have not presumed to get into this. In fact, you have suggested preparation of a package of steps on the refugee problem in order to try to separate that from the issue of political arrangements in East Pakistan. But the fact remains that this is of great importance.

5. You would like, therefore, to give President Yahya your impression that the Indians would accept any solution that is “non-communal and non-military.” Mrs. Gandhi said she is not wedded to any particular solution. You hasten to add that you do not think India should determine how Pakistan should arrange the political structure of East Pakistan. Nevertheless, the fact is that political progress will be an important part of the package.