



# Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976

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Volume XI

## South Asia Crisis, 1971

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*General Editor* Edward C. Keefer

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# Preface

The *Foreign Relations of the United States* series presents the official documentary historical record of major foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity of the United States Government. The Historian of the Department of State is charged with the responsibility for the preparation of the *Foreign Relations* series. The staff of the Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, under the direction of the General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series, plans, researches, compiles, and edits the volumes in the series. Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg first promulgated official regulations codifying specific standards for the selection and editing of documents for the series on March 26, 1925. These regulations, with minor modifications, guided the series through 1991.

Public Law 102-138, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, established a new statutory charter for the preparation of the series which was signed by President George Bush on October 28, 1991. Section 198 of P.L. 102-138 added a new Title IV to the Department of State's Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 4351, et seq.).

The statute requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be a thorough, accurate, and reliable record of major United States foreign policy decisions and significant United States diplomatic activity. The volumes of the series should include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the United States Government. The statute also confirms the editing principles established by Secretary Kellogg: the *Foreign Relations* series is guided by the principles of historical objectivity and accuracy; records should not be altered or deletions made without indicating in the published text that a deletion has been made; the published record should omit no facts that were of major importance in reaching a decision; and nothing should be omitted for the purposes of concealing a defect in policy. The statute also requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be published not more than 30 years after the events recorded. The editors are convinced that this volume meets all regulatory, statutory, and scholarly standards of selection and editing.

## *Structure and Scope of the Foreign Relations Series*

This volume is part of a subseries of volumes of the *Foreign Relations* series that documents the most important issues in the foreign policy of the administrations of Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford. The subseries presents a documentary record of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the administrations of Presidents Nixon and Ford. This volume documents the response of the United States to the crisis that developed in South Asia in 1971.

*Focus of Research and Principles of Selection for Foreign Relations,  
1969–1976, Volume XI*

The scope of this volume is limited to the political crisis that began in Pakistan in March 1971 with the government's efforts to suppress Bengali demands for virtual autonomy in East Pakistan and concluded with the establishment of the state of Bangladesh at the end of the year. The limited time frame covered by the volume enabled the editor to compile the record of the Nixon administration's response to the crisis in considerable detail. The crisis was managed largely out of the White House by President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger, with the support of the National Security Council staff. The focus of the volume is on the management of the crisis by Nixon and Kissinger. The editor selected documentation to trace the evolution of the United States response to the crisis from Nixon's initial reluctance to become involved to his "tilt" toward Pakistan which was highlighted by the despatch of the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* to the Bay of Bengal to act as a restraint on India in the war that had developed between India and Pakistan as a result of the crisis. Nixon's response to the crisis in Pakistan was conditioned in part by the concern that he and Kissinger had to protect the emerging opening to China, which had been facilitated by Pakistani President Yahya Khan. The volume documents that concern, as well as the assurance offered to China that the United States would protect China from the Soviet Union if China took military action against India in support of Pakistan. The record of the Nixon administration's management of the crisis in South Asia thus also bears importantly on United States relations at the time with China and the Soviet Union. In that respect, the volume should be read in conjunction with *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972; volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971; and volume XIV, Soviet Union, October 1971–May 1971.

Additional documentation on the crisis in South Asia is published in the companion electronic volume, *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972. The electronic volume incorporates a number of lengthy documents, such as intelligence assessments of the crisis, responses to National Security Study Memoranda prepared for the Washington Special Actions Group, and full transcripts of taped conversations. The electronic volume also covers United States relations with India and Pakistan in the period leading up to the crisis, and in the aftermath of the crisis. The volume includes compilations on Afghanistan and on the decision to recognize and offer assistance to the new nation of Bangladesh.

### *Editorial Methodology*

The documents are presented chronologically according to Washington time. Memoranda of conversation are placed according to the time and date of the conversation, rather than the date the memorandum was drafted.

Editorial treatment of the documents published in the *Foreign Relations* series follows Office style guidelines, supplemented by guidance from the General Editor and the chief technical editor. The source text is reproduced as exactly as possible, including marginalia or other notations, which are described in the footnotes. Texts are transcribed and printed according to accepted conventions for the publication of historical documents within the limitations of modern typography. A heading has been supplied by the editors for each document included in the volume. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are retained as found in the original text, except that obvious typographical errors are silently corrected. Other mistakes and omissions in the source text are corrected by bracketed insertions: a correction is set in italic type; an addition in roman type. Words or phrases underlined in the source text are printed in italics. Abbreviations and contractions are preserved as found in the source text, and a list of abbreviations is included in the front matter of each volume.

Bracketed insertions are also used to indicate omitted text that deals with an unrelated subject (in roman type) or that remains classified after declassification review (in italic type). The amount of material not declassified has been noted by indicating the number of lines or pages of source text that were omitted. Entire documents withheld for declassification purposes have been accounted for and are listed with headings, source notes, and number of pages not declassified in their chronological place. All brackets that appear in the original text are so identified in footnotes.

The first footnote to each document indicates the source of the document, original classification, distribution, and drafting information. This note also provides the background of important documents and policies and indicates whether the President or his major policy advisers read the document.

Editorial notes and additional annotation summarize pertinent material not printed in the volume, indicate the location of additional documentary sources, provide references to important related documents printed in other volumes, describe key events, and provide summaries of and citations to public statements that supplement and elucidate the printed documents. Information derived from memoirs and other first-hand accounts has been used when appropriate to supplement or explicate the official record.

The numbers in the index refer to document numbers rather than to page numbers.

#### *Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation*

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, established under the *Foreign Relations* statute, reviews records, advises, and makes recommendations concerning the *Foreign Relations*

series. The Advisory Committee monitors the overall compilation and editorial process of the series and advises on all aspects of the preparation and declassification of the series. The Advisory Committee does not necessarily review the contents of individual volumes in the series, but it makes recommendations on issues that come to its attention and reviews volumes as it deems necessary to fulfill its advisory and statutory obligations.

### *Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act Review*

Under the terms of the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act (PRMPA) of 1974 (44 U.S.C. 2111 note), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has custody of the Nixon Presidential historical materials. The requirements of the PRMPA and implementing regulations govern access to the Nixon Presidential historical materials. The PRMPA and implementing public access regulations require NARA to review for additional restrictions in order to ensure the protection of the privacy rights of former Nixon White House officials, since these officials were not given the opportunity to separate their personal materials from public papers. Thus, the PRMPA and implementing public access regulations require NARA formally to notify the Nixon Estate and former Nixon White House staff members that the agency is scheduling for public release Nixon White House historical materials. The Nixon Estate and former White House staff members have 30 days to contest the release of Nixon historical materials in which they were a participant or are mentioned. Further, the PRMPA and implementing regulations require NARA to segregate and return to the creator of files private and personal materials. All *Foreign Relations* volumes that include materials from NARA's Nixon Presidential Materials Staff are processed and released in accordance with the PRMPA.

### *Declassification Review*

The Information Response Branch of the Office of Information Programs and Services, Bureau of Administration, conducted the declassification review for the Department of State of the documents published in this volume. The review was conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in Executive Order 12958, as Amended, on Classified National Security Information and applicable laws.

The principle guiding declassification review is to release all information, subject only to the current requirements of national security as embodied in law and regulation. Declassification decisions entailed concurrence of the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the Department of State, other concerned agencies of the U.S. Government, and the appropriate foreign governments regarding specific documents of those governments. The final declassification re-

view of this volume, which began in 2002 and was completed in 2003, resulted in the decision to withhold 1 document in full, excise a paragraph or more in 9 documents, and make minor excisions of less than a paragraph in 34 documents.

The Office of the Historian is confident, on the basis of the research conducted in preparing this volume and as a result of the declassification review process described above, that the documentation and editorial notes presented here provide an accurate account of the response of the Nixon administration to the crisis in South Asia in 1971.

### *Acknowledgments*

The editors wish to acknowledge the assistance of officials at the Nixon Presidential Materials Project of the National Archives and Records Administration (Archives II), at College Park, Maryland.

The editors wish to acknowledge the Richard Nixon Estate for allowing access to the Nixon presidential recordings and the Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace for facilitating that access.

Louis J. Smith collected the documentation for this volume and selected and edited it, under the supervision of Edward C. Keefer, General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series. Gabrielle Mallon prepared the lists of names, sources, and abbreviations. Vicki E. Futscher and Kristin L. Ahlberg did the copy and technical editing, and Susan C. Weetman coordinated the declassification review. Do Mi Stauber prepared the index.

**Marc J. Susser**  
*The Historian*  
*Bureau of Public Affairs*

March 2005

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# Sources

## *Sources for the Foreign Relations Series*

The *Foreign Relations* statute requires that the published record in the *Foreign Relations* series include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation on major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant U.S. diplomatic activity. It further requires that government agencies, departments, and other entities of the U.S. Government engaged in foreign policy formulation, execution, or support cooperate with the Department of State Historian by providing full and complete access to records pertinent to foreign policy decisions and actions and by providing copies of selected records. Many of the sources consulted in the preparation of this volume have been declassified and are available for review at the National Archives and Records Administration.

The editors of the *Foreign Relations* series have complete access to all the retired records and papers of the Department of State: the central files of the Department; the special decentralized files ("lot files") of the Department at the bureau, office, and division levels; the files of the Department's Executive Secretariat, which contain the records of international conferences and high-level official visits, correspondence with foreign leaders by the President and Secretary of State, and memoranda of conversations between the President and Secretary of State and foreign officials; and the files of overseas diplomatic posts. All the Department's indexed central files through July 1973 have been permanently transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Maryland (Archives II). Many of the Department's decentralized office (or lot) files covering the 1969–1976 period, which the National Archives deems worthy of permanent retention, have been transferred or are in the process of being transferred from the Department's custody to Archives II.

The editors of the *Foreign Relations* series also have full access to the papers of President Nixon and other White House foreign policy records, including tape recordings of conversations with key U.S. and foreign officials. Presidential papers maintained and preserved at the Presidential libraries and the Nixon Presidential Materials Project at Archives II include some of the most significant foreign affairs-related documentation from the Department of State and other Federal agencies including the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Access to the Nixon White House tape recordings is governed by the terms of the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act (P.L. 93–526; 88 Stat. 1695) and an access agreement with the Office of

Presidential Libraries of the National Archives and Records Administration and the Nixon Estate. In February 1971 President Nixon initiated a voice activated taping system in the Oval Office of the White House and, subsequently, in the President's Office in the Executive Office Building, Camp David, the Cabinet Room, and White House and Camp David telephones. The audiotapes include conversations of President Nixon with his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger, other White House aides, Secretary of State Rogers, other Cabinet officers, members of Congress, and key foreign officials. The clarity of the voices on the tape recordings is often very poor, but the editors make every effort to try to verify the accuracy of the conversations. Readers are urged to consult the recordings for a full appreciation of those aspects of the discussions that cannot be fully captured in a transcription, such as the speakers' inflections and emphases that may convey nuances of meaning, as well as the larger context of the discussion.

Research for this volume was completed through special access to restricted documents at the Nixon Presidential Materials Project. While all the material printed in this volume has been declassified, some of it is extracted from still-classified documents. The Nixon Presidential Materials Staff is processing and declassifying many of the documents used in this volume, but they may not be available in their entirety at the time of publication.

### *Sources for Foreign Relations, 1969–1976, Volume XI*

In preparing this volume, the editor made extensive use of Presidential papers and other White House records at the Nixon Presidential Materials Project, which proved to be the richest collection bearing on the Nixon administration's management of the crisis in South Asia. The bulk of the foreign policy records at the Nixon Project are in the National Security Council Files. Within the National Security Council Files, the Country Files, the files created for the Indo-Pak crisis, the Backchannel Files, the Kissinger Office Files, and the President's Daily Briefing Files proved to be of particular value. The Backchannel Files were especially important as containing the private channel of communication between Kissinger and Ambassador Farland in Pakistan. The Subject Files were also valuable and include memoranda from Kissinger to Nixon as well as memoranda of conversation involving Kissinger and the President. The President's Trip Files contain the important memoranda of Kissinger's conversations with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. The National Security Council Institutional Files (H-Files) are a fundamental source for the policy process and for crisis management. The White House Special Files contain the President's Office Files and a number of important Staff Member and Office Files. The editor also made use of the White House tape record-

ings, which are of central importance to an understanding of the management of the crisis by Nixon and Kissinger. Extensive extracts from the tape recordings are printed in editorial notes in the volume and the full transcripts will be published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972.

Second in importance to the records in the Nixon Presidential Materials Project are the records of the Department of State. The Department's Central Files contain cable traffic that illuminated the crisis as it developed and was the channel for instructions dealing with such issues as assistance for the Bengali refugees that flooded into India from East Pakistan and contacts with representatives of the Awami League. The lot files of the Department were also important, particularly the files of Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco that contain the only record found of a meeting of the NSC crisis management group, the Washington Special Actions Group.

The Kissinger Papers at the Library of Congress in large measure replicate documentation found in other collections. In the Geopolitical File, the file on Memoranda to the President, and the Presidential File, the editor did find some important documentation unique to the collection. The collection also contains the records of Kissinger's telephone conversations. Boxes 359–375 contain a chronological file of transcripts of conversations covering the period 1969–1972. Boxes 394–395 comprise the Dobrynin file of telephone conversations, including Kissinger's conversations with Ambassador Dobrynin and Chargé Vorontsov. Boxes 396–397 contain transcripts of conversations recorded at Kissinger's residence. The entire collection is invaluable for the light it sheds not only on the crisis in South Asia but also on the full range of foreign policy issues dealt with by the Nixon administration. Copies of the Kissinger telephone conversations are now open at the National Archives and are part of the Nixon Presidential Materials.

The editor also had access to the files of the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency. The files of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs were valuable for the issue of military assistance to India and Pakistan. The files of the Central Intelligence Agency, particularly the NIC Registry of NIE and SNIE Files and the DCI (Helms) Files, were essential for the intelligence reports and assessments on which the Nixon administration based its policy judgments.

Almost all of this documentation has been made available for use in the *Foreign Relations* series thanks to the consent of the agencies mentioned, the assistance of their staffs, and especially the cooperation and support of the National Archives and Records Administration. In

addition, John H. Taylor, Executive Director of the Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace Foundation, facilitated access to relevant tape recordings of the Nixon White House.

The following list identifies the particular files and collections used in the preparation of this volume. The declassification and transfer to the National Archives of the Department of State records is in process, and many of these records are already available for public review at the National Archives.

## Unpublished Sources

### Department of State

**Central Files.** *See* National Archives and Records Administration below.

**Lot Files.** For other lot files already transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Maryland, Record Group 59, see National Archives and Records Administration below.

#### INR/IL Historical Files

Files of the Office of Intelligence Coordination, containing records from the 1940s through the 1970s, maintained by the Office of Intelligence Liaison, Bureau of Intelligence and Research

### National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland

#### Record Group 59, Records of the Department of State

##### *Central Files*

AGR 15 PAK: food supply, Pakistan  
AV 2 INDIA: general aviation reports and statistics, India  
AV 12 INDIA: aircraft and aeronautical equipment, India  
AID 9 INDIA: loans for economic development, India  
AID 9 PAK: loans for economic development, Pakistan  
AID (US) INDIA: general policy, U.S. aid to India  
AID (US) PAK: general policy, U.S. aid to Pakistan  
AID (US) 9 INDIA: U.S. loans to India for economic development  
AID (US) 15 PAK: PL-480, Food for Peace program, Pakistan  
AID (US) 15-8 PAK: commodity sales for foreign currency, Pakistan  
AID (US) 15-8 PAK: PL-480 Title I commodity sales, Pakistan  
DEF PAK-US: defense affairs, Pakistan-United States  
DEF 1-1 ASIA SE: contingency military planning, Southeast Asia  
DEF 7 PAK-US: military visits and missions, Pakistan-United States  
DEF 12-5 ASIA SE: procurement and sale of armaments, Southeast Asia  
DEF 12-5 INDIA: procurement and sale of armaments, India  
DEF 12-5 PAK: procurement and sale of armaments, Pakistan  
DEF 15 PAK-US: bases and installations, Pakistan-United States  
DEF 15-10 PAK-US: establishment, construction, and termination of bases and installations, Pakistan-United States  
DEF 18-8 INDIA: testing and detection of nuclear explosions, India  
DEF 21 PAK: military communications, Pakistan

E 8 PAK: economic conditions, Pakistan  
 FT 18-1 INDIA-US: licenses for foreign trade, India-United States  
 LEG 7 FRELINGHAUSEN: legislative visits, Peter Frelinghausen  
 ORG 7 S: organization and administration, visits by Secretary Rogers  
 ORG 7 S/NM: organization and administration, visits by the Secretary's Coordinator for International Narcotics Affairs  
 ORG 7 U: organization and administration, visits by the Under Secretary of State  
 POL AFG-PAK: political affairs and relations, Afghanistan-Pakistan  
 POL CHICOM-US: political affairs and relations, People's Republic of China-United States  
 POL INDIA-PAK: political affairs and relations, India-Pakistan  
 POL INDIA-US: political affairs and relations, India-United States  
 POL PAK: political affairs and relations, Pakistan  
 POL PAK-US: political affairs and relations, Pakistan-United States  
 POL 1 INDIA-US: general policy, India-United States  
 POL 1 PAK-US: general policy, Pakistan-United States  
 POL 1 ASIA SE-US: general policy, Southeast Asia-United States  
 POL 1-1 INDIA-PAK: contingency planning, India-Pakistan  
 POL 7 INDIA: visits and meetings with Indian leaders  
 POL 7 PAK: visits and meetings with Pakistani leaders  
 POL 7 US/AGNEW: visits and meetings, Vice President Agnew  
 POL 7 US/CONNALLY: visits and meetings, John Connally  
 POL 7 US/KISSINGER: visits and meetings, Henry Kissinger  
 POL 12 INDIA: political parties, India  
 POL 12 PAK: political parties, Pakistan  
 POL 14 INDIA: Indian elections  
 POL 14 PAK: Pakistani elections  
 POL 15 PAK: government, Pakistan  
 POL 15-1 INDIA: Indian head of state  
 POL 15-1 PAK: Pakistan head of state  
 POL 15-1 US/NIXON: United States head of state  
 POL 15-2 PAK: legislature, Pakistan  
 POL 15-5 PAK: constitution, Pakistan  
 POL 17 PAK/US: diplomatic and consular representation, Pakistan-United States  
 POL 18 PAK: provincial, municipal, and state government, Pakistan  
 POL 21 INDIA-USSR: peace and non-aggression, India-USSR  
 POL 23-8 PAK: demonstrations, riots, and protests, Pakistan  
 POL 23-9: rebellion and coups  
 POL 23-9 PAK: rebellion and coups, Pakistan  
 POL 27 INDIA-PAK: military operations, India-Pakistan  
 POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK: truce, ceasefire, and armistice, India-Pakistan  
 POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK/UN: truce, ceasefire, and armistice, India, Pakistan, and the UN  
 POL 29 PAK: political prisoners, Pakistan  
 POL 32-1 INDIA-PAK: India-Pakistan border disputes  
 PR 11-3: press conferences and interviews  
 REF PAK: refugees and migration, Pakistan  
 SOC 10 PAK: disasters and disaster relief, Pakistan  
 SOC 11-5 INDIA: traffic in narcotics, India  
 SOC 11-5 PAK: traffic in narcotics, Pakistan

*Lot Files*

NEA Files: Lot 73 D 69

Subject files of Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco for 1970-1971, maintained by the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

## XVI Sources

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NEA Files: Lot 73 D 376

Country and special files of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Rodger Davies, 1967–1971, maintained by the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INC Files: Lot 77 D 51

Country Director's miscellaneous subject files, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Ceylon Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 73 D 377

India political subject files for 1969–1970, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 74 D 17

India political files for 1970, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 74 D 444

India economic files for 1971–1972, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 74 D 446

Bangladesh refugee files for 1971–1972, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 76 D 30

India political and defense files for 1971, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 77 D 51

Country Director's miscellaneous subject files, 1969–1971, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/INS Files: Lot 78 D 60

Country Director's files, 1963–1974, maintained by the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 74 D 179

East Pakistan/Bangladesh political files for 1971, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 74 D 191

Pakistan subject files for 1970, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 74 D 214

Pakistan economic files for 1970, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 77 D 91

Pakistan subject files for 1971, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 77 D 285

Pakistan economic files for 1971, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

NEA/PAB Files: Lot 78 D 98

Pakistan military subject files for 1971, 1972, 1974, and 1975, maintained by the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

### **Nixon Presidential Materials Project**

National Security Council Files

Backchannel Files

Briefing Books for HAK's SEA and PRC trips

Country Files: USSR, South Asia, India, India/Pakistan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh

Haig Chronological File

Kissinger Office Files

Indo-Pak Crisis Files

Indo-Pak War Files

NSC Unfiled Material

Presidential Correspondence

Presidential/HAK Memcons

President's Daily Briefing Files

President's File—China Trip

President's Trip Files

Saunders Files

Subject Files

Items to Discuss with the President

HAK/Richardson Meetings

National Security Study Memoranda

Presidential Determinations

President/Kissinger Memos

VIP Visits

National Security Council Institutional Files (H-Files)

White House Special Files

President's Office Files

Staff Member and Office Files

H. R. Haldeman, Haldeman Diaries

Helmut Sonnenfelt

White House Central Files

Staff Members and Office Files, Office of Presidential Papers and Archives, Daily Diary

White House Tapes

### **National Security Council**

Intelligence Files

**Central Intelligence Agency**

DCI (Helms) Files, intergovernmental files, Job 80–B01086A

DCI (Helms) Files, geographic and subject files, Job 80–M01048A

DCI (Helms) Files, miscellaneous files, 1966–1972, Job 80–B01285A

Deputy Director for Plans Files, 1971, Job 79–480A

NIC Registry of NIE and SNIE Files, Job 79–R01012A

Office of the Deputy Director for Plans Files, 1969, Job 79–01229A

Office of the Deputy Director for Plans Files, 1970, Job 79–01440A

**Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland**

**Record Group 330, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense**

OSD Files: FRC 330 74 142

Top Secret files from the immediate office of the Secretary of Defense, 1969–1972

OSD Files: FRC 330 76 0028

Chronological files of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1958–1973

OSD Files: FRC 330 76 067

Secret files of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, 1970

OSD Files: FRC 330 76 076

Top Secret files of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, 1970

OSD Files: FRC 330 76 197

Secret files of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, 1971

OSD Files: FRC 330 76 207

Top Secret files of the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, 1971

OASD/ISA Files: FRC 73 A 1975

Secret files of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1970

OASD/ISA Files: FRC 330 74 083

Secret files of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1971

OASD/ISA Files: FRC 330 74 115

Top Secret files of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 1971

**Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

Manuscript Division

Kissinger Papers

Richardson Papers



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U.S. Department of State, *Bulletin*, 1969–1972.

U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973).

### Memoirs

Kissinger, Henry A. *White House Years*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979.

# Abbreviations

- ABM**, anti-ballistic missile  
**ACDA**, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency  
**ADB**, Asian Development Bank  
**ADC**, aide-de-camp  
**AEC**, Atomic Energy Commission  
**AFS**, Afghani, Afghan currency  
**AID**, Agency for International Development  
**AID/ASIA/NE**, Office of Near Eastern Affairs, Bureau for Asia, Agency for International Development  
**AID/GC**, Office of the General Counsel, Agency for International Development  
**AID/NESA**, Bureau for Near East and South Asia, Agency for International Development  
**AID/PPC**, Office of Program and Policy Coordination, Agency for International Development  
**AID/PRI/DRD**, Disaster Relief Division, Office for Private Overseas Programs, Agency for International Development  
**AICC**, All India Congress Committee  
**AL**, Awami League (Pakistan)  
**AMCITS**, American citizens  
**A/OC/T**, Bureau of Administration, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Communications, Communications Center, Department of State  
**A/OPR/RS**, Bureau of Administration, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations, Records Services Division, Department of State  
**AP**, Associated Press  
**APC**, armored personnel carrier  
**ARMATT**, Army Attaché  
**ASAP**, as soon as possible
- BBC**, British Broadcasting Corporation  
**BD**, Bangladesh  
**BDG**, Bangladesh Government  
**B/G**, Brigadier General  
**BNDD**, Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, Department of Justice
- CAS**, Controlled American Source  
**CCC**, Commodity Credit Corporation  
**CCD**, Conference of the Committee on Disarmament  
**CENTO**, Central Treaty Organization  
**CF**, contingency funds  
**Chicom(s)**, Chinese Communist(s)  
**CIA**, Central Intelligence Agency  
**CIA/ONE**, Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Estimates  
**CINC**, Cabinet Committee for International Narcotics; Commander in Chief  
**CINCARPAC**, Commander in Chief, Army, Pacific  
**CINCMEAFSA**, Commander in Chief, Middle East, South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara  
**CINCPAC**, Commander in Chief, Pacific  
**CINCPACAF**, Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Force  
**CINCPACFLT**, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

## XXII Abbreviations

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**CINCSTRIKE**, Commander in Chief, Strike Command  
**CINCUSAFE**, Commander in Chief, United States Air Forces in Europe  
**CL**, commercial list  
**CND**, United Nations Commission on Narcotics Drugs  
**COMECON**, Council on Mutual Economic Assistance  
**CONGEN**, Consulate General  
**CPM**, Communist Party Madras  
**CPI**, Communist Party of India  
**CTB**, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty  
**CWC**, Congress [Party] Working Committee, India

**DAC**, Democratic Action Committee, Pakistan  
**DATT**, Defense Attaché  
**DCM**, Deputy Chief of Mission  
**DEA**, Department of External Affairs, India  
**DefSec**, Defense Secretary  
**del**, delegate; delegation  
**DIA**, Defense Intelligence Agency  
**DL**, development loan  
**DMZ**, demilitarized zone  
**DOD**, Department of Defense  
**DOD/ISA**, Department of Defense, International Security Affairs  
**DOD/ISA/NESA**, Department of Defense, International Security Affairs, Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs  
**DRV**, Democratic Republic of Vietnam  
**DSAA**, Defense Security Assistance Agency

**EA**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State  
**EA/VN**, Office of the Vietnam Working Group, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
**EBR**, East Bengal Regiment  
**ECAFE**, United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and Far East  
**ECOSOC**, United Nations Economic and Social Council  
**EEC**, European Economic Community  
**ELINT**, electronic intelligence  
**ENDC**, Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, Geneva  
**Emb**, Embassy  
**EP**, East Pakistan  
**EPADC**, East Pakistan Development Corporation  
**EPCAF**, East Pakistan Civil Armed Force  
**EPR**, East Pakistan Rifles  
**EUR**, Bureau of European Affairs, Department of State  
**EUR/SOV**, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Bureau of European Affairs  
**Exdis**, Exclusive Distribution (extremely limited distribution)  
**Ex-Im**, Export Import Bank of Washington

**FAO**, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization  
**FCO**, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom  
**FDR**, Franklin D. Roosevelt  
**FFW**, Food for Work  
**FMS**, Foreign Military Sales  
**FonMin**, Foreign Minister  
**FonSec**, Foreign Secretary  
**FPREPORT**, Foreign Policy Report  
**FRG**, Federal Republic of Germany

**FSL**, Foreign Service Local  
**FY**, fiscal year  
**FYI**, for your information

**GA**, United Nations General Assembly  
**GBD**, Government of Bangladesh  
**GAO**, General Accounting Office  
**GMT**, Greenwich Mean Time  
**GNP**, gross national product  
**GOBD**, Government of Bangladesh  
**GOEP**, Government of East Pakistan  
**GOI**, Government of India  
**GON**, Government of Nigeria  
**GOB**, Government of Pakistan  
**GOT**, Government of Turkey

**H**, Bureau of Congressional Relations, Department of State  
**HMG**, Her Majesty's Government, United Kingdom  
**HRH**, His Royal Highness

**IA**, Indian Army  
**IAEA**, International Atomic Energy Agency  
**IBRD**, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank  
**ICAO**, International Civil Aviation Organization  
**ICBM**, Intercontinental Ballistic Missile  
**ICC**, International Control Commission  
**ICRC**, International Committee, Red Cross  
**IDA**, International Development Association  
**IFY**, Indian Fiscal Year  
**IG**, Inspector General  
**IMF**, International Monetary Fund  
**INR**, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State  
**INR/DDC**, Directorate for Coordination, Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
**INR/DRR/RNA**, Office of Research and Analysis for Near East and South Asia, Directorate for Regional Research, Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
**INR/DRR/RSE**, Office of Research and Analysis for USSR and Eastern Europe, Directorate for Regional Research, Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
**INR/DRR/RSG**, Office of Strategic and General Research, Directorate for Regional Research, Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
**INR/IL**, Office of Intelligence Liaison, Bureau of Intelligence and Research  
**IO**, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State  
**IO/UNP**, Office of United Nations Political Affairs, Bureau of International Organization Affairs  
**IRBM**, Intermediate-range Ballistic Missile  
**ISID**, Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (Indian and Pakistani equivalent of CIA)  
**IST**, Indian Standard Time

**J**, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs  
**JCS**, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
**JP**, Justice Party, Pakistan  
**J/PM**, Office of Politico-Military Affairs in the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

**kg**, kilogram

## XXIV Abbreviations

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**LDC**, less developed country

**Limdis**, Limited Distribution

**LTG**, Lieutenant General

**MAAG**, Military Assistance Advisory Group

**MAC**, Military Assistance Command

**MAI**, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Afghanistan

**MAP**, Military Assistance Program

**MB**, Mukti Bahini (People's Brotherhood, East Pakistani guerrilla force)

**MCH**, Ministry of Children's Health

**ME**, Middle East

**MEA**, Ministry of External Affairs

**MFA**, Minister/Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**MIDEASTFOR**, Middle East Forces

**MIL**, military

**MINAG**, Ministry of Agriculture

**MINPLAN**, Ministry of Planning

**ML**, Muslim League; military list

**MLA**, Martial Law Administrator/Administration, Pakistan

**MNA**, Member of the National Assembly, Pakistan

**MP**, Member of Parliament

**MPA**, Member of Provisional Assembly, East Pakistan

**MPH**, Ministry of Public Health

**MPW**, Ministry of Public Works

**MT**, metric ton

**NAC**, North Atlantic Council

**NAP**, National Awami Party, Pakistan

**NAP/L**, National Awami Party, Left, East Pakistan

**NASA**, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**NATO**, North Atlantic Treaty Organization

**NBC**, National Broadcasting Company

**NDF**, National Democratic Front, Pakistan

**NEA**, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

**NEA/INC**, Country Director for India, Ceylon, Nepal, and Maldives Islands, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**NEA/INS**, Country Director for India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Maldives Islands, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**NEA/PAB**, Country Director for Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**NEA/PAF**, Country Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**NEA/RA**, Office of the Director of Regional Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern, and South Asian Affairs

**NEFA**, Northeast Frontier Agency

**NESA**, Bureau for Near East and South Asia, Agency for International Development

**NI**, Nizam-E-Islam (Pakistani political party)

**Niact**, night action, telegram indicator requiring immediate action

**NIC**, National Intelligence Council

**NIE**, National Intelligence Estimate

**NLF**, National Liberation Front

**Nodis**, No Distribution (other than to persons indicated)

**Noforn**, no foreign dissemination

**NPT**, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

- NSA**, National Security Agency  
**NSAM**, National Security Action Memorandum  
**NSC**, National Security Council  
**NSCIC**, National Security Council Intelligence Committee  
**NSCIG/NEA**, National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for the Near East and South Asia  
**NSDM**, National Security Decision Memorandum  
**NSSM**, National Security Study Memorandum  
**NVN**, North Vietnam  
**NWFP**, Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan
- OASD/ISA**, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs  
**O/CT**, Bureau of Administration, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Communications, Communications Center  
**OECD**, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
**OEP**, Office of Emergency Preparedness  
**OMB**, Office of Management and Budget  
**OPIC**, Overseas Private Investment Corporation  
**OSD**, Office of the Secretary of Defense
- PA**, purchase authorization  
**PAF**, Pakistan Air Force  
**PAK**, Pakistan, Pakistani  
**PAO**, Public Affairs Officer  
**PDM/AL**, Pro-PDM Awami League (Pakistan political party)  
**PDP**, Pakistan Democratic Party  
**PIA**, Pakistan International Airlines  
**PL**, Public Law  
**PM**, Prime Minister  
**PM**, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State  
**PM/AE**, Office of Atomic Energy and Aero-Space, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs  
**PM/MAS**, Office of Military Assistance and Sales, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs  
**PML**, Pakistan Muslim League  
**PNE**, Peaceful Nuclear Explosion  
**POL**, petroleum, oil, and lubricants  
**Polad**, Political Adviser  
**PolOff**, Political Officer  
**POW**, prisoner of war  
**PPP**, People's Party of Pakistan  
**PR**, Public Relations  
**PRC**, People's Republic of China  
**PriMin**, Prime Minister
- R&D**, research and development  
**RCD**, Organization of Regional Cooperation for Development  
**reftel**, reference telegram  
**rep(s)**, representative(s)  
**res**, resolution  
**RGA**, Royal Government of Afghanistan
- SALT**, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks  
**SCI**, Bureau of International Scientific and Technological Affairs, Department of State  
**SDR(s)**, Special Drawing Right(s)

## XXVI Abbreviations

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- SEA**, Southeast Asia  
**SEATO**, Southeast Asia Treaty Organization  
**Secto**, series indicator for telegrams from the Secretary of State or his party to the Department of State  
**septel**, separate telegram  
**SFRC**, Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
**SIG**, Senior Interdepartmental Group  
**SIGINT**, signals intelligence  
**SITREP**, situation report  
**SNIE**, Special National Intelligence Estimate  
**Sov**, Soviet  
**S/PC**, Planning and Coordination Staff, Department of State  
**S/R**, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Refugee and Migration Affairs  
**SRG**, Senior Review Group  
**S/S**, Executive Secretariat of the Department of State  
**SVN**, South Vietnam  
**SYG**, United Nations Secretary-General
- TA**, technical assistance  
**TASS**, Telegraphnoye Agentstvo Sovyetskogo Soyuz (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union)  
**TDY**, temporary duty
- U**, Office of the Under Secretary of State  
**UAR**, United Arab Republic  
**UK**, United Kingdom  
**UKG**, United Kingdom Government  
**UN**, United Nations  
**UNCURK**, United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea  
**UNEPRO**, United Nations East Pakistan Relief Operation  
**UNGA**, United Nations General Assembly  
**UNHCR**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
**UNICEF**, United Nations Children's Fund  
**UNROD**, United Nations Relief Operation in Dacca  
**UNSC**, United Nations Security Council  
**UNSYG**, United Nations Secretary-General  
**US**, United States  
**USAF**, United States Air Force  
**USAFI**, United States Air Force Intelligence  
**USAFSS**, United States Air Force Security Service  
**USAID**, United States Agency for International Development  
**USCINCEUR**, United States Commander in Chief, European Command  
**USCINCEAFSA**, United States Commander in Chief, Middle East, South Asia, and Africa South of the Sahara  
**USDA**, United States Department of Agriculture  
**USG**, United States Government  
**USIA**, United States Information Agency  
**USIB**, United States Intelligence Board  
**USINFO**, United States Information Service  
**USIS**, United States Information Service (overseas branches of USIA)  
**USSR**, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
**USUN**, United States Mission to the United Nations in New York
- VC**, Vietcong

**VOA**, Voice of America

**VOLAGS**, voluntary agencies

**VP**, Vice President

**WESTPAC**, Commander, Western Pacific

**WFP**, World Food Program

**WH**, White House

**WSAG**, Washington Special Actions Group



# Persons

- Abshire, David M.**, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations from April 1970
- Agha Khan, Prince Sadruddin**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Ahmad, Khondkar Mushtaq**, Vice President of the Awami League and Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh April–December 1971
- Ahmad, M. M.**, Deputy Chairman of the Economic Planning Commission in Pakistan, Economic Adviser to President Yahya
- Ahmed, Aziz**, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan
- Ahmed, Tajuddin**, General Secretary of the Awami League and Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh, April 1971–January 12, 1972; thereafter Minister of Finance of Bangladesh
- Ahsan, Vice Admiral Syed Mohammad**, Deputy Martial Law Administrator and Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Navy until August 1969; Governor of East Pakistan, August 1969–February 1971
- Ali, Iftikar**, Foreign Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan from April 1972
- Ali, M. Hossain**, Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States from December 1972
- Atherton, Alfred L., Jr.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs from March 1970
- Ayub Khan, Mohammad**, President of Pakistan until March 1969
- Beam, Jacob D.**, Ambassador to the Soviet Union, March 1969–January 1973
- Bhashani, Maulana Abdul Hamid**, Leader of the National Awami Party in East Pakistan
- Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali**, Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister, December 7–December 19, 1971; thereafter President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Defense of Pakistan
- Blood, Archer K.**, Consul General in Dacca until June 1971
- Bowles, Chester**, Ambassador to India until April 1969
- Brezhnev, Leonid Ilyich**, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
- Bush, George H. W.**, Republican Congressman from Texas until January 1971; Permanent Representative to the United Nations, February 1971–January 1973
- Cargo, William I.**, Director of the Policy and Coordination Staff, Department of State
- Chavan, Yashwantrao B.**, Indian Minister of the Interior until June 1970; thereafter, Minister of Finance
- Chowdhry, Abu Ayed**, President of Bangladesh from January 12, 1972
- Cline, Ray S.**, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, from October 1969
- Connally, John B., Jr.**, Secretary of Treasury, February 1971–May 1972
- Cromer, Earl of**, British Ambassador to the United States
- Cushman, Lieutenant General Robert E., Jr.**, USMC, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, May 1969–December 1971
- Davies, Rodger P.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
- DePalma, Samuel**, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs
- Desai, Morarji Ranchhodji**, Indian Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister until July 1969
- Dobrynin, Anatoliy F.**, Soviet Ambassador to the United States

**Douglas-Home, Sir Alec**, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from June 1970

**Eilts, Hermann E.**, Ambassador to Bangladesh from September 1972

**Eliot, Theodore L., Jr.**, Special Assistant to the Secretary and Executive Secretary of the Department of State from August 1969

**Etemadi, Nur Ahmed**, Prime Minister of Afghanistan until May 1971

**Farhadi, Rawan**, Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan

**Farland, Joseph S.**, Ambassador to Pakistan, September 1969–April 1972

**Firyubin, Nikolai Pavlovich**, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union

**Gandhi, Indira**, Prime Minister of India

**Giri, Varahagiri Venkata**, Vice President of India until May 3, 1969; Acting President, May 3–July 29, 1969; President from August 20, 1969

**Gordon, Herbert**, Consul General in Calcutta

**Green, Marshall**, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from May 1969; also Chairman, Special Group on Southeast Asia from May 1970

**Gromyko, Andrei A.**, Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union

**Haig, General Alexander M., Jr.**, Senior Military Adviser to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, January 1969–June 1970; Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, June 1970–January 1973

**Haksar, Parmeshwar Narain**, Secretary to Prime Minister Gandhi

**Haldeman, H.R.**, Assistant to the President

**Hamed, Samad**, Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan

**Handley, William J.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs until May 1969; Ambassador to Turkey, May 1969–April 1973

**Hannah, John A.**, Administrator, Agency for International Development, April 1969–October 1973

**Haq, Major General Inam-ul**, Director General, Defense Procurement, Pakistan Ministry of Defense

**Heath, Edward**, British Prime Minister from June 1970

**Helms, Richard M.**, Director of Central Intelligence until February 1973

**Hilaly, Agha**, Pakistani Ambassador to the United States until September 1971

**Holdridge, John H.**, member of the National Security Council staff, 1970–1972

**Hoskinson, Samuel M.**, member of the National Security Council staff, 1970–1972

**Huang Hua**, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations

**Hughes, Thomas L.**, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, until August 1969

**Hussain, Zakir**, President of India until his death, May 3, 1969

**Irwin, John N., II**, Under Secretary of State, September 1970–July 1972; thereafter, Deputy Secretary of State

**Islam, Syed Nazrul**, Acting President of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh, April–December 1971

**Jha, Lakshmi Kant**, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India until May 1970; thereafter, Indian Ambassador to the United States

**Johnson, U. Alexis**, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from February 1969

**Jung, Nawab Ali Yavar**, Indian Ambassador to the United States until March 1970

**Karamessines, Thomas H.**, Deputy Director for Plans, Central Intelligence Agency

- Karim, Muhammad Enayet**, Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States, May–August, 1972; thereafter Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Karim, S. A.**, Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh until August 1972
- Kaul, Triloki Nath**, Foreign Secretary of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs from February 1969
- Keating, Kenneth B.**, Ambassador to India, May 1969–July 1972
- Kellogg, Francis L.**, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Refugee and Migration Affairs from January 1971; also Chairman of the Interagency Committee on Pakistani Refugee Relief
- Kennedy, Richard T.**, member of the National Security Council staff, January 1970–January 1972
- Khan, General Abdul Hamid**, Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army and Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator
- Khan, Abdul Monem**, Governor of East Pakistan until March 1969
- Khan, Lieutenant General Tikka**, Martial Law Administrator and Governor of East Pakistan, February–September 1971; Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army from March 1972
- Kissinger, Henry A.**, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- Kittani, Ismat**, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs; also Special Representative of the Secretary-General for assistance to East Pakistan
- Klein, Herbert G.**, White House Director of Communications from January 1969
- Kosygin, Aleksei N.**, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union
- Laingen, L. Bruce**, Deputy Chief of Mission in Afghanistan until July 1971; thereafter Country Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
- Laird, Melvin R.**, Secretary of Defense, January 1969–January 1973
- Lewis, Samuel W.**, Deputy Chief of Mission in Afghanistan
- Lord, Winston**, member of the National Security Council staff
- Luppi, Hobart**, Consul General in Karachi, Pakistan
- MacDonald, Donald G.**, Assistant Administrator for Near East and South Asia, Agency for International Development
- Malek, Frederick**, Special Assistant to the President with responsibility for personnel operations
- Malik, A.M.**, Special Assistant to President Yahya for Displaced Persons and Relief and Rehabilitation Operations in East Pakistan, July–September 1971; thereafter Governor of East Pakistan
- Malik, H.R.**, Chairman of the East Pakistan Agriculture Development Corporation, 1971
- Malikyar, Abdullah**, Afghan Ambassador to the United States
- Manekshaw, General Sam Hormusji Framji Jamshedji**, Chief of Staff of the Indian Army
- McNamara, Robert S.**, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
- Meyer, Armin H.**, Special Consultant in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State, from April 1972
- Mitchell, John**, Attorney General, January 1969–February 1972
- Moorer, Admiral Thomas H.**, USN, Chief of Naval Operations until July 1970; thereafter Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Naas, Charles**, Political Counselor at the Embassy in Afghanistan
- Neumann, Robert G.**, Ambassador to Afghanistan
- Newberry, Daniel O.**, Deputy Chief of Mission in Afghanistan from October 1972
- Nixon, Richard M.**, President of the United States

## XXXII Persons

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**Noyes, James H.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

**Nutter, G. Warren**, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

**Oehlert, Benjamin H., Jr.**, Ambassador to Pakistan until June 1969

**Packard, David**, Deputy Secretary of Defense from January 1969

**Peterson, Peter G.**, Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, and Executive Director of the Council for International Economic Policy, 1971–January 1972; Secretary of Commerce, January 1972–January 1973

**Pickard, Sir Cyril**, British High Commissioner in Pakistan

**Qaiyum, Qazi Zahirul**, member of the Pakistan National Assembly, Awami League representative

**Rahman, Sheikh Mujibur, (Mujib)** President of the Awami League; Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of Bangladesh from January 1972

**Ram, Jagjivan**, Indian Minister of Defense from June 1970

**Rasgotra, Maharajkrishna**, Minister for Political Affairs of the Indian Embassy in the United States

**Raza, Major General Nawabzada Agha Mohammad**, Pakistani Ambassador to the United States, November 1971–April 1972

**Rees, C. Herbert**, Director of the Office of South Asian Affairs, Bureau for Near East and South Asia, Agency for International Development

**Richardson, Elliot L.**, Under Secretary of State until June 1970

**Rockwell, Stuart W.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

**Rogers, William P.**, Secretary of State, January 1969–September 1973

**Rush, Kenneth**, Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, July 1969–February 1972, Deputy Secretary of Defense, February 1972–January 1973

**Samad, Abdus**, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh

**Sarabi, Abdul Wahed**, Afghan Minister of Planning

**Saunders, Harold H.**, member of the National Security Council staff

**Scali, John**, Special Consultant to the President, January 1971–January 1973

**Schlesinger, James R.**, Assistant Director, Bureau of the Budget, 1969; Acting Deputy Director, 1969–1970; Assistant Director, Office of Management and Budget, 1970–1971; thereafter, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission

**Schneider, David T.**, Country Director for India, Ceylon, Nepal, and the Maldives Islands, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State, from August 1969

**Selden, Armistead, I., Jr.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

**Seraj, Dr. Majid**, Afghan Minister of Public Health

**Shafiq, Mohammad Moussa**, Afghan Foreign Minister, July 1971–December 1972; thereafter also Prime Minister

**Shakespeare, Frank**, Director, United States Information Agency, February 1969–February 1973

**Shultz, George P.**, Secretary of Labor, January 1969–June 1970; first Director of the Office of Management and Budget, June 1970–May 1972

**Singh, Dinesh**, Minister of External Affairs of India, February 1969–June 1970

**Singh, Kewal**, Foreign Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of India from November 1972

**Singh, Swaran**, Indian Minister of Defense until June 1970; thereafter, Minister of External Affairs

- Sisco, Joseph J.**, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs until February 1969; thereafter, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; also Chairman of the NSC Interdepartmental Group for the Near East and South Asia
- Sober, Sidney**, Director of the Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State until November 1969, thereafter Deputy Chief of Mission in Pakistan
- Sonnenfeldt, Helmut**, member of the National Security Council staff, 1969–1972
- Sorabi, Abdul Wahid**, Minister of Planning of Afghanistan
- Spain, James W.**, Director of the Office of Pakistan and Afghanistan Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State, January–July 1969; Chargé d’Affaires in Pakistan, July–November 1969; thereafter Country Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan until July 1970.
- Spengler, William F.**, Country Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State, July 1970–July 1971
- Spivack, Herbert D.**, Consul General in Dacca, June 1971–September 1972
- Stans, Maurice**, Secretary of Commerce, January 1969–January 1972
- Stone, Galen L.**, Chargé d’Affaires in India from August 1969
- Sultan Khan, Mohammad**, Foreign Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan until April 1972, thereafter Ambassador to the United States
- Timmons, William**, Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs, January 1969–February 1970; thereafter, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs
- Thant, U**, Secretary-General of the United Nations until December 1971
- Van Hollen, Christopher**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, May 1969–September 1972; thereafter, Ambassador to Sri Lanka
- Volcker, Paul A.**, Under Secretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs
- Vorontsov, Yuli M.**, Minister of the Soviet Embassy in the United States
- Wali, Major General Sardar Abdul**, Commander of the Central Forces of Afghanistan
- Weinberger, Caspar W.**, Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget, July 1970–May 1972; Director, May 1972–January 1973
- Williams, Maurice J.**, Deputy Administrator, Agency for International Development; Chairman of Interdepartmental Working Group on East Pakistan Disaster Relief
- Yaftali, Abdullah**, Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan until July 1971
- Yahya Khan, General Agha Mohammad**, Chief Martial Law Administrator, President, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, March 1969–December 1971
- Young, David, Jr.**, member of the National Security Council staff from January 1970
- Yung, Ali Yavar**, Indian Ambassador to the United States until May 1970
- Yusuf, S. M.**, Foreign Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan until April 1972
- Zahir, Abdul**, Afghan Prime Minister, June 1971–December 1972
- Zahir, Mohammad**, King of Afghanistan
- Ziegler, Ronald L.**, Press Secretary to the President, January 1969–January 1973
- Zumwalt, Admiral Elmo R.**, Chief of Naval Operations

# 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)<sup>1</sup>

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,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> March 3.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Sunday<sup>4</sup> 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?

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<sup>4</sup> 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 118<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

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### 3. National Security Decision Memorandum 101<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> The President has approved

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 480<sup>3</sup> 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**

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

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**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)**<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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 points<sup>3</sup>—not jumping too soon to recognition of East Pakistani independence.]<sup>4</sup>

—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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> March 7.

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> All brackets in the source text.

paper<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

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## 6. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

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

### SUBJECT

Pakistan

### PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup>

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

Mr. Johnson: We're already on page 7 of that paper<sup>4</sup> 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

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

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 5.

<sup>4</sup> 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 speech<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.)

<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.

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<sup>7</sup> 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 3<sup>8</sup> 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

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<sup>8</sup> 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 3<sup>9</sup> 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

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<sup>9</sup> 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)

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## 8. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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-

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<sup>1</sup> 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 speech<sup>2</sup> 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 speech<sup>3</sup> 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]<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 5, Document 6.

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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 Saturday<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

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**9. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Sunday<sup>2</sup>). 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 Zulfiqar 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.

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<sup>2</sup> March 14.

10. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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## 11. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

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

SUBJECT

Pakistan

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Friday<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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 compromise<sup>3</sup> [under discussion between Yahya and Mujibur Rahman]<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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?<sup>5</sup> 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].<sup>6</sup>

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

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<sup>5</sup> 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)

<sup>6</sup> 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 Uttapau. 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**<sup>1</sup>

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.)<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.*)

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> At the

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<sup>4</sup> 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)

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

Washington, March 28, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in Pakistan

As you will have noted from the cables<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.]<sup>3</sup>

—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.

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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)

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

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

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)**<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.]

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

<sup>2</sup> April 1.

**16. Letter From the Pakistani Ambassador (Hilaly) to Secretary of State Rogers<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

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]<sup>2</sup> comes out,

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Brackets in the source text.

we are going to face a sort of Biafra situation. You might be interested in the Secretary's [Rogers']<sup>3</sup> 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]<sup>3</sup> 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]<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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].<sup>6</sup>

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.

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<sup>4</sup> Spokesman of the Department of State.

<sup>5</sup> 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)

<sup>6</sup> Brackets in the source text.

**18. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

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## 19. Telegram From the Consulate General in Dacca to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

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 message<sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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)

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

3. Signed:

Brian Bell  
Robert L. Bourquein  
W. Scott Butcher  
Eric Griffel  
Zachary M. Hahn  
Jake Harshbarger  
Robert A. Jackson  
Lawrence Koegel  
Joseph A. Malpeli  
Willard D. McCleary

Desaix Myers  
John L. Nesvig  
William Grant Parr  
Robert Carce  
Richard L. Simpson  
Robert C. Simpson  
Richard E. Suttor  
Wayne A. Swedengurg  
Richard L. Wilson  
Shannon W. Wilson<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup> I also subscribe to

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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)

<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

## Blood

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<sup>7</sup> The 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.

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

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

R: I wanted to talk about that goddam message from our people in Dacca.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup>

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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 State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, April 6, 1971, 0838Z.

3164. Subj: Yahya's Letter<sup>2</sup> to President Nixon. Ref: State 54514,<sup>3</sup> Dacca 1045<sup>4</sup> and New Delhi 4814.<sup>5</sup>

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 3018<sup>6</sup> that we accommodate to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan's request for public statement expressing concern about possible internalization of conflict. Department in State 56401,<sup>7</sup> however, came down against our acceding to Sultan's request. I will not press our recommendation further, having modified it as explained hereafter.

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

<sup>2</sup> See Document 16.

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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)

<sup>5</sup> 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)

<sup>6</sup> Dated April 1. (Ibid., POL 23-9 PAK)

<sup>7</sup> 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,<sup>8</sup> 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-

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<sup>8</sup> 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).<sup>9</sup> The Department also provided this view as the principal element in the instructions to Embassy Colombo for Ambassador's call on the Ceylonese Prime

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<sup>9</sup> 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).<sup>10</sup> 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

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<sup>10</sup> Not found.

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## 22. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, April 8, 1971, 1105Z.

3228. Subj: Assessment of Pak Situation. Ref: State 59106<sup>2</sup> (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,

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-053, SRG Meeting, Pakistan, 4/9/71)

<sup>2</sup> 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—disintegration 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)<sup>3</sup> that he hopes for provincial governments in West which

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<sup>3</sup> 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 Meeting<sup>1</sup>

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 letter<sup>2</sup> 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.]

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> 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 Bengali, 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,<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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. Bandaranaike<sup>4</sup> 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 memo<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>4</sup> Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon.

<sup>5</sup> 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]<sup>6</sup> 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 Wednesday<sup>7</sup> or Thursday.

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<sup>6</sup> Brackets in the source text.

<sup>7</sup> April 14.

24. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

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,<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> 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 pre-judge 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> See Document 23.

<sup>3</sup> 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 “quizzing 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.

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## 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)

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**26. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 13, 1971.

SUBJECT

Policy Review on Pakistan

Secretary Rogers has sent you the attached memo<sup>2</sup> 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 Friday<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Dated April 7; attached but not printed.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

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

Washington, April 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

SNIE on Prospects for Pakistan

Attached is a Special National Intelligence Estimate on "Prospects for Pakistan"<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.”

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**28. Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

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).<sup>2</sup> These are, of course, integrated into the NEA/IG paper,<sup>3</sup> 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.”

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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)

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> The only argument at this point—and it is a crucial

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<sup>4</sup>Kissinger added a handwritten note in the margin at this point which reads: “Maybe he was repositioned.”

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 B<sup>5</sup> is a cable from Ambassador Keating with his familiar views on this subject.

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<sup>5</sup> 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)

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## 29. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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,<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 message<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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

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**30. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

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.<sup>2</sup> 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)

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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**

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**31. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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**

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<sup>2</sup> 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.*)

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## 32. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

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

### SUBJECT

Pakistan and Ceylon

### PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> 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	AID
John N. Irwin	Donald MacDonald
Christopher Van Hollen	Maurice Williams
Tom Thornton	OMB
Defense	James Schlesinger
David Packard	NSC Staff
James S. Noyes	Harold Saunders
G. Warren Nutter	Sam Hoskinson
JCS	Col. Richard Kennedy
Adm. John P. Weinell	Jeanne W. Davis
Col. James Connell, USA	
CIA	
Lt. Gen. Robert Cushman	
David Blee	
[name not declassified]	

### 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 paper<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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 SNIE<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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 paper<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>5</sup> 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?<sup>6</sup> 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

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<sup>6</sup> 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 letter<sup>7</sup> 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.]

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<sup>7</sup> 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)**<sup>1</sup>

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 summary<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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#### 34. **Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, April 21, 1971, 0730Z.

[*number not declassified*] Ref WH 10389.<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> 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 copy<sup>4</sup> 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,<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> 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 3601<sup>6</sup>).

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.

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<sup>6</sup> 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 Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

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,<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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 Khan<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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**

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**36. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 settlement<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>**

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.]

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

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,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 37.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 4, Document 35.

Attached at Tab A<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Attached but not printed.

<sup>5</sup> 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)

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**39. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

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,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Secret; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> 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)

<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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**

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<sup>5</sup> 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 Irwin<sup>1</sup>**

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,<sup>2</sup> the President has reviewed the options and approved the attached letter<sup>3</sup> 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.

**Haig<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Document 41. A draft of this letter was attached to Irwin's memorandum to the President.

<sup>4</sup> Haig signed for Kissinger above Kissinger's typed signature.

41. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 7, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

I have given most serious thought to your message<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> 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**

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## 42. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Kissinger expressed appreciation for the cables sent by Ambassador Farland, and for his loyalty over the past weeks.

Mr. Kissinger then stated that McNamara<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.)

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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

<sup>4</sup> See Document 19.

<sup>5</sup> 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 Rush<sup>6</sup> talk to Brandt<sup>7</sup> 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.]

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<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Rush, Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

<sup>7</sup> Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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### 43. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 demands<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

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#### 44. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

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#### 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)

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#### 46. Letter From Indian Prime Minister Gandhi to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi, May 13, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your warm message of congratulations on our recent elections.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.*)

<sup>2</sup> 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**

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#### 47. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, May 14, 1971, 1045Z.

4655. Subj: Flow of Hindu Refugees to India. Ref: State 83656.<sup>2</sup>

1. We share Department's concern that continued massive outflow of East Pak refugees may have serious consequences, both in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 7022<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.*)

<sup>4</sup> 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

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**48. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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 Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

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 letter<sup>2</sup> from President Nixon in reply to President Yahya's letter of March 31.<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 4332<sup>5</sup>). 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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))

<sup>3</sup> See Document 16.

<sup>4</sup> 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)

<sup>5</sup> 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 17<sup>6</sup> (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**

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<sup>6</sup> 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)**<sup>1</sup>

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).<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> Dick Kennedy concurs.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Draft letter attached but not printed.

<sup>4</sup> 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 Rogers<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 study<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> Sisco's conversation with Ahmad was reported to Islamabad on May 19 in telegram 87878. (Ibid., POL 7 PAK)

<sup>3</sup> 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.

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## 52. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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 letter<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> 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.]<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Brackets in the source text.

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### 53. Telegram From the Consulate General in Karachi to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Karachi, May 22, 1971, 1955Z.

1184. From the Ambassador. Subj: President Yahya's Observations on Pakistan Political Situation. Ref: State 084783.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> During hour and half conversation which ensued I discussed with Yahya, among other subjects which are reported by septel,<sup>4</sup> the political situation within Pakistan and his plans with regard thereto.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Document 49.

<sup>3</sup> Document 41.

<sup>4</sup> 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 State<sup>1</sup>

Karachi, May 22, 1971, 2050Z.

1186. From the Ambassador. Subj: East Pakistan Refugees in India. Ref: State 085973,<sup>2</sup> Islamabad 04872<sup>3</sup> (Notal); State 87878,<sup>4</sup> State 089635<sup>5</sup> (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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.)

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 51.

<sup>5</sup> 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,<sup>6</sup> 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.

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<sup>6</sup> 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 septel<sup>7</sup>—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.<sup>8</sup> 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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<sup>7</sup> Document 53.

<sup>8</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>**

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.]

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Rawalpindi, May 24, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

I appreciate greatly the constructive and friendly contents of your letter<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.)

<sup>2</sup> 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

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**57. Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson and Richard Kennedy of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 25, 1971.

SUBJECT

WSAG Meeting on India-Pakistan, Wednesday,<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 Monday<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> May 24.

*Paper*

At tab "Contingency Study" is State's first cut at a "Contingency Study for Indo-Pakistani Hostilities."<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

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**58. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Possible India–Pakistan War

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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## 60. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 26, 1971, 4:35–5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan

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<sup>1</sup> 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 paper<sup>2</sup> 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.)<sup>3</sup>

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.

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<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the "Contingency Study for Indo-Pakistani Hostilities"; see footnote 3, Document 51.

<sup>3</sup> 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 paper<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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 Thant<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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)

<sup>6</sup> 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 memorandum<sup>7</sup> 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 telegram<sup>8</sup> 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.

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<sup>7</sup> Not found.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

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**61. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Eliot) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup> the visit of M.M. Ahmad to Washington, and the May 22 meeting between President Yahya and Ambassador Farland.

**Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.**

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<sup>2</sup> 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 Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 28, 1971.

Dear Madame Prime Minister:

Your recent letter<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> 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 Yahya<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 28, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

Your letter of May 24<sup>2</sup> 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 letter<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> Document 56.

<sup>3</sup> 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**

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#### 64. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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]<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

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## 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.

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**66. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, June 5, 1971, 1123Z.

5530. Subj: General Refugee Situation. Ref: Islamabad 5528.<sup>2</sup>

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,<sup>3</sup> 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 statement<sup>4</sup> which Yahya had issued. Noting that Washington was encouraged by GOP's plan to set up refugee reception centers in East Pakistan,<sup>5</sup> I expressed the hope that these

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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)

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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)

<sup>5</sup> 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

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**67. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 7, 1971.

SUBJECT

Relief Assistance for East Pakistan Refugees

You will recall that your recent letter<sup>2</sup> 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]<sup>3</sup> 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].<sup>4</sup>

State has also sent over a suggested White House press release [Tab B]<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 370, Subject Files, Presidential Determinations, 71-11-72-09/71. Confidential. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> Document 62.

<sup>3</sup> All brackets in the source text. Attached as Tab A but not printed was a May 29 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon.

<sup>4</sup> OMB Director George Shultz concurred in the attached but not printed June 2 memorandum to Nixon.

<sup>5</sup> 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:*<sup>6</sup>

1. That you sign the determination [at brown signature tab] to transfer \$5 million from Foreign Assistance Funds to use for refugee relief.<sup>7</sup>
2. That you approve announcement by the State Department.

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<sup>6</sup> 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)

<sup>7</sup> 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)

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## 68. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Irwin to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Consortium<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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**

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## 69. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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's<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> President of the Washington Post company.

70. **Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State**<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

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

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.

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<sup>1</sup>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.

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### 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 India<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> Does not believe six points are inconsistent

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<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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 Desh" 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 Desh nor decided that Bangla Desh 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 in future.

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 India<sup>1</sup>**

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.<sup>2</sup> 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**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

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.<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.)

<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

With my warm personal regards,  
Yours sincerely,

**A.M. Yahya Khan**

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<sup>3</sup> 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 Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 22, 1971, 0029Z.

110978. Subject: Communication concerning recognition of Bangladesh.

1. Department has received document<sup>2</sup> 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 acknowledgment 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";

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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

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**78. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 25, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Supply for Pakistan

Attached is a study covering a recommendation from Secretary Rogers<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> One more ship is known to be loading.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> A June 23 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon was attached but not printed.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>4</sup>

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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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* Tuesday<sup>5</sup> on two Pakistani ships that left New York in recent days triggered a letter<sup>6</sup> 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

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<sup>5</sup> June 22.

<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

Once your decision on this is made, you will receive a memo looking to the larger military supply question.

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<sup>7</sup> President Nixon initialed his approval of the recommendation.

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## 79. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Sadruddin continue his efforts and it was agreed we would keep in close touch in future. End summary.

2. Sadruddin 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. Sadruddin 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, Sadruddin said he thought some East Pakistanis would return if they had an element of guarantee. Sadruddin 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,” Sadruddin 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 speech<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup> 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. Sadrudin 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. Sadrudin spoke of UN's recruiting new personnel, including persons from Eastern Europe.

**Rogers**

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**80. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Selden) to Secretary of Defense Laird<sup>1</sup>**

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).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

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**81. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, June 28, 1971, 1440Z.

6487. Subj: East Pakistan Refugees: Kellogg Discussion with Pres. Yahya.

1. Summary: In discussion with Special Assistant Kellogg<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, REF PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, New Delhi, Geneva, USUN, and London.

<sup>2</sup> 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. Malik<sup>3</sup> who would be working with "Kittani's<sup>4</sup> 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.)<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> H.R. Malik, chairman of the East Pakistan Agriculture Development Corporation, charged with responsibility for administering the distribution of food.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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

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## 82. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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**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)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 29, 1971, 10:40 a.m.

S: I am going to send you over a copy of the bureaucratic talking papers<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 368, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> 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 article<sup>3</sup> on Sat.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>4</sup> June 26.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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**84. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>2</sup> Sisco added a handwritten marginal comment at this point that reads: “Banning Awami League makes political accommodation almost impossible.”

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**85. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 1, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your two recent messages<sup>2</sup> 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 Islamabad<sup>3</sup> 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 28<sup>4</sup> setting forth the framework

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Documents 76 and 82.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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 Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

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**87. Evening Briefing Notes Prepared for the President's  
Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

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."]

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<sup>1</sup> 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 133<sup>1</sup>

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**

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<sup>1</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>**

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

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## 90. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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## 91. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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 letter<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> 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.]<sup>3</sup>

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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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. Saunders<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

## 92. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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*.<sup>2</sup> 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."

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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. Saunders<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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### 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.

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#### 94. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>1</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Conversation<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 to 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."]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 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 message<sup>3</sup> 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 war<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> They feel that if Pakistan can make some effort to restore

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to Document 76.

<sup>4</sup> Neville Maxwell, *India’s China War* (New York: Anchor Books, 1971).

<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

**Harold H. Saunders<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> 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)

<sup>7</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>**

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Soviet Attitude on South Asia

Recent [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reports<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 87.

<sup>3</sup> 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)."

<sup>4</sup> 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.

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## 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)<sup>1</sup>

Rawalpindi, July 11, 1971.

SUBJECT

Your Talk with President Yahya

*In Your Absence*

Following the postponement of your departure Saturday,<sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>3</sup> who explained the food situation in the East (he is Presidential adviser on food and agriculture), and on M.M. Ahmad,<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. V, 16 May–31 Jul 71. Secret; Sensitive.

<sup>2</sup> July 10.

<sup>3</sup> 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)

<sup>4</sup> 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 afternoon<sup>5</sup> 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

101. Analytical Summary Prepared by the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 12, 1971.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING ON SOUTH ASIA

As directed by NSSM 133<sup>2</sup> an Ad Hoc Interagency Group chaired by State has prepared a paper on "Contingency Planning on South Asia."<sup>3</sup> As directed, the study includes:

—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 the coming weeks;

—a discussion of the options open to the U.S. should hostilities occur between India and Pakistan.

This is by far the best paper so far produced on the situation in South Asia. For the first time we have a vehicle for high level review of our posture and serious consideration of additional steps that might be taken.

*I. Present Strategy*

Our present strategy is based on the following major assumptions concerning U.S. interests and objectives in South Asia:

—The U.S. has no vital security interest in South Asia but as a global power we are inevitably concerned about the stability of an area where such a large percentage of mankind resides and which is geopolitically significant in terms of the Soviets and Communist Chinese.

—Both India and Pakistan are important to U.S. interests although India is of "potentially greater significance." Therefore, in formulating U.S. policy in the region the "relative preeminence" of our interests in India should be an underlying factor in the decisions which we make.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-058, SRG Meeting, South Asia, 7/23/71. Secret; Exdis. Sent to Kissinger on July 21 under cover of a memorandum from Harold Saunders and Richard Kennedy, who apparently drafted the summary. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Document 88.

<sup>3</sup> This 40-page paper, drafted in NEA/INC by Quainton and approved on July 9 by a State/Defense/CIA Ad Hoc committee, is summarized in the analytical summary, which is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 140. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-058, SRG Meeting, South Asia, 7/23/71)

—Peace is essential for the maintenance of U.S. interests. Therefore, our basic objective is to prevent hostilities between India and Pakistan. If hostilities do break out, it would be our objective to ensure that neither we nor any other major external power become directly involved.

—On an operational level, our objectives have been to maintain a “constructively close” relationship with India and “reasonable” relations with West Pakistan while avoiding steps which would do “irreparable damage” to a yet undefined future relationship with East Pakistan.

There are *three major ingredients to the strategy we have followed* since the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan on March 25.

1. *Restraint.* We have counseled restraint on both sides in hope of reducing the possibility of the situation in East Pakistan escalating into a war between India and Pakistan. On the Indian side this seems to have reinforced important elements inclined toward restraint, although contingency planning for an attack against East Pakistan continues and there is considerable public and parliamentary pressure for more forceful action. Our counsels of restraint in Pakistan have been “somewhat less successful.”

2. *International Assistance.* Because the refugee situation is the most likely proximate cause for escalation, we have concentrated considerable effort on lessening this burden for India. To date we have offered grants of \$70.5 million and a \$20 million supplemental development loan to India and have actively promoted the international relief effort of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. This, of course, leaves untouched the serious social and internal political problem generated by the refugees in India that we can do nothing about. On the Pakistan side, we have also actively promoted an international relief effort, both to deal with the immediate relief needs and to facilitate the return of the refugees. The West Pakistanis were initially very slow to respond but have in recent weeks been more receptive and a UN presence is in the process of being gradually established in East Pakistan. So far the U.S. has granted \$2 million for the chartering of boats to distribute food and other relief supplies and \$4.7 million for reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the coastal area affected by the cyclone last winter.

3. *Political Accommodation.* We have urged the West Pakistanis to proceed as expeditiously as possible with political accommodation in East Pakistan. Recognizing the complex and sensitive issues involved and the fact that Yahya may have only limited political flexibility, we have not attempted to spell out the details of such an accommodation beyond the need to deal with representative political leaders. These efforts have not yet led to a meaningful basis for a political settlement.

In addition to the above steps and in order to maintain a constructive relationship with the West Pakistanis, we have taken several other important policy decisions:

1. *Economic Assistance.* We have decided not to use our economic assistance to Pakistan as a lever for political pressure and have indicated that future assistance would be conditioned only on developmental and legislative criteria.

2. *Military Assistance.* We have taken the following restrictive actions concerning the shipment of arms to Pakistan:

—A temporary “hold” has been placed on the delivery of all FMS items from Department of Defense stocks.

—The Office of Munitions Control at State has been instructed to suspend the issuance of new licenses and renewal of expired licenses under either FMS or commercial sales.

—The one-time exception offer of lethal end items announced last October is being held in “abeyance”.

## *II. Limitations on Present Strategy*

The judgment of the paper is that although our present policy has had a limited effect in meeting the immediate requirements of the situation, it has *not provided the basis for a viable long-term resolution of the crisis.*

—The Indians have so far exercised restraint but the problem which the refugees represent and which India considers a threat to its vital interests remains unresolved. The Pakistanis have not created yet either the political, economic or social conditions for the return of most of the refugees.

—Some international relief assistance is reaching the refugees but it is not yet nearly enough to substantially reduce the economic burden on India. On the Pakistan side, relief and rehabilitation efforts are only starting to get underway.

—A viable political accommodation between East and West Pakistan appears to be only a remote possibility at this time.

The paper also concludes that our *economic and military supply policies toward Pakistan have done little to maintain the constructive relationships which we desire with both India and Pakistan.*

—The hold on all military shipments except those licensed before March 25 has not been received with favor in Islamabad where such shipments are of considerable psychological significance. The West Pakistanis have not, however, chosen to make political issue out of this yet.

—On the Indian side, our failure to embargo all arms shipments (coupled with State’s misleading handling of this issue) has resulted



in bitter criticism of U.S. motives and policies and has at least temporarily made it more difficult to carry on a constructive dialogue with India.

### III. *Additional Steps*

*The conclusion of the paper is that if we are to help preserve the peace in South Asia, to avoid enhanced Chinese and Soviet influence and to support political and economic development, additional new efforts will be required in each of the three major areas of our policy—restraint, international assistance, political accommodation.*

#### A. *Restraint* (pp. 7–13)

The paper judges that our efforts to achieve restraint will need to be continued either as long as conditions in East Pakistan do not return to normal, there is no political accommodation, and most of the refugees do not return or until the Indians recognize and accept that they have no alternative but to agree to the permanent resettlement in India of most of the refugees. It is thought the use of both diplomatic channels and public statements will be necessary. Specific action which we might take include:

1. *Public speech or statement* by either Secretary Rogers or the President outlining U.S. policy. This would include a call on India and Pakistan, and possibly other external powers, to exercise restraint while efforts were being made to cope with the refugee problem and achieve a political solution. Such a statement might also include an expression of our concern that efforts at reconstruction be accelerated in East Pakistan and a renewal of our commitment to humanitarian relief under the UN auspices on both sides of the border.

The *argument for* doing this is that it would put us more clearly on the record, demonstrate high-level concern, and might encourage other countries to join us in urging restraint.

The *argument against* is that such a statement would be resented by India, would only have a limited impact on decision-makers in both India and Pakistan, could intimidate other major powers.

2. *Consultations with the Soviets*, perhaps in a high-level approach, aimed at securing their cooperation with us in the maintenance of peace. This could include seeking Soviet support for a larger UN role and presence both in relief efforts and facilitating the return of the refugees.

The *argument for* doing this is that the Soviets probably have more influence with the Indians on this problem and in any event it would lay the basis for U.S.-Soviet cooperation if hostilities broke out. It would also be a positive response to a probe Dobrynin made to Secretary Rogers immediately after the fighting broke out in East Pakistan.

The *argument against* is that the Soviets might be reluctant to offend the Indians and could see our approach as an effort to weaken their position in New Delhi and obtain their de facto support for the West Pakistanis. The Chinese might be inclined to see a U.S.–USSR cooperative approach in South Asia as collusion against their interests.

3. *Discuss the Chinese threat with the Indians.* We would probably not wish to share our assessment with the Indians unless more direct evidence of Chinese intentions was available. We might, however, with the danger of escalation in mind, pass an alarmist assessment of Chinese intentions to Indians. In private discussions we could indicate that the Indians should not count on automatic implementation of our 1964 Air Defense Agreement<sup>4</sup> if China attacked as a result of an Indian attack on Pakistan.<sup>5</sup>

The *argument for* doing this is that it would indicate to the Indians the perils of attacking Pakistan and the sharing of intelligence would be a positive collaborative act.

The *argument against* is that any reference like this to the Air Defense Agreement would be regarded as a threat and bitterly resented. An alarmist assessment would risk seriously undermining our credibility in New Delhi since the Indians have fairly good intelligence on Chinese border activities.

4. *Seek to encourage Chinese restraint.* If the Chinese appeared poised to embark on a more aggressive and adventuristic policy toward South Asia, we might seek to urge restraint through third powers with missions in Peking. India could be informed of this effort in confidence.

The *argument for* this move is that it could head off disruptive Chinese involvement and would be viewed favorably by India.

The *argument against* is that it probably would not influence the Chinese and if the Chinese were responsive, it could act as an encouragement to Indian military action. Pressure on the Chinese could also have an adverse impact on our relations with Pakistan.

5. *UN involvement and presence in border areas.* We could encourage the UNHCR to seek placement of UN personnel in refugee camps and resettlement centers on both sides of the border, as an aid in assessing needs and deterring Indian cross-border activities.

The *argument for* this move is that it would provide an additional means of restraint.

The *argument against* is that it could provoke opposition that would endanger the UNHCR's broader relief role.

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<sup>4</sup> An apparent reference to the agreement signed in New Delhi on July 9, 1963; for text, see *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XIX, Document 307.

<sup>5</sup> Kissinger wrote "No" in the margin next to this paragraph.

B. *International Assistance* (pp. 14–20)

The paper notes that we have concentrated considerable effort in this area but that more is needed. Additional steps on which we should focus include (1) the creation of conditions conducive to the refugees' return, (2) planning for the permanent resettlement of at least some refugees, and (3) the encouragement of a more extensive UN role on both sides of the East Pakistan–India border.

1. *Conditions in East Pakistan Conducive to Return of Refugees.* We have already impressed on Yahya the need to create conditions conducive to the refugees' return and he has responded by (a) publicly indicating [*encouraging*] bona fide refugees' return irrespective of religion, (b) establishing some refugee reception centers near the border. Specific programs to assure the refugees that they will get their homes and property back, receive relief until they can re-establish themselves and will be compensated for damages have not yet been articulated. We could now, therefore, suggest to Yahya in conjunction with the UNHCR that programs to meet their needs be established. We might also offer to grant considerable quantities of PL-480 grain to be sold for rupees that would then be used to support a UN program of resettlement allowances and home reconstruction.

The *argument for* is that such moves would encourage the return of those refugees who are willing to go home prior to a political settlement. It might also encourage the Indians to continue to act with restraint by holding out the hope of a substantial refugee return.

The *argument against* is that the West Pakistanis might regard this as undue interference in their business, the UN program would be expensive, and, if not accompanied by steps toward political accommodation, could be seen by India as a retrogressive step.

2. *Conditions in India conducive to return of refugees.* The primary problem concerning refugee repatriation is in Pakistan but there are also additional steps which need to be taken in India. The paper recommends that we urge the Indians (a) to agree to a UN presence in the refugee camps, (b) to be flexible in setting political conditions on repatriation, and (c) to limit their support for cross-border operations.

The *argument for* is that, if it worked, this could maximize on the Indian side the likelihood that the refugees would return home.

The *argument against* is that such an approach would be resented by the Indians and, even if they agreed, it might only marginally increase the chances of a substantial refugee return.

3. *Permanent resettlement planning.* Since a substantial portion of the Hindu refugees may never return, we should consider (a) a possible UN role in resettlement coordination, (b) financial resources required to relocate refugees from the border areas, (c) AID initiatives to create labor-intensive work projects, (d) an initiative on Calcutta

redevelopment where many of the refugees will tend to eventually gravitate.

The *argument for* is that it is increasingly likely that most of the substantial portion of refugees who are Hindus will never return to East Pakistan, and it is only prudent to begin planning for their eventuality.

The *argument against* is for the time being any U.S. acknowledgment that most of the refugees might never return would be of considerable concern to India and resettlement activities might be prematurely rejected as out of hand.

4. *Enhanced relief contributions.* Contributions for relief from the international community have fallen far short of the minimum requirements. We should again encourage the UN and UNHCR to launch a more active campaign for contributions and support these efforts through our embassies. Simultaneously, we should encourage the Indians and Pakistanis to be more active in seeking international assistance.

The *argument for* is that this is essential if adequate resources are to be mobilized and would help meet Indian demands for a more adequate international response.

The *argument against* is that it could generate pressure for a very large U.S. contribution and does not deal with the political roots of the refugee problem.

### C. *Political Accommodation* (pp. 20–26)

While we need to continue to generally urge Yahya to work toward a political settlement, to be effective we need to be more direct in our suggestions as to the basic conditions for an East-West Pakistan political settlement and point out that failure to achieve this end could increase the dangers of escalation. Specifically, we might suggest the following:

1. *Shorter timetable for accommodation.* Under Yahya's current game plan there cannot be, under any circumstances, a transfer of power to the civilians before late October or early November which coincides with what could be the optimum time for an Indian attack on East Pakistan. It would be much preferable if Yahya by early September could at least give the appearance of having promulgated a firmly scheduled return to civilian rule having some democratic basis and involving a fair degree of regional autonomy.

The *argument for* is that this would support our efforts to maintain Indian restraint and could be the first step towards a longer term political settlement.

The *argument against* is that such a suggestion could be resented by Yahya as unnecessary interference and rejected as out of line with domestic political requirements.

2. *Lifting ban on Awami League.* We might indicate to Yahya our view that the Awami League is the only party in East Pakistan with a

genuine popular following and that Mujib is the only man capable of selling a viable political settlement to the Bengalis.

The *argument for* is that this is our honest judgment and, if accepted and acted upon, could offer the basis for a lasting political accommodation.

The *argument against* is that Yahya might well reject this approach from us and in fact bitterly resent it.

3. *Indian flexibility.* In tandem with our dialogue with Yahya we might also emphasize to the Indians the need for them to remain flexible on the terms of a political settlement and to conduct their relations with the representatives of “Bangla Desh” with circumspection.

The *argument for* is that this would reinforce policies India is already pursuing.

The *argument against* is that the Indians might regard it as gratuitous advice at best.

4. *UNSYG involvement.* We could encourage the UN Secretary General to adopt a more open political role as one means of mobilizing other forms of international opinion on behalf of political accommodation.

The *argument for* is that, if successful, it could bring greater pressure on Yahya to move more rapidly on political accommodation. It would follow logically from the UN relief efforts and prolong, at a minimum, the talking stage between the parties.

The *argument against* is that such a move might not be welcomed by either the UNSYG or Yahya and hence might use up political capital in an unsuccessful effort.

5. *Third party involvement.* Other third parties might be willing, if encouraged, to use their good offices in helping to resolve either the East-West Pakistan problem or the Indo-Pakistan problem. Muslim states with good relations with Pakistan, like Iran, Turkey or Jordan might be useful in the former role whereas neutral states like Ceylon or Malaysia might be used in the latter case. A five-power international conference of the main externally involved powers (USSR, US, China, UK and France) is another possibility at some stage.

The *argument for* is that any other angle on multinational mediation effort would provide a protective facade behind which difficult compromises might be made.

The *argument against* smaller powers are unlikely to be very successful in efforts between these Asian giants and conflicting great power interests might hinder a five-power approach.

6. *UNHCR facilitative role* for the return of the refugees. This would require Indian acceptance of UNHCR representative in the refugee

camps and acceptance of UNHCR representative in reception centers across the borders.

The *argument for* is that an effective UNHCR facilitative role could be an important measure for assuring the refugees about the safety in going home.

The *argument against* is that the Indians are not inclined to have UN representatives in the refugee camps and pressure on them to do so could be abrasive to our bilateral relations.

7. *Resort to Security Council.* We would seek an even-handed Security Council resolution calling on both parties to reduce tensions and urging all states to promote peace and stability in South Asia.

The *argument for* is that it might help deter dramatic actions on the ground, demonstrate our parallel interests with the Soviets and, with the UN in the middle, preserve U.S. credentials and leverage and provide a basis for a further UN mediation effort.

The *argument against* is that it would be an empty gesture with no enforcement capability and the session could easily degenerate into an Indo-Pak shouting match. It might also detract from more productive quiet diplomacy. Finally, the Pakistanis might oppose the whole affair on the grounds that it constituted interference in internal affairs.

#### IV. *Military and Economic Programs* (pp. 26–30)

Our military and economic aid programs take on considerable significance in view of our desire to develop cooperative relations with both India and Pakistan.

A. *Military supply.* Our military sales to Pakistan are of paramount psychological and practical significance to the West Pakistanis. Our current even limited supply of arms to Pakistan has been strongly criticized by India and our handling of this issue has further damaged our capacity to influence India in the direction we desire. At the same time the West Pakistanis are likely to become increasingly dissatisfied with our current policy and it is highly vulnerable with the Congress.

The paper recommends a "suspension" of all shipments of arms to Pakistan, "in order to restore a degree of credibility to our calls for restraint and to support the relative preeminence of our interests in India." Once peaceful conditions are restored and a satisfactory political settlement achieved, we could review this suspension. The paper notes that if we wished to stop short of public announcement of such a suspension, we might simply say we had decided to review the remaining items in the pipeline, clearly implying that the more sensitive items would not be shipped.

The *arguments for* are that such a policy would:

—support our primary interest in influencing India to act with restraint;

- significantly improve relations with India;
- remove a difficult issue with Congress and lessen public criticism;
- have a positive impact on the Bengalis and ultimately on any future relations with East Pakistan.

The *arguments against* such a policy include that it would:

- seriously irritate the West Paks and greatly reduce our influence with them;
- increase Chinese influence as the major arms suppliers;
- perhaps lead to more intransigent West Pakistani positions on military actions against the Bengalis and political accommodation;
- perhaps encourage India to take military action against Pakistan.

B. *Economic Assistance*. The paper recommends that we continue to adhere to a policy of not conditioning aid politically but insisting on developmental criteria which will ensure that both East as well as West Pakistan will benefit from our resources. Economic aid, within this context, is viewed as a carrot which we are holding out before the Pakistanis and which may be important if we are to have an effect in dealing with sensitive political subjects such as political accommodation with Mujib.

The *arguments for* include:

- make non-political and less controversial economic aid the major positive ingredient in our relations with Pakistan;
- is consistent with worldwide policies we follow;
- indicates our continuing concern for Pakistan's developmental prospects and protects our past inputs;
- to a degree counters Chinese influence;
- consistent with approach of other major aid donors.

The *arguments against* include:

- developmental criteria if strictly imposed could result in very little aid and ultimately the erosion of our credibility and influence in Pakistan;
- if we do not ease his foreign exchange problems, Yahya may be forced into intransigent political positions;
- any aid to Pakistan will be resented by India, although if it was clearly conditioned on developmental terms would not necessarily be a major negative factor in our relations.

V. *Options in the Event of Hostilities* (pp. 32–35)

The policies suggested in the paper and outlined above would reinforce the intrinsic negative factors working against an Indian decision to attack Pakistan. Nonetheless there is still *a significant possibility that a war could erupt between India and Pakistan during the next three to six months.*

The judgment of the paper is that *if no progress is made toward political accommodation between East and West Pakistan or on the repatriation of the refugees by September or October the chances for hostilities will increase.*

Our actions in the event of another Indo-Pak war would in part be determined by the circumstances in which hostilities broke out. The most likely scenarios are an Indian attack on East Pakistan to “liberate” the area or a gradual process of escalations involving border incidents on both sides. In any event *it would be in the U.S. interest to see that hostilities do not expand to include third parties, particularly China.* It would also, according to the paper, be in our interest:

—to see that the hostilities were not protracted since a prolonged war could do profound damage to the political, economic and social fabric of both India and Pakistan.

—If India attacked, *our interests would be best served by a rapid Indian victory in East Pakistan followed by a swift withdrawal and installation of a Bangla Desh government and a stalemate on the Western front which left West Pakistan intact.* The problem would be how to insure Indian withdrawal and limitation of the conflict in the West.

Irrespective of our political posture toward hostilities, various U.S. programs in India and Pakistan would be immediately affected. The paper recommends that contingency planning by appropriate U.S. agencies should be undertaken along the following lines:

1. U.S. ships destined to India and Pakistan should be warned not to call at belligerent ports if carrying cargo for both belligerents, since it will most likely be confiscated. (Confiscated cargoes caused considerable problems in 1965 which we are still trying to straighten out.)
2. MAC and commercial air carriers should have contingency arrangements for overflying the area without stopping in either India or Pakistan, since the fighting may include the bombing of air fields.
3. Evacuation plans should be reviewed for all posts in India and Pakistan for implementation on short notice.
4. Intelligence collection should be increased to provide the maximum advance warning of Chinese intentions. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

*The U.S., according to the paper, could pursue one of the following three broad strategies in the event of hostilities between India and Pakistan:*

1. *Passive international role.* The U.S. would assume an essentially passive role toward the conflict indicating our basic neutrality. This would be most appropriate in circumstances where the responsibility for the outbreak of war was unclear or where we judged the likelihood of Chinese military involvement to be small. It would not do irreparable harm to our interests in either country. This posture would also allow us to adopt a mediating position encouraging a negotiated political set-



tlement when circumstances made such a role possible. Such an approach would not be appropriate if there were a prolonged conflict. In pursuing these options we could

- adopt a public posture of neutrality;
- support third party efforts to end hostilities;
- suspend all economic and military aid;
- offer good offices.

The *argument for* is that U.S. involvement would be at a minimum and we would at the same time maintain maximum flexibility as events unfolded. Also our relationship with both India and Pakistan would be preserved.

The *argument against* is that we would risk serious damage to our interests if the conflict were protracted. Indian dependence on the Soviets and Pakistani dependence on the Chinese could be increased without any significant gain for the U.S.

2. *Military Support.* At the other extreme would be a decision to support with military assistance either India *or* Pakistan. We have limited commitments to both sides (through SEATO and CENTO to Pakistan and the 1964 Air Defense Agreement with India) although there is no provision for automatic U.S. involvement.

(a) *To Pakistan.* If the U.S. decided to assist Pakistan in the case of clear Indian aggression we could:

- develop an emergency military supply program;
- terminate all programs to India;
- take lead in mobilizing international effort to pressure India to halt aggression;
- support a Security Council resolution condemning India.

The *argument for:* we would be supporting our interest in Pakistan's national unity, diminishing Chinese influence and generally strengthening our relations with the whole Muslim world.

The *argument against* is that we would severely damage our relations with India who would move closer to the Soviets. There would also be no room for a U.S. conciliatory role.

(b) *To India.* The judgment of the paper is that military support to India is a "less likely" strategy in the context of a limited Indo-Pak conflict, but *if China were to intervene we would want to consider military assistance to India.*<sup>6</sup> It might even be possible, if China intervened, to mil-

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<sup>6</sup> In his memoirs, Kissinger points to the contingencies considered in the planning paper in the event of Chinese intervention in a conflict between India and Pakistan and concludes: "Nothing more contrary to the President's foreign policy could have been imagined." (*White House Years*, p. 865)

itarily support India and launch peacemaking efforts that would allow us to maintain a viable future relationship with the West Pakistanis. Specific action we might take would include:

- consultation with India under the 1964 Air Defense Agreement;
- develop an emerging military assistance program;
- [1 paragraph (1 line of source text) not declassified]
- coordinate with British and Soviets on additional military assistance measures.

The *argument for* is that it would be consistent with our overall Asian policy and would establish a firm basis for a close relationship with India, perhaps at the expense of the Soviets.

The *argument against* is that severe strains would be created in our relations with Pakistan and China. There would also be the risk of creeping involvement leading to a more extensive commitment involving a direct U.S. confrontation with one or more outside powers.

3. *Political intervention.* The main purpose of political efforts would be to localize and end hostilities. We would also work vigorously for a negotiated settlement that would remove the basic causes for tension in South Asia. Such an effort would involve:

- an immediate call for Security Council consideration of the crisis.
- support of a Security Council resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire and direct negotiations on the terms of withdrawal and political settlement.
- immediate Presidential message to Yahya and/or Mrs. Gandhi calling for end of hostilities and/or a negotiated settlement.
- immediate consultations with British and Soviets.

If there were a clear case of Indian aggression we would also want to cut off all military shipments to India and hold economic assistance in abeyance.

If the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of war were unclear, we would want to cut off military supply and consider suspending all economic aid to both India and Pakistan. We would urge other major powers to follow suit.

The *arguments for* include:

- would provide maximum U.S. flexibility;
- would maximize use of U.S. programs and leverage to shorter hostilities and prevent third party intervention;
- would make it possible to maintain relations with both India and Pakistan (and perhaps Bangla Desh as well) in the aftermath of hostilities.

The *arguments against* include:

- could lead to very serious strains in our relations with India;
  - would be seen by Pakistan as a repetition of our future [failure] to help them and as a failure of the U.S. to fulfill its treaty commitments.
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## 102. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, July 15, 1971, 1235Z.

7164. Subj: Conversation With Pres. Yahya Khan: Food Situation East Pakistan.

1. I met with Pres. Yahya Kahn in President's office in Rawalpindi at 1000 hours Thursday, July 15. Conversation ensued for approximately 35 minutes.

2. I emphasized our serious concerns about possibility of famine developing in East Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> I pointed out that if famine conditions developed, people will sustain further widespread suffering, GOP will be faced with additional major public relations problem, and substantial new exodus of refugees may occur. I informed President of USAID estimates of rice production and food gap and stated that unless heroic efforts made, famine conditions are likely to prevail. I emphasized that efforts to date have been less than adequate. The GOP has been reluctant to admit possibility of famine and consequently problems of food and transport have not been dealt with sufficient urgency. I pointed out that it was essential that GOP face up to the very real possibility of a major food crisis and begin developing, on a top priority basis, contingency plans for dealing with such a crisis.

3. I noted that the results of the efforts to improve food transportation have been very disappointing, pointing out that during June shipments were less than half of the amounts which could reasonably

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, SOC 10 PAK. Confidential; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to USUN, Geneva, Dacca, Karachi, and Lahore.

<sup>2</sup> On July 23 the Consulate General in Dacca warned that unless steps were taken to prevent famine in East Pakistan anticipated deaths from mass starvation could approach the catastrophe of the Bengal famine of 1943 in which millions of people died. (Telegram 2814 from Dacca; *ibid.*)

be expected. I told the President that we hoped that grain shipments up country would be at least 100,000 tons in July and 125,000 in August.

4. I advised the President of the actions we were taking to permit shipment of 100,000 tons of wheat, and emphasized that it was the responsibility of the GOP to insure that these shipments are received, unloaded and distributed expeditiously.

5. I also pointed out that efforts must be made to increase purchasing power in East Pakistan so that a situation will not arise in which people will go hungry or starve because they cannot afford to buy food which is available. I urged the President to authorize a special allocation of at least rupees 20 crore, over and above existing budgets, for immediate expenditure on relief and public works activities in East Pakistan.

6. In conclusion I referred to our misgivings about the present relief coordinator, Mr. H.R. Malik, and suggested that he be replaced with a more dynamic officer.

7. Yahya said that he had carefully studied the Ryan report<sup>3</sup> which I had heretofore given to him, and from it and his own government's sources of information he was considerably concerned by the problem presented by the food situation. He said that as a result of my suggestion to him that a "food czar" should be appointed, a suggestion reflected in the Ryan report, he had as of yesterday appointed the former head of the Chittagong Port Authority, retired Commodore Bajwa, as his personal representative with superior power to act in alleviation of the problem. He further said that as a result of his concern for East Pakistan and the multitude of issues that it presented, he would be going over to Dacca within the next two weeks. He added that during his visit he would carefully examine all facets of the present difficulties, with particular reference to the comments that I had made to him.

8. Another subject that was discussed during this conversation will be reported by septel.<sup>4</sup>

**Farland**

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<sup>3</sup> The Ryan report was a survey of the East Pakistan port and shipping situation prepared in June 1971 by Joseph A. Ryan of the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the request of M.M. Ahmad. (Telegram 6395 from Islamabad, June 25; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 625, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. V, 16 May-31 Jul 1971)

<sup>4</sup> During the same conversation, Farland urged Yahya to replace General Tikka Khan, the Governor of East Pakistan, with a civilian governor, preferably a Bengali. Yahya replied that it would be difficult to appoint a civilian governor in East Pakistan and not in West Pakistan, where Bhutto was "standing in the wings" urging a transfer of power. Yahya said that he had just appointed Dr. A.M. Malik as his Special Assistant for Displaced Persons and Relief and Rehabilitation Operations in East Pakistan. Yahya felt that Malik's appointment would meet the need for civilian control in East Pakistan in that Malik would outrank the governor of East Pakistan and could issue orders to the governor in the name of the President. (Telegram 7172 from Islamabad, July 15; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 18 PAK)

### 103. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

San Clemente, California, July 16, 1971, 10:57 a.m.–12:06 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

NSC Meeting on the Middle East and South Asia

#### PARTICIPANTS

The President  
Secretary of State, William Rogers  
Deputy Secretary of Defense, David Packard  
Admiral Thomas Moorer, Chairman JCS  
Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence  
U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary of State  
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President  
Brigadier General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Deputy Assistant to the President  
Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State  
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

The President opened the meeting by pointing out that there are enormous risks in the situation in South Asia for our China policy. There are risks for the Indians and Pakistanis, too. He suggested that the discussion begin with the Middle East and then turn to a briefer discussion of South Asia. That is one problem that must be watched very closely. The Indians are stirring it up. If they mess around on this one, they will not find much sympathy here.

[Omitted here is discussion of the situation in the Middle East.]

The President then turned the discussion to South Asia. With a smile, he asked Dr. Kissinger, “Did you really have a stomach ache?”

Secretary Rogers said that the press thinks it is so smart but it was certainly gullible to assume that if Dr. Kissinger had had a stomach ache he would have driven four hours to have a special lunch with General Hamid.

The President started out by saying that the purpose of the discussion was to get the South Asian situation into perspective. For obvious considerations, he said that he would have to be personally involved. First, he said that it is imperative that the Pakistanis, if possible, not be embarrassed at this point. He said that we could ask them to do what they can on the refugees. Second, he said that he had talked

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-110, NSC Minutes, Originals, 1971 thru 6/20/74. Top Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on August 4. The time of the meeting is from the President’s Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files) The meeting was held in the conference room at the Western White House.

to Ambassador Keating. He had noted that world opinion is on the side of the Indians and they may be right. However, they are "a slippery, treacherous people." He felt that they would like nothing better than to use this tragedy to destroy Pakistan. In any case, they have built a heavy press campaign against the US. But now intelligence reports show that they are developing a capability to "ramble around" in East Pakistan. He felt that if the Indians believed that they could get away with it they would like to undercut the Pakistani government.

The President asked what restraints could be applied to the Indians. He acknowledged that he has "a bias" on this subject. But under no circumstances would they get a "dime of aid, if they mess around in East Pakistan." He said that we could not allow—over the next three-four months until "we take this journey" to Peking—a war in South Asia if we can possibly avoid it.

The President asked whether the government of Pakistan would fight if they were attacked. Mr. Helms replied, "Yes." Admiral Moorer said he felt that the Pakistanis would not attack India.

Mr. Helms noted that the pressures are building in India to go to war. The President said that the situation "smells bad." The Indians are not to be trusted.

Dr. Kissinger said he agreed that the Indians seemed bent on war. Everything they have done is an excuse for war. Their claim to have been deceived by State on our arms policy looks like an alibi to go to war. Whatever their objective might ostensibly be, they appear to be thinking of using the war as a way of destroying Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger said that he believed that if East Pakistan were attacked, President Yahya would start an all-out war. He would lose it.

The President asked what the Chinese would do.

Dr. Kissinger said he thought the Chinese would come in. He said that the Indians are "insufferably arrogant." The army chief of staff, General Mannekshaw, said that India would take on East Pakistan, West Pakistan, and China, all at once. He said that it was his impression that if we do not "over-power the question of war, India would slide into it." The way that they are hooking a refugee solution to an overall political solution suggests that they are using the refugees for political purposes.

Dr. Kissinger continued that he does not feel that President Yahya has the imagination to solve the political situation in East Pakistan in time. Over a longer period, 70,000 West Pakistanis are not going to hold down East Pakistan. So our objective should be to start some historical evolution which will lead to the inevitable outcome in East Pakistan. But that is not going to happen tomorrow—it will not happen in time to achieve a refugee settlement and to head off an Indian attack.

Therefore, he had urged President Yahya to come [up] with the most comprehensive possible refugee package.

The President interjected that President Yahya is not a politician.

Dr. Kissinger said that he had urged President Yahya to come up with a generous settlement on the refugee issue so that India would lose that card as an excuse for intervention. He concluded that if there is an international war and China does get involved, everything we have done [with China] will go down the drain.

Secretary Rogers said that, as far as he could tell, India is doing everything it can to prevent the refugees from returning. Dr. Kissinger replied that if we kept publicizing a reasonable program for the return of refugees, it would be more difficult for the Indians to go to war on that issue.

Mr. Sisco said it is important to get an international program on the refugees moving. He said that he had told Ambassador Jha that India is in an untenable position. He said that it is important for India to come up with a well-orchestrated program.

Mr. Helms commented that, in the meantime, the Pakistanis are going broke. Mr. Johnson interjected that the Pakistanis face a major famine in East Pakistan.

Secretary Rogers interjected that the tragedy is that Pakistan as presently constituted cannot survive.

The President, changing the subject, said that he was going to brief the legislative leaders on Monday<sup>2</sup> on his China policy. He proposed to tell them nothing of the substance of the exchanges with Chou En-lai. And he would also have a Cabinet meeting to do the same thing.

Dr. Kissinger said that he had backgrounded the press on his visit to Peking but that he had not gone into the substance of the exchanges with Chou En-lai. He has simply provided the rationale for the trip.

The President said that the press would speculate on the impact of his announcement on China for Vietnam policy, South Asia, Japanese policy, effect on Taiwan and the USSR.

Dr. Kissinger noted that silence on our side was important because the Chinese had already suffered a great deal of anguish over maintaining the appearance that they are not colluding with us. The best line we can take is that we want friendly relations with everybody.

Admiral Moorer, on a separate issue, said that Senator Stennis had asked him to tell the President that he has gone as far as he can go on

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<sup>2</sup> July 19.

the draft bill.<sup>3</sup> Senator Stennis felt that Senator Mansfield is the key and that he is on the verge of coming along if somebody could just approach him.

**Harold H. Saunders<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>4</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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#### **104. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 23, 1971, 12:50–1:18 p.m.

##### **PARTICIPANTS**

Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan  
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President  
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

Ambassador Hilaly began the conversation by saying that in his talk with Secretary Rogers<sup>2</sup> the previous day the Secretary had said that he had given Indian Foreign Minister Singh a further warning against letting increasing incidents on the Pakistan–India border get out of hand. This had indicated to him that the US was maintaining its pressure on India. Dr. Kissinger said that when he had seen Ambassador Jha in San Clemente, he had made clear that any Indian move to begin hostilities would be looked on by the US with extreme disfavor.

Ambassador Hilaly noted that President Yahya had announced Pakistan's acceptance of UN personnel in East Pakistan to facilitate the return of refugees. In response to Dr. Kissinger's question, the Ambassador affirmed that President Yahya had appointed a civil administrator—Dr. Malik—to oversee the refugee repatriation program in East Pakistan.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on July 24. 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)

<sup>2</sup> Ambassador Hilaly's meeting with Secretary Rogers was reported to Islamabad in telegrams 134599 and 134643, both July 24. Telegram 134599 is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 17 PAK–US. Telegram 134643 is Document 107.



Dr. Kissinger said that Pakistan has not been good at its public relations. What Pakistan needs is a comprehensive refugee program. Instead of dribbling out its actions one by one, Pakistan needed to draw them all together into a program to which we could point. He said that he had talked to Mr. McNamara of the World Bank, and he had said that he could support a maximum food and relief effort.

Ambassador Hilaly said that Pakistan is getting that kind of help from AID. What Pakistan needs from the World Bank is straight economic assistance. The Bank has given a wrong lead to the other consortium members. He then mentioned some of the comments made by members of the recent World Bank team which had visited Pakistan. One member had said that East Pakistan looked like “*Arnheim after the Nazi blitz*” and another said that it looked like “*a country after a nuclear attack.*” Hilaly commented that these were not the comments of a dispassionate group.

Dr. Kissinger said that he had talked with the British again, here and through “*the direct channel.*” The Ambassador said that he had talked to a number of members of Parliament when he had passed through London on his return from Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger returned to the question of a comprehensive refugee package. He recalled that when he had talked to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan in Islamabad he had suggested the idea of a comprehensive package which included UN personnel, a civil administrator in East Pakistan and so on.

Ambassador Hilaly noted the trouble that Pakistan is having with the US Senate and House. He wondered whether a package arrangement of the kind Dr. Kissinger was discussing would help there. He felt that many of the members were so strong in their feeling that their views would remain unchanged.

Dr. Kissinger repeated that what would help us most in our approaches to the Congress would be a comprehensive Pakistani program which we could point to. We could then argue that we had been able to achieve more with friendship and working with the Pakistan government than with the kind of pressure a number of members of the Congress were proposing. He went on to suggest that if Pakistan had a three-point or a five-point Pakistani refugee program pooling everything together and going as far on each point as possible, then the US would have a framework within which to argue for continued support for Pakistan.

Ambassador Hilaly—seeming to miss the overall import of Dr. Kissinger’s comments—said that he hoped the Administration would use influence with some of the Republicans in the Congress. He had had an invitation from Congressman Frelinghuysen to talk informally to a group of 20 or so of his colleagues. He also had been advised that

Senator Kennedy wants to go to India and Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger replied, "Let him go."

Ambassador Hilaly replied that a couple of Senator Kennedy's aides had been very difficult. One of them had even said that he was going to India and would try to enter Pakistan across the Indian border. The Ambassador said that he had pointed out to Senator Kennedy that this would be illegal.

The Ambassador then returned to an earlier subject: "So Jha came to the West Coast. Did he ask about China's intentions?"

Dr. Kissinger, speaking slowly and avoiding precise response, said that Jha had just wanted to get a general fill-in. He said that he had told Jha that we are violently opposed to any moves that could lead to war. He had told him that a complete political solution would take longer than working out a plan for the refugees, so the Indians should not condition refugee return on political settlement.

Dr. Kissinger reiterated that any ammunition that Pakistan could give us would help us. He said he would talk to Senator Scott. Ambassador Hilaly said he would send Dr. Kissinger a note, implying that the note would contain the elements of the package Dr. Kissinger was talking about. [*Comment: When that note arrived, it turned out to be simply a recapitulation of the things that Pakistan had said and done on the refugee question since the spring. It was not a new package such as Dr. Kissinger was talking about.*]<sup>3</sup> Dr. Kissinger said that maybe the Foreign Secretary could incorporate other ideas, in addition to those that Dr. Kissinger had mentioned.

Dr. Kissinger, changing the subject back to China, repeated that "our gratitude is very great." Ambassador Hilaly said that he had recalled in his conversation with Secretary Rogers the evolution of the China contacts. He recalled that there had been Secretary Rogers' 1969 visit in which the Secretary had mentioned the President's interest in improving relations with China. Then there had been the President's visit to Lahore, in which the President himself had mentioned this to President Yahya. After that, there had been two schools of thought:

—One school, following the thinking of former President Ayub, felt that Pakistan should continue to be neutral between the major world powers.

—Another school, however, felt that here were two friends of Pakistan, the US and China. Why should Pakistan not make an effort to bring the two together? The argument was that Pakistan would contribute to world peace and help itself as well as others.

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<sup>3</sup> Brackets in the source text. The note was not found.

The Ambassador continued, saying that he remembered arguing that it was one of the world's curses that the US and China had not talked for 20 years. It was an ill that had to be cured. International relations would be artificial until a normal relationship was established. President Yahya had accepted the Ambassador's argument. He had rejected the idea that Pakistan should not offend the Russians or the Indians. He concluded that the Russians are "upset" and may withdraw some bits of their aid to Pakistan.

As the conversation concluded, Dr. Kissinger reiterated that he hoped that Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan would review the conversation they had had in Islamabad and would put his mind to assembling a comprehensive Pakistani package on the refugee question.

H.S.

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## 105. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 23, 1971, 4:10–5:30 p.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin, II

Joseph Sisco

Thomas P. Thornton

Christopher Van Hollen

Defense

Armistead I. Selden

James Noyes

B/Gen. Devol Brett

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Col. James M. Connell

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

Maurice Williams

Donald McDonald

NSC Staff

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Jeanne W. Davis

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG 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 the Director of the Near East and South Asia Region, Brigadier General Devol Brett. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 092 (Jan–Jul 1971))

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that

—The State Department will prepare by early next week a paper outlining what we see as a desirable outcome of the imbroglio in East Pakistan and a scenario for discussions with the Pakistanis, the Indians and possibly the Russians, including some concrete ideas on what we want each side to do.

—We will get a statement of food requirements in East Pakistan, what is already there, the distribution problems, and the amount of the shortfall.

—Mr. Kissinger will raise with the President the question of the lapsing on August 10 of the licenses for further shipments of military equipment to Pakistan to determine if the President wishes to put this degree of pressure on Pakistan at this time.

—The SRG will meet again on the question late next week (subsequently scheduled for Friday, July 30).

Mr. Kissinger: I thought we should have a review of South Asia growing out of the NSC meeting<sup>2</sup> last week. Since I see our whole SALT position is in the *New York Times* today, I am beginning to think we should have a responsible newsman sitting in on these meetings.

As you know, the President has asked for a game plan for the next two or three months, and we have a number of problems. I want to be sure everyone understands that there is to be no India–Pakistan war if we can prevent it; we are to do absolutely nothing that might egg anyone on. There should be no doubt in anyone’s mind that there will be a drastic U.S. reaction if anyone resorts to military measures. I think the President made that very clear, but I can get it restated for you if necessary. The Indians should be under no illusion that if they go to war there will be unshirted hell to pay. We want to avoid a war and we will do the right things to prevent it.

Mr. Sisco: I agree: It is in our overriding interest to prevent a war. But the way we handle the Indians can either deter them or move them toward war.

Mr. Kissinger: That’s true.

Mr. Sisco: If we assume that the only way to move the Indians is with a stick, I don’t think we understand the Indian psychology. We need a combination of carrot and stick and some concentration on the proper way to use our leverage. Psychology and mood are important in terms of making the Indians believe that we are doing what we can to be helpful.

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 103.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree, and we are quite prepared to do that, but the Indians must not be under any misapprehension. We will do everything we can to ease the refugee problem as long as India understands the consequences of any rash action on their part.

Mr. Irwin: This is the key to the situation. The Indians are suspicious of us—they think we are pro-Pakistan. They will understand pressure if they believe we seriously want to help. But such pressure won't work unless we continue to push the Pakistanis so that the flow of refugees slows or stops, with some possibility of the return of the refugees to East Pakistan or the achievement of some political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree; we must make the greatest effort to get the refugee flow to stop. The Indians are not generating any refugees, are they? Or are they just discouraging them from going back?

Mr. Sisco: This will take simultaneous action on both sides. So that, as far as Pakistan is concerned, political accommodation is at the root of the problem. There are, of course, certain limitations on what Yahya can do. In his June 28 speech, he promised a turnover of power in East Pakistan in four months. I may think this is as far as he can go. We must recognize, however, that real progress is unlikely if a turnover of political power is coupled with a banning of the Awami League. The June 28 speech was a step forward but it was inadequate in producing a serious prospect of political accommodation, and we must encourage Yahya to do more in this regard. Yahya has been very good about accepting a UN presence and in declaring amnesty and inviting the refugees back to their villages. But he has not moved the army back to their barracks, primarily because they are still needed to deal with incidents throughout East Pakistan. India is still supporting the liberation movement including assisting border crossings. Any advice we might give Yahya to put his army back in their barracks won't get anywhere as long as the situation prevails. On the other side of the coin, although we gave India \$50 million to help with the refugees, they are refusing U Thant's request for a UN presence on the Indian side of the border.

Mr. Kissinger: The Indian Ambassador told me they considered the UN request for observers an unfriendly act.

Mr. Sisco: I agree, we have to support the Secretary General on both sides. India is linking the return of the refugees to some political accommodation. To the degree to which this is likely, that is all to the good. But these actions must be taken in parallel. We also should possibly find a way to begin to engage the Russians.<sup>3</sup> We have a common

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<sup>3</sup> Kissinger discussed the emerging confrontation between India and Pakistan with Ambassador Dobrynin on July 19. Kissinger said that he had received reports that the

interest here to see that the situation does not explode. There are responsible actions which need to be taken by both sides, accepting the fact that they are operating under some limitations.

Mr. Irwin: I agree basically. But in order to get India in a position to move, it would be helpful to get the UN moving on the Pakistani side. It would be helpful if we could get the flow of refugees down to the point where the UN could say "now we need a UN presence on the Indian side, too." We should continue to push India toward moving the refugees back but we may not be successful until there is broader pressure. One way would be to move the UN into Pakistan first.

Mr. Kissinger: Yahya is not making his acceptance of UN presence dependent on acceptance by India.

Mr. Sisco: That's right; the Pakistanis have already responded favorably.

Mr. Kissinger: There is no question that this is an issue of profound emotion to the Indians. My impression is that the Indians have a tendency to build to hysteria from which they won't know how to escape. They could bring about a major confrontation, and I am not confident that China would not come in in the circumstances.

Mr. Sisco: I agree that the Indian psychology is such that they may well paint themselves into a corner to the point that the only alternative they can see is the use of force. Given this mood, something like a continued supply of arms to Pakistan could build up disproportionately until the Indians lock themselves in.

Mr. Kissinger: But the Indians know that the amount of arms that is moving is rather small. They know we have held in abeyance the one-time exception, and that that was a big step. They also know they have received more U.S. aid than any other nation. However, when I was there, their press was vicious and they made no effort to calm it down. I wonder whether this is the result of the situation or whether it is helping to create it. If we assume that the question of human suffering is a big factor in the Indian outrage (although I have my own views on the Indian attitude toward human suffering), if they knock off East Pakistan, it will produce an upheaval, with untold additional human suffering in West Pakistan. I don't think the Indians have a master plan but they could slide into a major crisis.

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Soviet Union might encourage military adventures by India. Dobrynin replied that the Soviet Union was providing political support to India but was actively discouraging military adventures. Kissinger warned that a war between India and Pakistan could not be localized in East Pakistan and might not be confined to the subcontinent. (Memorandum of conversation, July 19; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 7, Part 2)

Mr. Irwin: With regard to military equipment to Pakistan, we might consider my talking to Jha and telling him exactly how much is involved to prove to him that the amounts are very small.

Mr. Kissinger: I have told them that. I have no specific view on your suggestion, but we must strike a balance between excessive reassurance and excessive frightening.

Mr. Irwin: Jha has said that we have helped them economically but never politically. They're really schizophrenic. They appreciate what we have done for them but are distrustful of us. Of course, they have never been with us politically.

Mr. Sisco: When many Americans think of India they think of Krishna Menon, and that's not an inaccurate image.

Mr. Kissinger: On the Pakistani side, it is my impression that Yahya and his group would never win any prizes for high IQs or for the subtlety of their political comprehension. They are loyal, blunt soldiers, but I think they have a real intellectual problem in understanding why East Pakistan should not be part of West Pakistan. You will never get acceptance of the Awami League from the present structure. If India attacks, it will be in the next six months. The Pakistanis will not put the Awami League back in power in the next six months. It seems inevitable that any political process will end with some degree of autonomy for East Bengal. Can we get a program that separates the refugee issue while still leaving a vista for political accommodation? The Pakistanis don't have the political imagination to do this themselves.

Mr. Helms: I agree Yahya simply does not see any political solution.

Mr. Sisco: If the Indians come to the conclusion that there is no hope of any accommodation, this continued frustration could lead to what we would consider irrational Indian action.

Mr. Kissinger: The Indians have a right to want to get the refugees off their territory but they have no right to insist on any particular political formula to do so.

Mr. Irwin: I know the Prime Minister told you they would not insist on any formula but Jha is insisting on reinstatement of the Awami League.

Mr. Kissinger: That's true. They are at the same time supporting a liberation movement and saying that the Awami League has to come back. If we can get a planned program geared to the refugees coming back we might have a chance to pressure Yahya. He has been pretty good about the refugees.

Mr. Irwin: He has been good in what he says but we have some [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] indications that this is just a front. (to Mr. Helms) Does Yahya really intend to get many Hindu refugees back?

Mr. Helms: We just don't know with any certainty.

Mr. Sisco: There were two factors in the use of force against the Hindus: (1) the fact that the primitive Punjabi peasants really took it out on the Hindus, and (2) the basic Pakistan policy of getting rid of the Hindus. If Yahya does what he says he will do, I think he will get 90-95 percent of the Moslems back and maybe 50 percent of the Hindus. Our posture has to be that all refugees come back.

Mr. Kissinger: We could press Yahya on that, but not on accepting the Awami League. If we press him on the Awami League and he refused, that could be the basis for an Indian attack.

Mr. Sisco: We will have to nudge Yahya toward the Awami League. We will also have to do what we can to see that he does not try Mujib.<sup>4</sup> I will weigh in with Hilaly on that.

Mr. Helms: But as long as the liberation forces are shooting up East Pakistan, nothing will really help.

Mr. Irwin: Are there any Awami Leaguers left in East Pakistan that Yahya could deal with?

Mr. Kissinger: Yahya claims he could get 45 to 60 out of the 167 Awami Leaguers.

Mr. Van Hollen: That estimate is high.

Mr. Irwin: It would help if he could find a few Awami Leaguers who still had some respect in East Pakistan with whom he could deal.

Mr. Kissinger: He says he could get 45 to 60 of them and hold by-elections for the seats of all the others. We could either see him disenfranchise 167 out of 169 Assembly members or ask him to do something he might not be able to do. I talked with the Army Chief of Staff and he was harder than Yahya.

Mr. Sisco: I agree that Yahya does not have complete freedom of movement.

Mr. Kissinger: I am no expert but I think the situation could be building toward war. India is torn between wanting the refugees to go back and wanting to use them as a pretext for a move against Pakistan. Pakistan is most flexible about wanting the refugees back but is least flexible about the possibility of restoring the Awami League.

Mr. Williams: I think that's too sharp a dichotomy. In the first place, I don't think Yahya can be talked out of his attitude toward Mujib. And the refugees can't be talked into going back unless there is some political accommodation.

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<sup>4</sup> The Embassy in Islamabad reported on July 22 that rumors were circulating that the Martial Law Administration was preparing for an in-camera trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. (Telegram 7430 from Islamabad; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 29 PAK)



Mr. Helms: But first we have to get the Indians to stop screwing around in East Pakistan.

Mr. Williams: And when the famine conditions increase, we will have even more refugees.

Mr. Kissinger: Dick's (Helms) question is crucial. If the Indians are serious, they should stop screwing around with the liberation forces.

Mr. Irwin: Jha takes the position that the overall fighting has stopped but that the refugees continue. He claims this is the result of selective pressure by Pakistan which is forcing out additional refugees. Until this stops, he claims, there wasn't much India could do but help the guerrillas. If the refugee flow could be reduced to a trickle the Indians wouldn't have that excuse. It's a chicken-and-egg situation.

Mr. Helms: It's a see-saw.

Mr. Sisco: It is the result of Pakistan's use of force in the early days. Also, of the continuation of guerrilla action and of the general dislocation in East Pakistan. We can't tell Yahya to put his army back in their barracks when India has training camps on the border, is engaged in border crossings and is actively supporting the liberation movement.

Mr. Helms: (to Mr. Sisco) You mentioned a possible Russian role. I never like to see us get involved with the Russians any more than we have to, but the Russians did a rather good job at Tashkent and they do have some swot with India. This may be one way of getting at them.

Mr. Sisco: In any question of a UN presence, we will certainly want the support of every Security Council member. Also, Russia can influence the Indians. We can't afford another Palestine refugee operation with the Russians standing on the sidelines. We would need them both politically and financially. That makes it more important that the question of the refugees be depoliticized and that the humanitarian aspect is emphasized. If India won't accept even a limited UN presence, there will be political problems all across the board. Absolutely nothing will move and the situation will continue to deteriorate.

Mr. Kissinger: Where does that leave us?

Mr. Sisco: With what we are doing now—trying to hit all things simultaneously.

Mr. Irwin: I think we can and should talk again to the Indian Ambassador here and possibly to the Russians.

Mr. Kissinger: I would like to get a better conception of exactly what it is we are trying to accomplish. If we are going to talk to the Russians, we had better be goddam sure we know what we are going to say.

Mr. Irwin: We will get together a scenario on exactly what we would say to the Indians, the Pakistanis and the Russians.

Mr. Helms: That's very important.

Mr. Kissinger: We must be clear in our own minds what constitutes a desirable outcome. What do we want the Pakistanis to do precisely?

Mr. Irwin: We want to reduce the flow of refugees to a trickle.

Mr. Kissinger: The Pakistanis will agree with that objective but we will have to tell them what to do to bring it about. Both the President and I have some money in the bank with them. We might get them to do something if we know what we want them to do.

Mr. Sisco: In approaching the Pakistanis I think we should say that we are prepared to take certain actions with the Indians. We will tell India to hold down its logistic support of the guerrillas. I think we should draw a distinction between logistical support and actual border crossings. We will tell India to accept a UN presence and to cooperate with it. If we do this with India, what will you—the Pakistanis—do to create more normal conditions in East Pakistan? We could suggest to them that they cut down Pakistani army activities in East Pakistan, even get the army back in their barracks. We could say that we assume Pakistan will cooperate with the UN. We also think Pakistan should implement what Yahya has said they will do about the refugees. We also think that they should do what they can in terms of the political process. For example, Yahya has said he will transfer power to East Pakistan within four months. Could they speed this transfer to two months? Could they try to get as many Awami League people back as possible?

Mr. Williams: As long as the Pakistani army is both fighting and running the country they won't be able to do much. It is absolutely necessary to get the army out of the civil administration. They don't give a damn and they aren't very good at it. That means speed up the process at least to get a quasi-Bengali political apparatus in East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger (to Mr. Selden): What does Defense think?

Mr. Selden: It's a good idea. We need a scenario.

Adm. Moorer: Before we can get the Pakistanis to do something, India must give some visible evidence that they are not engaging in these border crossings. Just the other day they destroyed a bunch of powerhouses and they are attacking the soldiers in their barracks. As long as there is military activity by India, Pakistan won't move. It has to be simultaneous. I am not sure India does not want to see this turmoil continue.

Mr. Selden: Where do we get these refugee figures from? Are these Indian figures?

Mr. Waller: They are fairly accurate.

Mr. Sisco: They are using the figure of 7 million but it wouldn't make much difference if it were 5 million. The Pakistanis don't seriously question the figures.

Mr. Kissinger: If we have only three plus months and plan on talking to Hilaly and Jha, we must come up with some concrete ideas on what we want each side to do. If we then make this a yardstick for what we will do, we might have a chance.

Mr. Irwin: We will put something down on paper.

Mr. Kissinger: There is a related problem. Mr. Williams has pointed out that the food situation in East Pakistan may generate a new flood of refugees. Can we set up something now to help in a food crisis? Can we do something to help them return to normal distribution procedures?

Mr. Williams: This is why I am stressing the weaknesses in the administrative structure.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we express what we want in terms of an administrative structure? Can we internationalize food relief? We shouldn't just let this famine hit us unprepared.

Mr. Helms: The difficulty is that they need 3.5 million tons of food and can only distribute 2 million.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we put them in a position to distribute more?

Mr. Helms: They have put a very weak man in charge of this.

Mr. Van Hollen: They have recently appointed Malik who has only limited competence. The best thing in his favor is that he is a Bengali.

Mr. Sisco (to Mr. Williams): Can you tell Henry what we have done specifically?

Mr. Williams: When M.M. Ahmad was here we told him he had a serious food problem coming up. We had a whole list of concrete steps that could be taken, including giving them \$2 million to charter transport, but the army just doesn't give a damn and isn't good at this kind of thing anyhow, and the Bengalis won't level with the army about what the problems really are.

Mr. Kissinger: We can expect that every one of these problems will get worse over the next few weeks. If famine is inevitable with the resulting increase in the outflow of refugees, there will be strong pressures here at home. Should we be prepared to squeeze the Pakistanis on this? Maybe if we organize ourselves here, we can get them to do something there.

Mr. Williams: One of the big problems, of course, is that most food relief operations are close to the border and susceptible to Indian interdiction.

Mr. Kissinger: But if the food programs are internationalized, this might be a way of restraining the Indians. They may be less likely to blow up an international transport. (to Mr. Irwin) Put into your paper a detailed program of what you want. We in this building are prepared

to press Pakistan to do whatever will help but we need to put our greatest weight on the things that matter.

Mr. Williams: The Pakistani Army is very thinly stretched in East Pakistan. They are extremely short of transport and they have been commandeering trucks. The real problem is in getting an effective operation going.

Mr. Sisco: We might think in terms of a massive emergency movement of transport which could be monitored by us or by an international group to see that it gets to the right place. We have two problems: the food that is getting there is not adequate for three months from now and the administrative structure cannot cope with its distribution.

Mr. Irwin: (to Mr. Williams): Have we got all the food into the port<sup>5</sup> that the warehouses can take?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: We need a statement of their requirements, what is actually there, and what the shortfall will be. The food situation can only get tougher. We should start to do our part now.

Mr. Helms: This will make Biafra look like a cocktail party.

Mr. McDonald: We have prepared a detailed plan on this. A Department of Agriculture man came out and did a detailed study<sup>6</sup> which we understand Yahya read personally. It spelled out specific policies and actions but none of its recommendations have been carried out.

Mr. Kissinger: Maybe Yahya can't do it; maybe it requires an international effort. If Yahya were willing to have international observers in the villages maybe he could get the refugees back.

Mr. Williams: A UN structure has begun to be staffed.

Mr. Kissinger: It is true that the UN was very slow in supplying personnel?

Mr. Sisco: Yes, but it is moving pretty well now.

Mr. Williams: They are getting some people there and beginning to build a structure.

Mr. Sisco: They are still trying to get Indian agreement, of course.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's get a scenario early next week and have another meeting on this later in the week.

Let's talk about military assistance now.

Mr. Irwin: You know our views. However, we now only have \$14–\$15 million to go and that's not going to go in the next two weeks. We would have originally recommended a complete embargo but

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the port of Chittagong in East Pakistan.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 3, Document 102.

now this may not be so significant. By August 10, \$10 million of the outstanding licenses will have expired, with only \$4 million left outstanding.

Mr. Sisco: We can let the pipeline slowly dry out. In part, of course, we will be influenced by the degree of success we have in modifying the Gallagher Amendment<sup>7</sup> to permit us sufficient latitude.

Mr. Noyes: If we are talking about a confrontation with Pakistan over military supply, the fat's already in the fire.

Mr. Sisco: We have put a hold on the one-time exception to our arms policy involving 300 APCs and some aircraft. We believe this hold should be maintained. Nothing has been delivered and nothing is scheduled to be delivered. Since March 25 no new licenses have been issued and we do not intend to issue any new licenses, although we have a hundred requests. There is about \$15 million in the pipeline based on licenses issued before March 25.

Mr. Kissinger: I am not aware of any Presidential decision not to issue licenses.

Mr. Sisco: This was considered at your last SRG meeting.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Selden: I think we need a definition of "arms."

Mr. Sisco: We will put in our paper what we think the policy is.

Mr. Kissinger: The Pakistanis complained specifically to me about a motor for some experimental tank. I just want to be sure we understand where we are. I agree the Pakistanis are not upset about arms now.

Mr. Sisco: Not at all; they are grateful that we haven't stopped entirely.

Mr. Kissinger: What happens when the licenses expire?

Mr. Sisco: It will be a year before everything that is in the pipeline has been delivered. But we have agreed that we will not renew licenses or issue new ones.

Mr. Selden: We still need a definition of "arms." Are we talking about such things as tires and spark plugs?

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<sup>7</sup> Congressman Cornelius E. Gallagher (D-New Jersey) offered an amendment to pending foreign assistance legislation that called for the suspension of all military sales and economic assistance to Pakistan until the President could report to Congress that Pakistan was facilitating a return to stability in East Pakistan, and until the refugees from East Pakistan were permitted to return to their homes and to reclaim their lands and property. (Subsection (V) (1) of Section 620 of Chapter 2 of Part III of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended) The House Foreign Affairs Committee voted in favor of the Gallagher amendment on July 15. On October 5 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee adopted the language approved by the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 32.

Mr. Kissinger: I don't want to reopen the whole question of arms for Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: It would be suicide to resume deliveries.

Mr. Kissinger: And the Pakistanis don't want it.

Mr. Sisco: We will get a statement of our position on paper.

Mr. Kissinger: Do the Pakistanis understand that the pipeline is closing on August 10?

Mr. Sisco: Let me be sure you understand. By the middle of August \$11 million of the \$15 million worth of licenses will have been used or will have expired. This does not mean that the material will have been delivered. It will be somewhere in the pipeline.

Mr. Kissinger: Can it be delivered after August 10?

Mr. Van Hollen: Some of it will have been shipped by August 10.

Mr. Irwin: But if it isn't shipped by August 10 it would not be permitted to be shipped.

Mr. Kissinger: How much of the \$10 million will be shipped? Do the Pakistanis know they are under the guillotine?

Mr. Sisco: They will still have \$4 million left.

Mr. Kissinger: Not even the Indians can make something out of that. In other words, by August 15 we will have done exactly what the President did not want to do in June except for \$4 million.

Mr. Saunders: I don't think anyone here understood what the effect would be.

Mr. Noyes: You understand that everything from the Defense Department is still under a complete hold.

Mr. Irwin: We hope that when the military supply fades out, we can get the same effect from humanitarian and food assistance.

Mr. Kissinger: Isn't this a stricter embargo than 1965?

Mr. Van Hollen: No, we had a complete embargo for some months in 1965-66. In 1966 we began providing non-lethal equipment and in 1967 we began giving them spares for equipment that was considered lethal.

Mr. Irwin: Of course, they can buy spark plugs and things commercially. They are only barred from getting them out of FMS stocks.

Mr. Kissinger: So we have cut off economic and, in effect, we are cutting off military assistance by indirection. All we did was give them an additional six weeks.

Mr. Sisco: What do you mean "six weeks"?

Mr. Kissinger: In June the President specifically did not approve cutting off the supply of military equipment. Now you are getting it by indirection.

Mr. Sisco: We have done nothing differently. The deliveries to which we were committed are already made. It is a question of whether or not we make new commitments.

Mr. Van Hollen: The President's reply to our recommendation was to continue present policy.

Mr. Kissinger: I will find out exactly what he thought present policy was. I thought it was that the licenses were to continue. I will find out if it is the President's policy to put this degree of pressure on Pakistan at this time. How much of the \$11 million will be shipped by August 10?

Mr. Van Hollen: The Munitions Control Group say they can't determine the amount but it will be substantially less than \$11 million. The licenses are valid for only a year.

Mr. Irwin (to Mr. Van Hollen): Can they be extended?

Mr. Van Hollen: No.

Mr. Kissinger: You can damn well extend them if you are told to. If 90 percent of the material is shipped and then the licenses lapse, that's one thing. If 5 percent is shipped, that's another. The Pakistanis don't know what we are doing to them. They are not pressing for new licenses. It has not penetrated that of the material that was licensed in March, 90 percent may be cut off on August 10.

Mr. Van Hollen: It should have; we have told them.

Mr. Kissinger: But they may not realize that goods purchased under license and not yet shipped can't be shipped. We don't want the Pakistanis to believe that we have put it to them in a devious way.

Mr. Sisco: No one can tell us how much of the \$11 million will have been shipped by then.

Mr. Van Hollen: But the feeling is that a substantial proportion will not be shipped.

Mr. Irwin: We should make sure the Pakistanis understand this.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Pakistani Military Supply Mission here knows the exact status of the shipments. They bug Defense about it all the time.

Mr. Kissinger (to Mr. Noyes): Do I understand you think some spare parts should be opened up to them?

Mr. Noyes: We have \$11 million in Defense stocks that are being held completely. These are mostly spare parts and the Pakistani military are constantly asking us about them.

Gen. Brett: Just today the Pakistani Group Captain asked me about starting cartridges for the B-57s. The shipments have been licensed but are still being held in our depots.

Mr. Kissinger: When was this hold order issued?

Gen. Brett: April 4.

Mr. Kissinger: Who issued that order?

Gen. Brett: Mr. Packard. Then, following the April 19 SRG meeting, the supplies were opened up again. Then we understood Mr. Packard and Mr. Sisco had agreed to reinstitute the hold and we got an order from Packard in writing to hold back.

Mr. Kissinger: Thank you.

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#### 106. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 24, 1971, 1438Z.

134596. Subj: Meeting Between Secretary and Indian Ambassador regarding China

1. Summary: At Secretary's invitation Indian Ambassador Jha visited Department July 22 for discussion recent US moves regarding China. Secretary explained purpose of Dr. Kissinger's visit to Peking was to arrange Presidential visit. US overall purpose was to establish communications with Peoples Republic of China and normalize relations. While there had been presentations of established positions on issues by both sides during Kissinger visit, there had been no decisions or understandings. We intended seek improvement of relations but not at expense of other nations. Amb Jha indicated GOI welcomed new US effort improve relations with PRC but concerned how relationship might affect interests of other countries and how it might relate to troubled Sino-India relationship and Chinese support of Pakistan. End summary.

2. Secretary opened meeting, also attended by Sisco, Rasgotra, Verma and Schneider, saying he had intended to see Jha sooner but Amb had been out of town. He had just come from appointment with President who conveyed his best regards to Amb Jha and asked that they be conveyed to PM Gandhi. Secretary explained that Dr. Kissinger had telephoned Jha prior to President's announcement of Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Nodis. Drafted on July 23 by Schneider and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to Islamabad, Kathmandu, and Colombo.



visit and planned Presidential trip to Peking.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kissinger had been in India immediately prior to his trip to China and he wanted to make clear that he had intended no misrepresentation when he did not inform GOI of planned visit. No other government had been consulted in advance since we believed without secrecy there would have been too many obstacles in way of successful mission. Secretary said he appreciated India's understanding of President's announcement.

3. Secretary explained purpose of Kissinger visit was to arrange Presidential visit. It seemed important to us that President meet PRC leaders as best means of normalizing relations, which was our purpose. We use this general term because we do not now know how normalization will develop. US Administration does not consider it wise continue without communications with country of 750 million people. This does not mean our policy will change. It may mean improvement in relations with PRC but this will not be made at expense of other nations. We have had close communications with Soviets for a long time but these have not been conducted at expense of our friends. No time has yet been fixed for Presidential visit. May 1 was mentioned as deadline because we did not wish visit to become involved in US Presidential campaign.

4. Referring to Kissinger/Chou-En-lai conversations Secretary explained half of time was taken for translation. Much of discussion related to working out communiqué. Balance consisted of restatement of policies, publicly stated before, of both governments. There were no agreements, explicit or implicit, and no understandings other than to have summit meeting. Both sides thought there would be something to be gained by that meeting. That gain will depend upon events. There was certainly nothing in conversations—and Secretary emphasized he had seen everything regarding talks which President had seen—which was detrimental to India in any sense of the word.

5. Amb Jha said GOI understood why it was not taken into confidence regarding Kissinger trip. GOI had noted that Kissinger when in New Delhi had discussed China in more detail than expected in view of refugee problem. In light of later revelations India read this as a prior assurance. Indian Foreign Minister's first response was to welcome US move. Later he made certain observations that external powers should not seek decide future of other countries. US move was important in relationship to state of Sino-India relations and active Chinese support to Pakistan. Therefore there was undercurrent of anxiety in India. There was feeling that this plus Pak role in arranging meeting will make it more difficult for USG to play constructive part in seeking solution to

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<sup>2</sup> President Nixon made this announcement on July 15. (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1971*, pp. 819–820)

refugee problem and promoting political accommodation in East Pakistan. India is concerned that all these developments may weaken kind of support it is seeking. Result could be additional obstacle in way of warm relations between India and US.

6. Secretary replied US does not intend that this happen. Explained any time we improve relations with one country there are inevitable suspicions that this being done at expense of others. This not so in this case. Secretary has long believed there need for communications with PRC. This should ease tensions and promote world peace. There is no collusion or invidious purpose behind US moves. US actions will demonstrate this is so.

7. Jha inquired whether there were any discussions in Peking about India. Secretary answered that he has avoided answering specific questions such as this and he would in this case except to say that there was no discussion of India in any substantial way. Most discussion related to matters of direct US-China interest. India not high on list of such matters.

8. Secretary explained that if better relations established between US and PRC this should reduce world tensions and, he would think, would be helpful to India as it would in regard Japan and Indo-China. We do not know and are trying to avoid speculation regarding prospects as that would make it appear we had reached agreements. Result, however, could be beneficial to Asia generally. During current era when nuclear power is so destructive it just possible we could have long period of peace. This is what we hope for. Furthermore, we are doing everything we can to show Soviet Union that this US move not directed against them.

9. Jha explained India has also said it desires normalization with China. It continues support Chinese entry in UN. Agreed if US move reduces tensions India would be most happy.

10. Secretary then inquired about latest report on flow of refugees from Pakistan into India. Jha replied there had been some reduction down to 40–50,000 per day. This was nonetheless high and no reverse trend in sight. Refugees not likely return while influx continuing as each newcomer brings warnings about return. Jha said that new reason for migration had been added to Pak actions against political leaders and Hindus. Now food and economic difficulties becoming operative factor while other factors continued. Predicted another 2 million refugees may enter India when monsoon ends and travel easier.

11. Secretary inquired about UN activities. Sisco replied these in planning phase. SYG had developed more precise proposal regarding UN presence to facilitate refugee return. There no disposition now to have Security Council meet. Clear conditions must be created in East Pakistan under which flow will stop and refugees can return. There

must be stability, absence of fear, adequate food. For latter purpose much must be done to improve transport to avoid famine. Both India and US wish to see steps toward political accommodation. US will do everything it can to influence these conditions in East Pakistan in the context of restraint and moderation on part of both India and Pakistan. This is US policy. Jha and Rasgotra pointed out East Pakistan problem was not instance of India–Pakistan dispute. It is problem between West and East Pakistan which has effect on India. India therefore takes exception to consideration of problem as another manifestation of India-Pakistan differences. Sisco said that, as he had said before, East Pakistan problem was not anything created by either US or India.

12. In conclusion Secretary asked that his best regards be conveyed to FonMin Swaran Singh whose visit we much enjoyed. Jha indicated FonMin hoped Secretary could visit India again. Secretary was non-committal. Said he hoped Jha would keep in close touch with him and Sisco during current difficult period.

**Rogers**

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#### **107. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 24, 1971, 1035Z.

134643. 1. Following is uncleared memcon, FYI only, Noform, subject to revision upon review.

2. During Ambassador Hilaly's call on Secretary July 23 (septel),<sup>2</sup> Hilaly raised two requests in economic field; i.e., request that USG expedite movement additional PL 480 wheat and provide additional funds for leasing coastal vessels. He had told NESAs Administrator MacDonald this morning of his impression that some AID people were "dragging their feet" on wheat shipments and issuance of PA's and had made strong case for expeditious wheat movement. GOP was concerned about possible food shortage later in year and worried that possible US port strike in September would complicate movements if max-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, AID (US) 15–8 PAK. Confidential; Exdis. Drafted on July 23 by Laingen, cleared in AID by MacDonald, and approved by Van Hollen.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 104.

imum effort not made now to get additional wheat on its way. Van Hollen injected that we well aware of possible shortages. We would keep pipeline full and would look promptly at request for more coastal vessels. However, US seriously concerned about need speed distribution system East Pakistan. Hilaly said whatever the facts on congestion in Pak ports and transportation system, it would be better if wheat were tied up in Pak ports than in ports in US. It was unrealistic to expect that "every knot should be tied" before additional PL 480 wheat "for which we have signed" is moved.

3. On coastal vessels Hilaly said GOP needed an additional one to two million dollars from US to hire up to half dozen coastal vessels of 3,000 ton capacity each. He had also raised this with MacDonald as important additional step that could be taken to avert difficulties later. Secretary assured Hilaly we would actively consider his requests, noting that if famine does in fact develop later in year and food is here and not in Pakistan, then we would also be subject heavy public criticism.

4. Ambassador made brief reference to articles today's press quoting contents of Department cables on possible food shortages East Pakistan. Secretary assured Hilaly we equally concerned over unauthorized disclosure this cable traffic and had said so in statement to press. Ambassador said he had written Senator Kennedy strong letter of concern about news stories and particularly over language therein that some of Senator's aides would shortly be visiting refugee camps India and "will try to enter East Pakistan" as well. He had reminded Senator that no one from his staff had applied for visas and that GOP could not be responsible for what might happen to such individuals should they attempt unauthorized entry across East Pakistan borders.

*Comment:* We plan call in Hilaly next week to apprise him fully of steps being taken by USG and to urge upon him essential need for GOP to take urgent steps on its side to put USG resources effectively to use.

**Rogers**

**108. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 27, 1971, 7:20 p.m.

P: Working late?

K: Yes, I am going over some papers.

P: Anything new?

K: Nothing of any consequence.

P: A lot of stuff to catch up on I guess.

K: There's a certain routine.

P: Terrific, I know.

K: It keeps piling up. There's still a lot of congratulatory mail<sup>2</sup> coming in.

P: Good, good. You know the one thing we want to do is to be fair—we will probably be getting a question on the India/Pakistan thing. We really want to—we sure don't want to hurt our friends.

K: No, we certainly don't. Being fed by the—.

P: I know, the Indians. Awful but they are getting some assistance from Keating, of course.

K: A lot of assistance; he is practically their mouthpiece.

P: I talked to Bill [Rogers] in California while I was waiting for you. He is down on Keating; he is a total mouthpiece for the Indians.

K: He has gone native. As I told you, I saw the Indians and listened to their complaints and Keating kept interrupting and saying but you forgot to mention this or that.

P: I think we ought to get moving on him; he is 71 years old.

K: Yes, but he would do us a lot of damage now. We should wait until things quiet down.

P: Two or 3 months and then I think we ought to do it.

K: I will make it clear with the Indians that there isn't going to be a war.

P: They had had this plan—covers planned [*sic*] long before this.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 368, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The call was placed by the President to Kissinger in the White House.

<sup>2</sup> The mail was in response to Kissinger's trip to China.

K: They have certainly been more respectful since this trip. I have asked Sisco to prepare a scenario of how we could handle this situation. I will talk to Farland tomorrow; and within this next week we will have a proposal for you. The problem—no military aid to Pakistan, they are not even getting economic aid. If anything will tempt the Indians to attack, it will be the complete helplessness of Pakistan.

P: After all they have done, we just aren't going to let that happen.

K: Right, right.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

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## 109. Editorial Note

Ambassador Farland returned to Washington for consultations at the end of July. President Nixon and Henry Kissinger met with him at the White House on July 28, 1971. The discussion began with a brief summary of the initiative undertaken with the People's Republic of China. Turning to developments on the subcontinent, Farland said: "There is another side to this picture, and I can say with complete candor that if we push Yahya to the point where he reacts, the reaction will be such that the entire subcontinent will be [unclear] I mean he'll fight." He anticipated that conflict between India and Pakistan would draw in China as well.

Nixon asked: "What do you think our position should be?" Farland responded: "I think we are doing what we should." He went on to paint a stark picture of prospects for the subcontinent. Hindus and Muslims had been at each other's throats for centuries and in his view were likely to remain so. Nixon interjected: "Miserable damn place." Kissinger said that his appreciation of India's involvement in the crisis building in East Pakistan was that "if they can undermine East Pakistan then in West Pakistan so many forces would be, will loosen, will be turned loose that the whole Pakistan issue will disappear." Nixon turned to Farland and said: "You are convinced that Yahya will fight." Farland responded: "Oh, he will." Nixon said: "He will commit suicide." Kissinger agreed that Yahya would fight: "Just as Lincoln would have fought." Farland added: "The possibility of defeat is a minor consideration as opposed to their sense of national unity."

Nixon asked for Farland's assessment of the "terrible stories" being circulated by the Indians about the horrors endured by the refugees at the hands of the Pakistani Army. Farland responded that the Indians were "past masters at propaganda." Nixon and Farland turned to

the question of arms supply for Pakistan. Farland noted that “since March 25 we have sent over 2,200 rounds of 22 ammunition for survival rifles for down there, that’s all.” He went on to observe that “40–50 percent of what is in the pipeline is for spare parts for trucks and for communication equipment without which the starving refugees could not be fed.”

Nixon encouraged Farland to “lay it right out” in discussing the issue and in talking about the situation in East Pakistan. Nixon felt that it was important to “try to help on the problem.” His concern was too that a “bloodbath” would develop in East Pakistan. “We warned the Indians very strongly,” he said, “that if they start anything—and believe me it would be a hell of a pleasure as far as I am concerned—if we just cut off every damn bit of aid we give them, at least whatever it is worth.”

Farland said that Yahya had told him that his intelligence had pinpointed 29 refugee camps in India where guerrillas were being trained. “I hate to tell you this, Mr. President, but the guerrilla threat is growing by leaps and bounds. They are averaging 18 Pakistanis a day now, they are averaging two bridges a day, killing that many.” He added that the situation was exacerbated by the fact that refugees were prohibited from coming back to East Pakistan.

Nixon said that his problems in dealing with the situation in East Pakistan were magnified by the Department of State bureaucracy. “We are having a hell of a time keeping the State Department bureaucracies hitched on this thing.” The Department’s South Asia specialists were, in Nixon’s view, pro-Indian. Farland noted the political fallout that had resulted in the United States from the issue made about Pakistani brutality by the Consul General in Dacca, and by the head of USIS. Both officers had been transferred out of the area and Farland indicated that he was trying to prevent any further negative reporting on the situation in East Pakistan. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among Nixon, Kissinger, and Farland, July 28, 1971, 4:21–4:54 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 549–25) The editors transcribed the portions of the conversation printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 141.

**110. Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Helms to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

Indian Reaction to Statement Attributed to You about U.S. Response in the Event of Indian Military Action in Bangla Desh

Following is an account [2 lines of source text not declassified] concerning a recent talk you had with Indian Ambassador L.K. Jha in Washington. This information will be given no further distribution unless you wish it.

1. [name not declassified] said that in a recent conversation held in Washington, Dr. Kissinger had made clear to Ambassador Jha that the United States Government (USG) would consider any Chinese invasion of India in response to any Indian action in the Bangla Desh context as entirely different from the Chinese invasion in 1962, and that the USG would provide no support to India, either military or political, in that event.

2. [name not declassified] remarked that while this was causing considerable concern at the highest levels of the Government of India (GOI), it was not being taken at those levels as a deliberate anti-Indian move on the part of the USG. According to [name not declassified], the leadership levels of the GOI believe that cautious steps toward normalization of U.S.-Chinese relations is to the net advantage of India and South Asia. [name not declassified] also remarked, however, that Dr. Kissinger's statement would be taken as an intentional anti-India posture on the part of the USG by the lower levels of MEA and by the Indian public if and when they learned of it.

**Dick**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul-30 Nov 71. Secret; No Foreign Dissem; Controlled Dissem; No Dissem Abroad; Background Use Only. Sent to Kissinger on August 13 by Saunders under cover of a memorandum in which Saunders states: "You may want to compare how this message got through with whatever you told the Indians when you were in New Delhi on this subject. Will they regard this as a change in tack?" (Ibid.)



## 111. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 30, 1971, 3:20–4:35 p.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin, II

Christopher Van Hollen

Thomas Thornton

Defense

Warren G. Nutter

James H. Noyes

B/Gen. Devol Brett

JSC

Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt

Col. James Connell

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

Dr. John Hannah

Maurice Williams

Herbert Rees

Treasury

John McGinnis

NSC Staff

R/Adm. Robert Welander

Harold H. Saunders

Jeanne W. Davis

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed to

—Prepare a comprehensive relief program for East Pakistan, including what has already been moved and where the bottlenecks are.

—Prepare a telegram, to be approved by the President, outlining an approach to Yahya telling him what needs to be done on refugees, food relief, etc.

—Talk with the British about a joint approach or separate but concurrent approaches to India and Pakistan.

—Talk with the Russians to get a mutual assessment of the situation.

—Develop a contingency plan for a possible Indian-Pakistani war.

—Schedule fifteen minutes at the beginning of the next NSC meeting for the President again to express his views on the subject.

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<sup>1</sup> 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. Another record of the meeting was prepared on August 9 in OASD/ISA by Brigadier General Brett. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 092 (Aug–Dec) 1971) A brief record of the meeting was prepared in the CIA on August 2 by John H. Waller, Chief of the Near East and South Asia Division, Directorate for Plans. (Central Intelligence Agency, O/DDO Files, Job 79–01229A, Box 7, Folder 8, NSC 1971)

Mr. Kissinger: This is a continuation of our meeting last week on this subject.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Irwin: Our basic feeling is that we should do something, and we recommend some movement along the lines of the scenario we have prepared.<sup>3</sup> We think we should try further with the Pakistanis to seek some restraint on military activity and persuade them to take steps to reduce the flow of refugees and move toward some form of political accommodation in East Pakistan. We should also try to counsel restraint on India in connection with some of the things [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] they are doing.

Mr. Helms: There are indications that India is doing something in the military field to keep everyone stirred up. We don't think they are preparing for a physical attack, but the indicators keep flashing. This is all designed to keep the pot boiling.

Mr. Irwin: We think we might also talk to the British and the Soviets. We can talk with the British about a joint or separate but concurrent approaches to the two states, and to the Soviets about getting an assessment of the situation.

Mr. Helms: Has anyone given any thought to involving the Shah of Iran in working with Pakistan? [*1 line of source text not declassified*]. He might be able to help us; at least it's worth considering since we seem to be out of gas with Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: We're not out of gas with Yahya. I think he will do a lot of things that are reasonable if we concentrate on the refugee problem. One thing he will not do is talk to the Awami League, at least not as an institution. He might talk to some League leaders as individuals.

Mr. Irwin: Ambassador Farland thinks there is a bare possibility that he might talk to the Awami League.

Mr. Van Hollen: Yahya's estimate of how far he might be able to go with the Awami League depends on whether or not he thinks he might be cut down from behind by his military leaders.

Farland thinks it's worth trying to move him a step further. There has been no progress along the lines of the June 28 formula.<sup>4</sup> The flow

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 105.

<sup>3</sup> An undated "Scenario For Action In Indo-Pakistan Crisis" was drafted on July 29 in NEA/INC by Quanton and circulated to the Senior Review Group. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-058, SRG Meeting, South Asia, 7/30/71) This paper is published in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 142.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 84.

of refugees is continuing, the insurgency is on the increase and there has been no move toward political accommodation. As a result, the Indians are still actively supporting the insurgents and they are facing the prospect of famine in October or November. We have to think of some way of breaking out of this vicious circle.

Mr. Kissinger: What are the Indians after? Do they want a political accommodation or do they want to split off East Pakistan?

Mr. Irwin: It's impossible to know. They would probably prefer to split off East Pakistan, and they are assisted in this objective so long as the refugees are still coming out, the Pakistan army is still active, there is no political accommodation and the country is moving toward famine. We should try to make it more difficult for India, by improving the situation in East Pakistan through reducing the refugee flow, putting a UN presence in East Pakistan, and making a start toward political accommodation. If Pakistan can move in this direction, it may be possible to put pressure on India.

Mr. Kissinger: Is it possible to ask the Pakistan Army to withdraw to its barracks when India is supporting guerrilla activity in the country?

Mr. Irwin: I don't think so, but we might work toward this. If conditions improve, this might be our goal.

Mr. Williams: I wouldn't want to take the Army out of its role of maintaining security. You can take them out of the civil administration, though—out of Government House—without insisting that they return to their barracks.

Mr. Kissinger: Why is it our business to tell the Pakistanis how to run their government? We can appropriately ask them for humanitarian behavior, but can we tell them how to run things?

Mr. Williams: It is not our business as such, but we can tell them what we think as a friend and counselor.

Mr. Kissinger: What would an enemy do to Pakistan? We are already cutting off military and economic aid to them. The President has said repeatedly that we should lean toward Pakistan, but every proposal that is made goes directly counter to these instructions. There are undoubtedly some things Pakistan must do, particularly to stop the refugee flow. They ought to do something to make the refugees come back or make India explain why the refugees are not coming back.

Mr. Irwin: What would they have to do to get the refugees to go back?

Mr. Kissinger: In part, India can control this. At the moment, they are expelling all foreigners from the refugee areas and we don't know what they are telling the refugees. Do we think India is encouraging or discouraging the refugees from going back?

Mr. Van Hollen: India is probably discouraging them, or at least is linking their return with some sort of political accommodation. Even if we take India out of the picture, though, the problems in East Pakistan are indigenous. They are merely accentuated by Indian activity.

Mr. Kissinger: So we have the following problems which are, to some extent linked: 1) the refugees—how to stop and reverse the flow; 2) political accommodation; 3) the threat of famine and the necessity for humanitarian relief, which in turn would affect the flow of refugees; and 4) the nature of an East Pakistan government. On famine relief, we must get a program started under any and all circumstances. If famine develops, it will generate another major outflow of refugees. This is one thing we can do something about. I think we can get considerable Pakistani cooperation on this.

(Mr. Kissinger was called from the room at 3:35 and returned at 3:50.)

Mr. Irwin: (to Dr. Kissinger) You mentioned the question of tilting our policy. The State Department is not trying to tilt the consideration of this matter. We have problems of political stability, refugees and the prospect of famine. Fundamental to each of these is the question of some move toward political accommodation. It will be very hard to solve these problems unless there is some start in the political field.

Mr. Kissinger: The relief effort has to be undertaken anyway.

Mr. Irwin: If there is not some move toward political accommodation we may not be able to carry out relief efforts. We can get the food there but if we can't get it distributed to the people who need it our relief efforts won't succeed. The whole distribution mechanism can be upset by the cross-border operations.

Mr. Kissinger: The cross-border operations depend on India. You could put the greatest civilian government in the world in East Pakistan and if India wants to continue the cross-border operations, they will.

Mr. Irwin: I agree, so the question is how to stop the cross-border operations. If we can do it by direct pressure on India, fine. If that is not possible, one way to help would be to start some form of political accommodation in East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: But the famine will start in October. Under the best possible scenario, political accommodation will have barely begun in October. The relief plans have to be started fairly soon.

Mr. Williams: "Political accommodation" is a shorthand expression. What is more important is some effective administration. Traditionally, in this part of the world, that means a civilian administration. The ability to mount an effective relief effort depends on how much of the civil administration is left intact.

Mr. Kissinger: Are we to tell the Pakistanis that unless they install a civilian administration we will let the famine develop?

Mr. Williams: No, but we can tell them that unless they install an effective civilian administration it will be harder to prevent famine.

Mr. Irwin: We are doing everything we can to prevent famine. We can get the food to them and try to see to it that it is properly distributed.

Mr. Hannah: There will be damned little satisfaction in getting the food to the ports if we can't get it where the people are. The Pakistan Army just isn't used to this kind of an operation, plus the fact that they are still under pressure from the guerrillas. They have invited the UN in to give overall direction to the program but that won't get the food delivered. And Pakistan won't let us in.

Mr. Kissinger: Have the Paks said they won't let us in?

Mr. Williams: They have approved a UN presence in principle, but they still haven't actually admitted them.

Mr. Kissinger: They told me they hoped we would get the UN people in faster.

Mr. Williams: It has been approved in principle in Islamabad but they have not yet agreed to admit the 28 UN people who are poised and waiting to go in.

Mr. Kissinger: We have no problem with the list of things that have to be done. We have to tell Yahya that this is what needs to be done, but why do we have to tell him that it has to be done by civilians?

Mr. Zumwalt: He can't do it with civilians while he is fighting a war. The prevention of famine and our interest in supporting Yahya dictate more help in granting him military supplies than we are apparently prepared to give him. This relates to the spare parts he needs to keep his vehicles moving. He has to keep the roads and waterways open. If we cut off his source of spare parts he can neither fight a war or distribute supplies—both because he couldn't stop the cross-border operations which could interdict the relief distribution and because he wouldn't have the vehicles to move the relief supplies themselves.

Mr. Waller: We have a report from India that if the relief efforts were under UN administration, they would not be interdicted by cross-border operations.

Mr. Kissinger: If we are faced with a huge famine and a huge new refugee outflow in October and we're still debating political accommodation, we'll have a heluva lot to answer for. We need an emergency relief plan and we need to tell Yahya that this is what has to be done to get the supplies delivered. Yahya will be reasonable.

Mr. Williams: There doesn't have to be political accommodation to get the civilians in.

Mr. Van Hollen: But the two things are directly related. We should be and are preparing a relief program, but its implementation depends on the governmental situation in East Pakistan—not on the US or on the UN. The way to get some organizational arrangement in East Pakistan to prevent famine and restore some normality is through some political accommodation.

Mr. Helms: Our problem is to provide the food and get it in place. How can we assume the responsibility for its distribution? We should confine ourselves to doing the things we can do. It's up to Yahya to decide how the food should be distributed. He has an interest in keeping East Pakistan with West Pakistan. He's not interested in helping India by letting a famine develop in East Pakistan.

Mr. Williams: We can get the food there.

Mr. Kissinger: We can go further than that. (to Williams) You made a good presentation at the last meeting on the necessity to marshal water transport and things like that. The resources seem to be more under Army control than civilian control. If we told Yahya these things were required for distribution and we will help, we might make real progress. But if, on top of that, we tell him he must end the insurgency and have some sort of political accommodation, we won't make it in time for October. Yahya's mind just doesn't work that fast and the structure isn't there.

Mr. Irwin: I agree we should do all you say, but we would go a step further. We would point out that there should be a start in a direction that might accomplish political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: What do we mean by "political accommodation?" India considers political accommodation as splitting off East Pakistan from West Pakistan.

Mr. Van Hollen: We shouldn't have a blue print. But, in order to create a viable institution, Yahya must agree to deal with the true political representatives in East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: The question is whether we have to have political accommodation before we can get a relief program.

Mr. Irwin: Not before the relief program starts. But if there is not some effort in this direction, the cross-border operations will intensify and there will be more disruption of the relief efforts. If we can stop the cross-border operations by India, the relief effort might have a better chance of success.

Mr. Kissinger: Will India slow down its cross-border operations if the political process could be speeded up to October? India says Yahya has to deal with the Awami League.

Mr. Van Hollen: The extent to which India desists from its cross-border operations would be linked to progress on the political side.

Mr. Hannah: Why not approach it the other way around. Tell Yahya that the best way to thwart the Indians is to get better food and better conditions in East Pakistan than in the refugee camps in India. We must convince Yahya that certain things have to be done while the military is occupied in dealing with the guerrillas. If Yahya assumes responsibility for the distribution of food, he can use it as a political weapon.

Mr. Kissinger: We can tell him what is needed to distribute the food as long as our programs are moving ahead.

Mr. Irwin: We're not really disagreeing with you.

Mr. Kissinger: But you're saying the next turn of the wheel is conditional—that nothing will move until there is a start on political accommodation.

Mr. Irwin: No we're not.

Mr. Williams: No.

Mr. Zumwalt: Even if all the food gets through, the famine will still probably occur. Both the Indians and the Soviets would prefer famine rather than see Yahya win. The Chinese would probably prefer famine to seeing East Pakistan split off from West Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree with John Hannah. If we can be forthcoming with Yahya on something, we have a better chance of getting some political accommodation than if we hector him and try to put the squeeze on him.

Mr. Hannah: We should continue to do everything we have been doing. We should get Yahya to accept UN direction. We should recognize, though, that even when the UN people are there, it won't work unless the US gets involved in an operation to marshal all existing resources, similar to the recent flood relief operation. We can give him the backstopping of the UN, but we'll still have to furnish the food and get it there, and provide some management once it's there.

Mr. Williams: The food that is moving to Pakistan now is adequate to deal with the crisis. The food is moving to the ports and we have obtained \$3 million worth of charter transport to move it from the ports. We want a UN presence involved in the internal distribution. We have an agreement in principle from Pakistan, but they have still not authorized the entrance of the 28 people. We're not holding anything back.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Williams) Maybe you should go there and tell Yahya what is needed to break the bureaucratic log-jam.

Mr. Hannah: It would be more effective if we could get a representative Pakistani to carry the message to Yahya. We can reinforce it. How about Shoaib?<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Williams: He's traveling for the World Bank.

Mr. Irwin: We would like to move ahead as you are suggesting. In addition, we think it would be better to start some move toward political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: My personal judgement of Yahya is that if we do something for him, then ask him to move in a direction of political accommodation, he would be more likely to do it. We're really debating timing. Can we get a comprehensive program of relief and get it to Yahya together with our judgement as to where the bottlenecks are. We can then get someone to talk to him.

Mr. Williams: This is all in train—he's not in real trouble at the moment. When the harvest fails, then there will be trouble.

Mr. Kissinger: The situation isn't going to get any easier in the next two months. If there is another great outflow of refugees, the domestic problem in India may become unmanageable.

Mr. Williams: It's a matter of internal transport.

Mr. Kissinger: I understand that, but let's keep that a technical problem.

Mr. Williams: We'll put together a comprehensive relief package.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's put it all together—what has moved and where the bottlenecks are.

(to Irwin) With regard to your scenario, I doubt that Yahya can withdraw his army to their barracks under present circumstances.

Mr. Irwin: We took that out of the paper and substituted a restoration of the civil administration, leaving the maintenance of law and order to the police and the provincial para-military forces.

Mr. Kissinger: Your idea would be to go to Yahya with the whole program. If you do, he'll say "I'll do everything but the political steps."

Mr. Van Hollen: We can tell him that to the degree he can do these things, it would help clamp down on the Indian cross-border operations and establish a UN presence on the Indian side of the border. If he makes some political moves, India may be more amenable to stopping its activities that are adding to the tension.

Mr. Kissinger: How would we get India to do that?

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<sup>5</sup> Mohammed Shoaib, Vice President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.



Mr. Van Hollen: We could tell India that what is happening in East Pakistan is in the right direction.

Mr. Kissinger: The right direction to them is the Indian direction. What is the right direction?

Mr. Irwin: For Yahya to begin to deal with the elected representatives in East Pakistan—maybe not the Awami League. This needn't be conditioned to doing other things.

Mr. Kissinger: We're holding up military shipments to Pakistan and not giving them economic assistance. What would we do if we were opposed to Yahya? How does our policy differ from a hostile policy?

Mr. Van Hollen: In many ways. In general we have been very forthcoming with Pakistan. We came forward rapidly on relief. We haven't cut off economic assistance—indeed we have been more flexible than the other members of the economic consortium. In Yahya's eyes, our stance has been favorable.

Mr. Kissinger: We should tell him he should do these things on refugees but tie it to political accommodation?

Mr. Irwin: It wouldn't be tied to political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: Would we tell him that our efforts with India are contingent on these steps, or that our resumption of economic assistance is contingent on political steps?

Mr. Van Hollen: They are not contingent on political steps. We have been doing these things all along. We can tell him that *our success* with India depends on *his success* on the refugee flow and on political accommodation.

Mr. Nutter: We have the very practical problem that 90% of his transport is of US origin. If we cut off his spare parts he won't have a transportation system.

Mr. Zumwalt: Or he won't be able to maintain sufficient order to prevent the insurgents from cutting the system. If we don't give him some spares that are classified as lethal, the Pakistan Army will be relatively limited. They could do a better job than if we bring their military machine to a halt by withholding spare parts. We can use the military capability to keep the lines open and use the vehicles to deliver food.

Mr. Williams: I think your first point is valid but I question the second. The UNICEF vehicles have been commandeered by the Army and they aren't using them to move supplies.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) Your proposed scenario says (reading) "... our hold on military shipments ... should not be lifted until there is an end of military activity against the civilian population and until the army is returned to its barracks and effective civilian adminis-

tration is in operation." In other words, until after East Pakistan is independent.

Mr. Hannah: What about the spare parts for the trucks now under order? Are they being shipped?

Mr. Zumwalt: The licenses will run out in a few weeks.

Mr. Williams: Shipments will cease on August 13.

Mr. Zumwalt: At just about the time the famine is hitting, we will likely see a breakdown of transport and of the ability to maintain sufficient order to get food supplies through.

Mr. Irwin: If by giving the military some trucks they would use them to move supplies, no one would object. By giving trucks and spare parts to the military, even though we did our best to see that they were used for food distribution, you would be certain to arouse political opposition here.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we see a cable on what you would tell Yahya. I will schedule fifteen minutes at the beginning of the next NSC meeting so that all of the principals can hear the President's views again on this subject. Let's see a cable of what we want to tell Yahya. We're very receptive here to anything we should say on what he should do on refugees.

Mr. Irwin: To sum up, anything in any area that we can do without getting into the question of political accommodation, we should do. Political accommodation will be treated separately.

Mr. Kissinger: In general, of course, I'm in favor of representative government and we should urge Yahya to restore an increasing degree of participation by the people of East Pakistan. But the clock is running in India faster than the clock on political accommodation. We are determined to avoid war. If it is necessary to squeeze India, we will. There will be no war if we have any pressure available. The inevitable eventual outcome of all this is an autonomous East Pakistan. Over any two or three year period, 75,000 Punjabi cannot govern 75 million Bengalis. West Pakistan needs more time for the sort of accommodation that will be required than they do to meet the urgent problem of the refugees.

Mr. Irwin: We don't disagree. In addition, we are saying it might be helpful if Yahya could make a start in the direction of political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: If it can be done in a non-conditional way.

Mr. Irwin: There are no conditions.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's draft a telegram and I will show it to the President.

Mr. Irwin: Warren (Nutter) and Admiral Zumwalt have raised a good question on military supply.

Mr. Kissinger: We can't do anything on military supply until these other things are in train.

Mr. Nutter: There will be a de facto embargo about mid-August.

Mr. Williams: Aren't these truck spares available commercially?

General Brett: They're all made to military specifications.

Mr. Kissinger: Would it be possible to release some spare parts for transport alone?

Mr. Noyes: Some truck parts are interchangeable with tank parts.

Mr. Williams: The Army should have spare parts for its vehicles. Their mobility is important. But the UN people in Dacca had recommended against sending any vehicles. Increased mobility for the army won't move a lot of relief supplies.

Mr. Van Hollen: What about possible discussions with the British?

Mr. Kissinger: That's a good idea.

Mr. Van Hollen: How about with the Soviets?

Mr. Kissinger: What would we tell the Soviets? Who would talk to them? Another Sisco–Dobrynin conversation?

Mr. Van Hollen: It should probably be the Under Secretary.

Mr. Kissinger: That would be useful.

Mr. Irwin: We could suggest a mutual discussion and assessment of the situation.

Mr. Kissinger: We also need a contingency plan in the event of an Indian-Pakistani war.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have done some work on it, but it needs more.

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## 112. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 30, 1971, 6 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

Joseph S. Farland, US Ambassador to Pakistan

Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President

Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Nov 69–July 1971. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders on July 31. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office at the White House.

After the initial exchange of greetings, Dr. Kissinger asked the Ambassador whether he knew that Senator Kennedy had had the nerve to ask the Pakistanis to arrange a visa for a visit to China. He noted that Ambassador Hilaly had told him of this fact. There was an exchange on the fact that Senator Kennedy plans to visit the Indian refugee camps and that the Pakistanis had denied a visa to one of Senator Kennedy's aides who has been particularly hostile to Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger then asked the Ambassador what the reaction of the officers in his embassy had been after the announcement that Dr. Kissinger had gone to Peking from Islamabad.

Ambassador Farland said that he had never seen so many jaws drop. He said there was no suspicion of this in the embassy. Substantively, everyone felt that it was a significant accomplishment.

Mr. Saunders noted that there had been suspicion among embassy officers during Dr. Kissinger's absence from Islamabad that something special was going on, but most of the officers had given up thinking much about it because they did not have any plausible idea of what might be happening. Ambassador Farland noted that he had been concerned about the AP stringer in Islamabad. Mr. Saunders noted that the few American reporters in Islamabad had pestered the embassy for a while on Saturday and then had taken off for various other places on Sunday morning, having decided that there apparently was to be no story in Islamabad.

Dr. Kissinger concluded this part of the conversation by describing the whole exercise as a "well done operation." He said that he had fully expected something to leak after his return and he had been holding his breath until the Thursday<sup>2</sup> announcement.

Dr. Kissinger then turned to the situation in India and Pakistan. He said, "State is driving me to tears." He said he was certain that the State Department wanted to link any movement on the refugee and relief fronts to a full political accommodation in East Pakistan.

He asked Ambassador Farland to check his judgment that (1) it is better to talk to Yahya "with love rather than with brutality" [Ambassador Farland said, "That is the only way."] <sup>3</sup> and (2) that we could say anything to Yahya as long as we related it to a refugee settlement and did not describe it as related to "political accommodation."

Dr. Kissinger said that, if one were to ask his estimate, there will some day be an independent Bangla Desh. However, the problem now is to defuse the refugee situation so that India cannot use it as a plau-

<sup>2</sup> July 15.

<sup>3</sup> All brackets in the source text.

sible excuse for going to war. The political outcome in East Pakistan will run far behind the increase or decrease in tensions this fall resulting from the refugee problem. He concluded with a comment on Assistant Secretary Sisco's characteristic of showing a lot of motion without much sense of strategy. He said he had "let Sisco get away with some things in the Middle East" but he is not going to let him do that in South Asia. "Sisco will produce two wars in his area, if we are not careful."

Ambassador Farland agreed that the possibility of war is imminent.

Dr. Kissinger said he felt that we had to press the Indians harder. When he asked what Mr. Saunders thought, Mr. Saunders said that he felt that we had just about run out of steam with the Indians for a moment and had to press for some accomplishment on the Pakistani side before we could go back at the Indians. Dr. Kissinger shrugged.

Dr. Kissinger said that he thought the big mistake the Pakistanis were making was to dribble out all of the things they were doing on the refugee front. He felt that they should save them all up for several weeks and then announce a big program that could be pointed to as a significant effort to solve the refugee problem.

Dr. Kissinger asked whether Ambassador Farland thought he could sell this to President Yahya. Ambassador Hilaly did not understand it here. He thought that perhaps Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan had understood, but "he is such a hard-liner" that it seems unlikely that he would act on the suggestion. Dr. Kissinger does not feel that President Yahya had understood.

Ambassador Farland said that he thought that he could—or at least he would try—to sell this idea to President Yahya. Dr. Kissinger said, "Let's make a deal—that if you get some instructions from the State Department that you consider absolutely crazy, you will use the special communications channel with us." Ambassador Farland agreed.

Ambassador Farland said that he had talked with Mr. McNamara at the World Bank and McNamara remained obstinately opposed to any resumption of economic assistance to Pakistan under present circumstances.

Dr. Kissinger said that it is absolutely essential that we get a comprehensive refugee program. If Yahya could propose a coherent program then we would have something to take to the Indians as a basis for squeezing them not to go to war. The Indians could then be asked to let the refugees go back or to keep quiet about them. In any case, if the Pakistanis had what looked like a plausible refugee program, then the Indians would have less of an excuse to go to war.

Dr. Kissinger said he would urge Yahya to be "sweeping on refugees." He would urge him to allow the intrusion of UN officials into every village. Then, with international civil servants on the scene,

we could go to the Indians and refute any of the allegations they were making to keep the refugees from returning. The onus would be on them. It would be difficult to go to war on that issue.

Dr. Kissinger said that he despaired of the State Department's effort to link political accommodation with a refugee solution. [*Comment: This had been discussed in the Senior Review Group earlier that afternoon.*]<sup>4</sup> Mr. Saunders said that he felt that the terms "political accommodation" and "civil administration" had been confused during the Senior Review Group meeting. Mr. Saunders felt that Maury Williams [Deputy Administrator, AID] had not been concerned about the political complexion of government in East Pakistan but had been saying that for the refugee relief and feeding programs to succeed, there would have to be some effective local administration. Food would not move if village functionaries could not commandeer trucks to go down to the docks and bring food back to the villages. Williams, Mr. Saunders felt, was talking about the need to restore the administrative machinery, whereas State's term "political accommodation," while encompassing that thought, went beyond and had become shorthand for the ultimate constitutional and political arrangements in East Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger indicated that "Maury Williams is all right, but that idiot Van Hollen drives me crazy."

Ambassador Farland said that he would sell President Yahya on the idea of a refugee-relief program.

Dr. Kissinger said he thought we were heading for war in South Asia. What's more, he said he felt that the Chinese Communists would come in.

Ambassador Farland said that the Russians had backed the Indians down the line. Dr. Kissinger noted that recent intelligence reports had indicated that the Soviets had offered to hold naval maneuvers with the Indians. He did not think the Indians would go that far. He said he thought that the Indians feel they can take all of Pakistan, or at least make West Pakistan so feeble that it would no longer be a threat to India.

[At this point Mr. Saunders left and Dr. Kissinger and Ambassador Farland concluded their meeting alone.]

H.S.

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 111.

**113. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 3, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military and Economic Assistance to Pakistan as a Framework for South Asian Decisions

With mounting press and Congressional pressure on our assistance to Pakistan, I thought you should have an updated description of where issues stand. The SRG has met twice to refine a game plan for you. This memo is background for that.

*Economic Assistance*

There are three elements:

—The U.S., like other consortium members, has held up on new development assistance commitments since March 25 because of the general disruption of the Pakistani development program. We are holding \$75 million in FY 1971 money against the time when a revised Pakistani development plan is available. The World Bank and IMF continue to oppose resumption of development lending under present circumstances while Pakistan's overall development effort is disrupted. Most of the other consortium members share that view.

—Meanwhile, a pipeline of \$82 million is still flowing from earlier commitments. Of that \$82 million, about half is already tied up in letters of credit for purchases in process; \$15 million is committed to long-standing projects in East Pakistan and \$5 million for projects in West Pakistan; \$20 million remains to be drawn down. Pakistani drawdowns are running much lower than normal, now about \$2 million per month. This means that there could still be ten months of assistance left at present rates, but we could not count on that since the monthly drawdown rate could move back to a more normal level (\$5–10 million) if economic conditions improved.

—Food and relief assistance is moving at the rate it can be absorbed, and a major internal U.S. and UN effort is being developed to avert starvation in East Pakistan at the end of this year. Some 360,000

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 1/1/71–9/30/71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. On July 30 Saunders and Kennedy sent this memorandum, which they drafted, to Kissinger for his consideration and submission to the President. (Ibid.)

tons of U.S. grain remains to be shipped under existing authorizations. The total import need will be about 175,000 tons a month.

The time frame for further decisions is set by the fact that Pakistan's six-month moratorium on repaying debts to aid donors runs out in October. Pakistan's foreign exchange position now appears likely to hold until then. But at that point Pakistan will, through the aid consortium, seek relief either via formal acquiescence in the moratorium or via an IMF drawing which would require supporting aid from donor governments. Such aid would require some development framework, and the Pakistanis are aiming to present an interim development framework concentrating on rehabilitation in East Pakistan. That may well not satisfy either the World Bank/IMF or the other aid donors. The US may well be alone in proposing support unless the situation in East Pakistan shows improvement.

### *Military Supply*

Because military supply procedures are intricate, it helps in understanding where the present situation stands to understand the three avenues through which Pakistan has procured military equipment here:

1. Under our Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, Pakistan has been able to buy some equipment directly from US military depots. In these cases, Defense maintains control over the equipment until it is turned over to a Pakistani shipping agent at the depot gate.

2. Also under the FMS program, where equipment is not immediately available in US stocks, Defense has put a private US supplier under contract to furnish equipment directly to Pakistani shipping agents. In these cases, Defense control over the equipment is limited once the supplier accepts the contract.

3. Apart from the FMS program, the Pakistani procurement mission here can make its own contracts directly with the supplier. Defense is not involved at all.

In addition, it is important to understand the two controls that have been used to limit shipments since the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan:

1. All Munitions List equipment—regardless of the channel through which it is procured—requires an export license issued by the State Department.

2. In addition, equipment in the first category above—equipment supplied under the FMS program from US depots—is subject to administrative controls within the Defense Department.

When fighting broke out in East Pakistan on March 25, the first tentative decision was to establish an administrative hold on equipment still within US Government jurisdiction but not to touch equipment



which had already been turned over to a Pakistani shipping agent or was being handled directly between a US supplier and the Pakistani government.

This meant: (a) no new export licenses would be issued, but valid ones (good for one year) would be honored until they expired; (b) equipment in US depots would be administratively held. This left the following equipment moving: any equipment for which a license had been issued *and* which was under Pakistani jurisdiction, either because a US depot had turned it over to a shipping agent before early April or because the Pakistanis were procuring it directly from a supplier.

The rationale behind this distinction was that administrative actions over equipment within US Government jurisdiction could be explained for a time as bureaucratic delays, but establishing control over equipment within Pakistani jurisdiction would have had conveyed all the political signals of a full embargo. Those were signals we wanted to avoid.

It has been difficult to know exactly what the effect of these partial controls would be on the actual flow of equipment because the accounting is so diversified—through the Defense system and out into the commercial market.

What is clear now is that our policy has become more restrictive simply with the passage of time because licenses which were good for one year continue to expire. When Secretary Rogers wrote you on our military supply options in June,<sup>2</sup> it was estimated that equipment up to a value of \$34 million might legally be shipped under valid licenses but—because some of that was under administrative hold—the value of actual shipments possible would have been less. By mid-July, further refinement of the list which took into account the expiration of licenses set the outside figure at \$15 million under valid license, although again the amount free of administrative controls would have been less. The passage of another month is expected to reduce the amount that Pakistan could, by mid-August, still pick up anew from US suppliers to just under \$5 million (in addition to \$9.5 million in sonar equipment licensed commercially for vessels being built in the UK).

On the other side of the ledger, we do not know how much equipment Pakistani shippers may already have picked up before licenses expired and have in transit. Some shipments could continue to show up from time to time, but the amount is not thought to be large.

The results of this policy are twofold:

1. The Pakistanis have played along with the administrative game and have not made an issue of our restrictions. It was clear when I was

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 78.

in Islamabad that they were grateful that the US had not taken the formal step of imposing an embargo. The loss of military supplies bothers the military, but to Yahya it seems at least as important that the US has not joined others in condemning him.

2. The Indians and the Congress have objected sharply to our not imposing a total embargo. The fact that very little equipment is actually moving now under present policy does not satisfy them. There are widely supported moves in the House and Senate to cut off both military and economic (except relief) assistance to Pakistan until you determine that most of the refugees are able to return home. If we hold out against embargo, we could suffer restriction on the more important economic aid for a small amount of equipment (plus the principle of avoiding embargo).<sup>3</sup>

As a product of two SRG discussions I would expect to have for you very soon a game plan covering our policy on these two issues as well as on the other elements of the South Asian problem.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Nixon and Kissinger discussed this memorandum in a telephone conversation at 5:25 p.m. on August 3. Kissinger said that they, by which he meant Indians and critics of Pakistan in the Congress, were asking for an embargo on arms and economic assistance to Pakistan. "The extreme people want to cut off everything" he said, and concluded "on relief we have a fighting chance but arms itself is hopeless." In considering how to work around pressure for an embargo on arms shipments to Pakistan, Nixon asked about future export licenses. Kissinger's advice was: "Fudge it;" indicate that no licenses were being authorized "at this time." Nixon concluded: "We will evaluate as it goes along. We will have to take the heat on this." (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 369, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) There is also a tape recording of the conversation among the White House tapes but it is difficult to understand. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, August 3, 5:25-5:31 p.m., Executive Office Building, Conversation No. 270-14)

<sup>4</sup> Nixon highlighted this paragraph and wrote "OK" in the margin.

**114. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 6, 1971, 1807Z.

143415. Strictly Eyes Only for Ambassador Keating and Chargé Sober from the Secretary.

1. I am increasingly concerned at public and intelligence indications that both Indian and Pakistani governments are beginning to feel war may be inevitable and are tending to act on that assumption. Pak and Indian air forces are on alert. Government of West Bengal has been informed that after August 15 it may not rely on presence of Indian army troops for internal security purposes. Bangla Desh guerrillas appear to hope to mount major offensive in September. Cross-border shelling by both Indians and Pakistanis has increased as has tempo of guerrilla activity which is shifting from sabotage to direct attacks on West Pakistani forces. In addition Indian rejection of UN presence on its side of border and efforts to exclude foreign relief workers from refugee areas suggest greater Indian sensitivity about activities in these areas.

2. With these indications of rising danger in view you should seek early opportunity to meet with Foreign Minister or Foreign Secretary to express our continued concern at dangers of situation and our hope GOI will continue to act with utmost restraint. Specifically you should ask GOI to take no action which would exacerbate situation and to use its influence with Bengali guerrilla forces to prevent creation of situation in which guerrilla activities could lead to hostilities. We would hope GOI would refrain from public statements which would raise level of tension and would make no military deployment which might seem to be provocative.

3. You may also tell Foreign Minister that we are making equally strong appeal in Islamabad and are well aware that restraint is not merely question for one side alone. We recognize that in cases of border incidents both sides must act with restraint and we are so informing GOP. You should stress in your presentation our view that war is in no one's interests in area.

**Rogers**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Priority; Nodis. Drafted by Quainton (NEA/INC) on August 3; cleared by Peter Constable (NEA/PAF), Van Hollen, Johnson (U), and Haig; and approved by Rogers. Repeated to Islamabad. According to an August 4 memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger, Kissinger also cleared the telegram. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 1/1/71–9/30/71)

## 115. Telegram From the Consulate General in Calcutta to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Calcutta, August 7, 1971, 1220Z.

2280. Subject: Meeting With AL Rep. Reference: Calcutta 2230.<sup>2</sup>

Summary: In discussion with ConGen PolOff, Awami League MNA reiterated points made reftel and reaffirmed that (despite propaganda to the contrary) AL leaders are unanimous in desire for compromise settlement with GOP. He said, in approaching ConGen, he acting under specific instructions of Bangladesh Minister who hopes to convince USG to initiate negotiations with GOP which will lead to a meeting of interested parties and peaceful settlement of current impasse. He said Bangladesh military forces building to strength of two "conventional" divisions (plus guerrillas) when this level is reached they plan to seize and hold territory in East Bengal. End summary.

1. On August 7 PolOff met again with Awami League MNA from Comilla, Qazi Zahirul Qaiyum, who reaffirmed that he had contacted ConGen under specific instructions of Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khandakar Moshtaqy Ahmed. In reiterating points made reftel, Qaiyum gave special emphasis to two of them: US is only country capable of successfully arranging settlement, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman must be a party to such settlement. He said that if Mujib is tried and executed, prospects for a compromise "will be zero." Other AL leaders including BD Cabinet members have "no authority, no control over the masses," and thus they would be unable to negotiate compromise. On other hand, any compromise negotiated by Mujib would be accepted by the people, even including a return to the status quo ante. He said refugees would go home under any settlement approved by Sheikh Mujib. Qaiyum thought USG was following correct policy in allowing limited arms shipments to Pakistan, as this would make it easier for USG to approach GOP on question of political settlement.

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Also sent to New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 2230 from Calcutta, July 1, reported on a meeting between Awami League representative Qazi Zahirul Qaiyum and a political officer from the Consulate General. Qaiyum told the officer that Awami League leaders feared the consequences of a war between India and Pakistan and were concerned that extremist elements would take over the Bangladesh movement if guerrilla warfare in East Pakistan was protracted. Consequently, they were interested in a political settlement and were prepared to back away from their demand for total independence. Qaiyum proposed a meeting of representatives of the Awami League, Pakistan, the United States, and India to work out a settlement, but he stipulated that Mujibur Rahman's participation was an essential prerequisite. (Ibid.)

2. According Qaiyum, AL leaders think there is a good chance of war breaking out, perhaps in the next 15–20 days, which would be an enormous disaster for everyone on subcontinent. Qaiyum said there rumors that India may soon recognize the Bangladesh Government; he thought this would sharpen Indo-Pak confrontation, reduce prospects for political settlement and make war more likely. If war comes, USSR rather than USA is likely to take lead in negotiating peace settlement, and this will be to disadvantage of AL.

3. Qaiyum said there was little time left and urged USG to take action soonest. He thought USG best able judge exactly how to initiate negotiations, but recommended that first we convey to GOP the AL's desire for compromise. He thought this might be done in Washington through Pak Ambassador and/or by US Embassy in Islamabad. He specifically authorized disclosure to GOP of any details of his conversation with us. He said he personally would be willing to go to West Pakistan for talks with the GOP, and Foreign Minister Ahmed also would undertake such a trip, provided the ground has been prepared and they had assurances of safe conduct. Ahmed also wants confer with USG officials, but does not know how best to arrange such talks.

4. Qaiyum said that Mukti Bahini<sup>3</sup> was becoming an increasingly powerful military force. He said they have developed two-prong strategy. They plan to build MB "conventional" force to two divisions. (They now have one division consisting of 10 battalions of 1200 men each.) When second division is trained and equipped, they will use their "conventional" forces to seize and hold portion of East Bengal. In meantime, MB guerrilla fighters will continue guerrilla warfare tactics throughout entire province. Qaiyum said GOI has 500 East Pakistanis [garble—in?] officer schools at Dehra Dun and in Rajasthan who will be assigned to "conventional" forces upon completion of their training. GOI is in process of providing "conventional" divisions with modern equipment including anti-aircraft guns. Guerrilla fighters are given shorter training at camps near border.

5. In long run, AL is confident that it can achieve military victory. East Bengal, however, is being devastated (situation would be many times worse if there were an Indo-Pak war), which makes it increasingly important that all efforts be made to achieve political settlement. Under any circumstances an enormous reconstruction job will be re-

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<sup>3</sup> The Mukti Bahini, which translated as People's Brotherhood, was the guerrilla force operating against the Pakistani Army in East Pakistan.

quired. Qaiyum thought that US was only country capable of providing necessary assistance.

6. *Comment.* We still have no reason to doubt Qaiyum's bona fides.<sup>4</sup> To best Qaiyum's knowledge, his is only such AL contact with USG. From military standpoint, he seemed more confident this week of eventual MB victory; but nevertheless he equally firmly convinced of necessity to strive for political settlement.

**Gordon**

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<sup>4</sup> The Consulate General in Dacca did an assessment of Qaiyum's role in the Awami League and concluded that he was not prominent in the leadership but was probably a confidant of Khondkar Mushtaq Ahmad, the "Foreign Minister" of the Bangladesh independence movement, and a bona fide representative of Mushtaq. (Telegram 3057 from Dacca, August 8; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK) On August 9 the Embassy in Pakistan weighed Qaiyum's approach and concluded that even if the initiative was legitimate and represented the views of the Bangladesh leadership, it was unlikely that it would be acceptable to Yahya Khan's government. The Embassy saw a risk to relations between the United States and Pakistan in becoming involved as a conduit for proposals such as that put forward by Qaiyum. In the interest of longer-term relations with the Bangladesh leadership, however, the Embassy judged that the risk was manageable and worth taking. (Telegram 8052 from Islamabad; *ibid.*)

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## 116. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Irwin to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation

In New Delhi on August 9, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh signed a twenty-year Treaty of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 21 INDIA-USSR. Confidential. Drafted by Quainton; cleared by Schneider, Van Hollen, Igor N. Belousovitch (INR/RSE); and in draft by Laingen, Douglas M. Cochran, Chief of the South Asia Division (INR/RNA), and Wayne S. Smith (EUR/SOV).

Peace, Friendship and Cooperation.<sup>2</sup> The Treaty is a dramatic demonstration of the closeness of current Indo-Soviet relations. It is an important Soviet initiative to gain greater influence over the course of events in South Asia.

The essence of the Treaty is its provision that in the event of attack or the threat of attack there will be immediate mutual consultations. Each side also undertakes to refrain from giving assistance to any third party taking part in armed conflict with the other party. These clauses not only assure Soviet neutrality in the event of hostilities in South Asia but also the prospect of Soviet assistance and support in the event of war.

The Indian decision to depart from its formal posture of non-alliance, the disclaimer of Soviet respect for India's policy of non-alignment as stated in the Treaty notwithstanding, reflects India's perceptions of changing international power realities, notably the *détente* in Sino-American relations. In addition, recent U.S. policies toward Pakistan have reinforced the Indian view that it could not count on U.S. support for Indian interests in the area or on U.S. assistance in the event of hostilities.

From the Soviet point of view the rising level of tension in South Asia and the prospect that India might extend formal diplomatic recognition to the Government of Bangla Desh, thereby precipitating hostilities, seem to have prompted the Soviet offer of a Treaty at this time. The gains from the Treaty for the Soviets are formal Indian assurances that it will not enter any hostile alliance system, permit the establishment of foreign bases in India or allow the use of India for purposes militarily harmful to the USSR.

It remains to be seen whether the impact of the Treaty will be a moderating one, although that was probably the Soviet intent. This assurance of Soviet support has probably also diminished pressures on the Indian Government and restored a degree of self-confidence and restraint. On the other hand, the Treaty in itself provides no basis for

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<sup>2</sup> The text of the treaty was transmitted to the Department on August 9 in telegram 12695 from New Delhi. (Ibid.) For text, see *Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuz, 1971* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1972), pp. 93–96. The Embassy in Moscow analyzed the treaty and concluded that it represented a move by the Soviet Union to consolidate its position in India by accepting increased involvement in an explosive situation on the subcontinent. (Telegram 5788 from Moscow, August 10; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 21 INDIA–USSR) Kissinger uses similar imagery in assessing the impact of the treaty in his memoirs. In his view the treaty removed an important restraint on India in its confrontation with Pakistan by ensuring continuing Soviet military supplies and by factoring in the Soviet Union to offset a possible intervention in the conflict by China. "With the treaty, Moscow threw a lighted match into a powder keg." (*White House Years*, p. 867)

the resolution of the fundamental issues at stake in the East Pakistan situation and may therefore offer only a temporary breathing space. Indeed it is possible that by implicitly giving India a deterrent against Pakistani and/or Chinese attack, it may encourage the Indians to step up their covert activities in East Pakistan with less fear that these activities will escalate into war.

While the Treaty represents no substantial change in Indo-Soviet relations, it reinforces the increasing closeness of view between the Indians and the Soviets which has developed in recent years. It reflects a Soviet recognition of the preeminence of its interests in India and India's recognition of the geo-political necessity of close relations with Moscow. The Treaty does not, however, imply any change in India's desire for close relations with the United States. The Indian Foreign Secretary called in our Acting DCM shortly after the signing of the Treaty to reassure him that it was not directly against the United States. In addition on August 7, two days before the signing of the Treaty, Prime Minister Gandhi's office informed us that she would be pleased to accept an invitation for an official visit to Washington this November, thereby clearly demonstrating her interest in maintaining a significant relationship with us.

**John N. Irwin II**

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### **117. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 9, 1971, 1:15–2:30 p.m.

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

Ambassador Lakshmi Kant Jha of India  
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

The lunch took place at the Ambassador's request.

Mr. Kissinger opened the conversation by saying that the Ambassador had picked a rather difficult occasion—the signing of the Soviet-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971. Secret. The meeting took place 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)



Indian friendship treaty [treaty text at Tab A].<sup>2</sup> In itself, the treaty was a matter of secondary concern to us, though it was hard to reconcile with the non-alignment policy of India. What did concern us, however, was the possibility that India might draw the conclusion from it of an unlimited freedom of action vis-à-vis Pakistan. Mr. Kissinger said he could not be more categorical in pointing out that a war between India and Pakistan would set back Indian-American relations for half a decade. No matter what the Ambassador was told around town, Mr. Kissinger wanted him to understand that an attack on East Pakistan would involve the high probability of a cut-off of aid. Also, if India wound up as a result of this treaty as a diplomatic appendage to the Soviet Union, there would be a much lessened interest in India. As he had pointed out to all the people he spoke with in India, the American interest was a strong, self-reliant independent India.

The Ambassador said that, of course, India was not going to be anybody's diplomatic satellite. Mr. Kissinger called his attention to Article 9 of the treaty<sup>3</sup> which, if read literally, meant that India would have to support the Soviet Union diplomatically in a new crisis over Berlin. The Ambassador said that, obviously, this was not the intention of the treaty. India was looking for a counter-weight to Pakistan's repeated claims to the effect that in a new war China would be on its side. Mr. Kissinger said that anything that exacerbated conditions in the subcontinent was against our policy. He hoped the Ambassador understood that we were deadly serious about it.

Mr. Kissinger also said that it seemed a pity for the United States and India, which have no conflicting interests, to quarrel over a problem whose solution was preordained by history. The Ambassador asked Mr. Kissinger what he meant. Mr. Kissinger said that it seemed to him that over a historical period, East Bengal would be gaining autonomy even without Indian intervention. We, in turn, had no interest in the subcontinent except to see a strong and developing India and an independent Pakistan. Indeed, there was a difference in our approach to India and in our approach to Pakistan. India was a potential world power; Pakistan would always be a regional power. For all these reasons, the problem would sort itself out if we separated the issue of relief from that of refugees and the issue of refugees from that of po-

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<sup>2</sup> All brackets in the source text. The attached text of the treaty was released in Moscow on August 9 by TASS and circulated in Washington by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

<sup>3</sup> Article 9 stipulated that each country would refrain from giving assistance to a third country engaged in conflict with the other country. It further stipulated that if either country was attacked or threatened with attack, the two countries would consult "with a view to eliminate this threat."

litical accommodation. The Ambassador said that he had no difficulty separating relief from refugees, but he saw no way of separating refugees from political accommodation.

The Ambassador then handed Mr. Kissinger a letter by Prime Minister Gandhi to the President. The letter [Tab B]<sup>4</sup> was couched in very conciliatory terms. He said it would provide an excellent opportunity for the President to state his basic policy towards India and to start a useful dialogue. He also told Mr. Kissinger that Prime Minister Gandhi had accepted the invitation to come to Washington and, indeed, on the dates we had proposed. This would give us an opportunity to ease some of the tensions.

Mr. Kissinger told the Ambassador that we welcomed Prime Minister Gandhi but that it was essential that the India/Pakistan problem not be solved by war. We would be generous in refugee relief, but India should not believe that it could use this crisis to overthrow the settlement of 1946.

The meeting ended with an exchange of pleasantries.

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<sup>4</sup> Attached is an August 7 letter that Kissinger sent to Nixon under a covering memorandum on August 19; see the attachment to Document 128.

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## 118. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 10, 1971.

### SUBJECT

Discussion with U Thant on the UN Relief Effort in East Pakistan

In two meetings August 10 with the Secretary-General and members of his staff and of the specialized agencies involved, I stressed our desire to see the UN rise to the great humanitarian challenge posed by the risk of famine and disease among the victims of the strife in East Pakistan and assured him of our strong support for the UN effort.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK. Confidential.

U Thant seemed fully aware of the magnitude and urgency of the problem and was very cooperative. He expressed concern over the threats being made by the guerrilla leadership against the safety of UN personnel in the area and preoccupied by the need for a political accommodation with the Awami League in East Pakistan as the only real solution. He said he is prepared under Article 99 of the UN Charter<sup>2</sup> to bring the situation between India and Pakistan to the attention of the Security Council if he decides that it involves a serious threat to peace. He will announce this week, probably Wednesday,<sup>3</sup> that he has decided to station 38 UN officials in the Dacca area by early September to coordinate and expedite the movement of relief supplies and to work out arrangements to assure that the supplies reach those in need. Once such arrangements are made he plans to send some 150 additional personnel to other parts of East Pakistan, including the reception centers established to handle returning refugees. Their staffing plan seems sensible.

He was grateful for our one million dollar contribution and the promise of additional financial aid for this effort, to which the UK is also contributing some \$500,000. At the same time he displayed considerable concern lest the US appear to be dominating the UN effort, and particularly at any effort to politicize the UN relief effort.

The discussions with U Thant's staff and representatives of the specialized agencies revealed substantial agreement with our assessment of the relief needs and what needs to be done to meet them. On the whole, I was favorably impressed by their competence and realistic attitude.

At U Thant's request, Mr. Sisco and I gave him a brief and general appraisal of Mr. Sisco's talks with Israeli officials, stressing that serious problems remain but that we are cautiously optimistic that an interim agreement is yet possible by the end of the year and that both sides continue to welcome our efforts to that end. U Thant said he would relay this information to Ambassador Jarring.

Incidentally, from the firmness with which U Thant spoke about his intention if necessary to raise the Indo-Pakistan matter in the Security Council and his stress on his good health, we came away with the impression that he is more than willing to remain as Secretary-General.

**William P. Rogers**

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<sup>2</sup> Article 99 of the UN Charter reads: "The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security." (*American Foreign Policy, 1950–1955: Basic Documents*, Vol. I, p. 158)

<sup>3</sup> August 11.

119. Letter From the Indian Ambassador (Jha) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 11, 1971.

Excellency,

I am desired by my Prime Minister to convey to Your Excellency the following personal message from her:

“The Government and people of India as well as our Press and Parliament are greatly perturbed by the reported statement of President Yahya Khan that he is going to start a secret military trial of Mujibur Rahman without affording him any foreign legal assistance. We apprehend that this so-called trial will be used only as a publicity to execute Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This will aggravate the situation in East Bengal and will create a serious situation in India because of the strong feelings of our people and all political parties. Hence our grave anxiety. We appeal to you to exercise your influence with President Yahya Khan to take a realistic view in the larger interest of the peace and stability of this region”. Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.<sup>2</sup>

L.K. Jha

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 29 PAK. No classification marking. Sent to Kissinger on August 11 under cover of a memorandum from Eliot. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> On July 22 Syed Nazrul Islam, using the title of Acting President of Bangladesh, sent a telegram to President Nixon asking him to intervene on behalf of Mujibur Rahman. (Telegram 140332 to Islamabad, July 30; *ibid.*)

## 120. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 11, 1971, 3:10–4:20 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Pakistan

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin

Joseph Sisco

Christopher Van Hollen

Lindsay Grant

Defense

Armistead Selden

Brig. Gen. Devol Brett

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Col. James Connell

Lt. Col. Walter B. Ratliffe

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robt. E. Cushman

John Waller

[*name not declassified*]

AID

Maurice Williams

Herbert Rees

OMB

Kenneth Dam

NSC Staff

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Samuel M. Hoskinson

Harold H. Saunders

Jeanne W. Davis

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that

—The State/AID package of telegrams<sup>2</sup> would be reworked by State, AID and Hal Saunders, in the light of the President's remarks, to separate some of the political issues from relief matters;

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. The minutes indicate that the meeting began at 3:10 p.m. and concluded at 3:55. According to Kissinger's appointment book, the meeting began at 3:10 and was interrupted at 3:15 by a meeting of the principal members of the Senior Review Group with President Nixon. That meeting concluded at 3:47 at which point the meeting of the Senior Review Group resumed and concluded at 4:20 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to two draft telegrams conveyed to Kissinger under a covering memorandum on August 7 by Eliot. One was a draft telegram from AID to Islamabad and New Delhi providing a status report on humanitarian relief in East Pakistan that emphasized the importance of preventing a famine. The other was a draft telegram of instructions to Ambassadors Keating and Farland entitled "Scenario for Action in the Indo-Pakistan Crisis," that outlined initiatives to be undertaken with Prime Minister Gandhi and President Yahya. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-058, SRG Meeting, Pakistan/Cyprus, 8/11/71)

—Mr. Williams would leave for Pakistan next week to make the presentation to Yahya on relief matters and discuss with M.M. Ahmad the case to be made to the World Bank consortium in October.

Mr. Kissinger: The President would like to see the principals for a few minutes on Pakistan.

(The following adjourned to the President's office and returned at 3:47: Irwin, Sisco, Selden, Cushman, Moorer, Williams, Kissinger, Saunders; see separate minutes.)<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: I think we covered the main points with the President on what is needed. We have the AID package on relief and refugees. I suggest we separate out some of the political issues from the relief matters. Saunders and Van Hollen can work together on this.

Mr. Irwin: I agree we've covered everything. We will take another look at the package in the light of the President's remarks.

Mr. Kissinger: Is \$100 million the right figure for refugee relief. We're prepared to entertain a larger figure if that would be desirable.

Mr. Sisco: We should discuss the timing of this. Some people believe we can do too much too quickly with the Indians.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm talking about Pakistan. We're not so eager to do things for India. We want to make a demonstrable case to prevent famine in East Pakistan.

Mr. Irwin: They don't need money as much as they do the means for distribution.

Mr. Selden: The real problem is distribution.

Mr. Williams: And administration.

Mr. Kissinger: Hal Saunders can get together with you on some changes in the State/AID message rather than redraft it here. Can we get the whole package out this week?

Mr. Sisco: I think so.

Mr. Kissinger: Then Maury Williams can go out there to make the presentation to Yahya. I think that is as much as can be done now.

Mr. Irwin: The quicker he can get there, the better.

Mr. Williams: We want to let the UN get out in front, though. Phase One should be an announcement by the UN that they are taking on the responsibility. My trip can then be made in support of the UN effort.

Mr. Kissinger: When will the UN announcement be made?

Mr. Sisco: It's supposed to be this week.

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<sup>3</sup> Document 121.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Williams) Then you could go out at least by the end of next week. I wouldn't want you to wait three weeks or so.

Mr. Irwin: He wouldn't wait beyond next week.

Mr. Williams: Just as long as the publicity is directed to the UN. It's a psychological thing. I don't need to wait until they recruit the people to do the job.

Mr. Kissinger: Someone should talk fairly straight to the Indians, too, and tell them the party is over. We will do what we can to help on refugee relief, but if they are planning to use this to split up Pakistan, we won't go along.

Mr. Sisco: The Secretary (Rogers) made this point clearly to Jha, but it will take constant reiteration. They will have less of an excuse now that their treaty with Moscow gives them some assurances.

Mr. Irwin: I have spoken twice to Jha and the Secretary saw him this morning.

Mr. Kissinger: The President has made it plain that there will be an absolute crisis in our relations if two divisions of Pakistan guerrillas cross the border.

Mr. Sisco: I'm convinced there will be no formal Indian attack, but they will probably continue to support the guerrillas in their border crossings. We should watch this very carefully in the light of the new treaty with Moscow.

(Messrs Williams, Van Hollen and Rees left the meeting.)

Mr. Kissinger: There was one other item I wished to take up. Should we not be doing something to prepare for October when the pressure to respond to Pakistan's financial assistance needs would become more acute? At present, there is little support in the World Bank consortium for additional assistance. Yet there might be something the US could be doing to help the Pakistanis present a better case to the consortium. I consider it intolerable that the World Bank should be setting political conditions for the resumption of assistance, but it would be difficult to argue that case if the Pakistanis made no case of their own on economic grounds. Could not Maury Williams, when he goes to Pakistan, also discuss with M.M. Ahmad the elements of a possible case to be presented to the consortium in October?

Messrs. Irwin and Sisco agreed heartily that this should be done.

(Mr. Saunders immediately after the meeting called Mr. Williams and informed him of the discussion. Mr. Williams said that he would be quite prepared to take up that subject and had been developing some ideas for an approach.)

## 121. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 11, 1971, 3:15–3:47 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

The President  
 Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President  
 John Irwin, Under Secretary of State  
 Thomas Moorer, Chairman, JCS  
 Robert Cushman, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
 Maurice Williams, Deputy Administrator, AID  
 Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State  
 Armistead Selden, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, ISA  
 Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

At the opening of a scheduled Senior Review Group meeting on Pakistan, Dr. Kissinger said that the President would like to see the principal members of the SRG in his office to talk about Pakistan.

When the group had moved from the Situation Room to the President's office, the President began by saying that he had had a chance in San Clemente to discuss the South Asian situation with Admiral Moorer, Mr. Helms and, of course, he had been in continuing touch with Secretary Rogers. But he had not had a chance to talk with other members of this group.

The President said that he felt it was important that he state his views on just how the emphasis must be played in the South Asian situation. It is "imperative" to play it this way, he said. He then spoke along the following lines:

First, we must look at this situation above all in terms of US interests. The interests of the US would be "very much jeopardized" by any development that could break into open conflict. "We will have to do anything—anything—to avoid war." We will do "anything—all we can—to restrain" those who want to be involved in a war.

On the public relations side, the media no longer have a great deal to write about on Vietnam. The big story is Pakistan. The political people—Democrat and Republican—are "raising hell" about this issue. "And they should from the standpoint of human suffering."

While there are great differences between the situation in South Asia and that in 1969 in Nigeria, the US in connection with Biafra stayed

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-058, SRG Meeting, Pakistan/Cyprus, 8/11/71. Secret; Nodis. Prepared by Saunders. The meeting was held in the President's office in the Old Executive Office Building.



out of the political side of the problem. We are deeply concerned about the suffering in East Pakistan and about the refugees in India. We must increase our effort on that front. We have already done a lot, but we must think of the “most massive” program possible in terms of our budget. And we must encourage other international support.

Dr. Kissinger interjected that there are two aspects to the humanitarian problem. First, there is the problem of potential famine in East Pakistan. Maury Williams is working on our programs to avert that. Second, there is the problem of the refugees that already exist in the Indian refugee camps.

The President continued:

Whether we help in a bilateral or an international framework, we must do the most that can possibly be done. Indian Ambassador Jha had been in “a month or so ago.” The Ambassador was “bullyragging me” about the great statements the French and British had made with regard to the Pakistani situation. He had told the Ambassador not to talk about what they had said but to look at what they had done. The US has contributed more to refugee relief than all the rest of them combined in terms of simply aiding the refugees in India.

We have to press other European countries to contribute. We are “not going to get very much” but we should “make a little issue of it.” Embarrassing them a little bit will make it easier for us to dramatize how much we have actually done.

He doubted that this problem would generate a great deal of enthusiasm in the US. It would not generate as much response as the catastrophe in Chile had. Still we must “go all out—all out—on the relief side.”

Turning to the political part of the problem, he could not emphasize his position too strongly. India’s interest, some Indians think, would be served by war. Some Pakistanis would be willing to have a war. “The USSR—I don’t know what they want.” The interests of the US would not be served by a war. The new China relationship would be imperiled, probably beyond repair, and we would have a “very sticky problem” with the USSR.

“Now let me be very blunt.” He had been going to India since 1953. Every Ambassador who goes to India falls in love with India. Some have the same experience in Pakistan—though not as many because the Pakistanis are a different breed. The Pakistanis are straightforward—and sometimes extremely stupid. The Indians are more devious, sometimes so smart that we fall for their line.

He “holds no brief” for what President Yahya has done. The US “must not—cannot—allow” India to use the refugees as a pretext for breaking up Pakistan. The President said with a great deal of empha-

sis that he is “convinced” that that is what India wants to do. That is what he might want to do if he were in New Delhi.

Now, as far as the US is concerned, the US has to use its influence in the other direction. The USSR has “this little deal” with India. [Reference to USSR-India Friendship Treaty signed August 9.]<sup>2</sup> Some think that the Russians want to punish the Pakistanis for their relationship with China. In his view, the Russians are looking at this situation as they looked at the Middle East before the June war in 1967. The danger is that they may unleash forces there which no one can control.

The problem is that if the Indians “romp around in East Pakistan” or send guerrillas, the Pakistanis may well go to war even though they feel that would be suicidal.

Returning to his basic point, he said to Mr. Sisco and Mr. Irwin that we “have to cool off the pro-Indians in the State Department and out in South Asia.”<sup>3</sup> We want to help India but we will not be parties to their objective [of breaking up Pakistan]. “If there is a war, I will go on national television and ask Congress to cut off all aid to India. They won’t get a dime.”

We have to keep some leverage in Pakistan. Our concerns must be communicated to the Pakistanis through Ambassador Farland. If we go along with the Congress and cut off all assistance to Pakistan, then we will lose what influence we have on the humanitarian problem. Perhaps the worst we fear will happen anyway, but certainly the US—while the Soviet Union is fishing in troubled waters—must use its influence to keep the war from happening.

In summary, publicly our position is that (1) we will go all out to help the refugees and to help people in East Pakistan; (2) there must not be a war because war would help no one; (3) we will not publicly exacerbate the political situation. We will deal with the political problem in private. It is not our job to determine the political future of Pakistan. The Pakistanis have to work out their own future. We will not measure our relationship with the government in terms of what it has done in East Pakistan. By that criterion, we would cut off relations with every Communist government in the world because of the slaughter that has taken place in the Communist countries.

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<sup>2</sup> All brackets in the source text. See Document 116.

<sup>3</sup> On August 10 Ambassador Keating sent a telegram from New Delhi pointing out that relations between the United States and India had sunk to a “poisonous” level. He argued that the United States should begin to take the steps necessary to reverse the general Indian perception of a U.S. preference for “politically authoritarian, inherently fragile, third-rate Pakistan over democratic, relatively stable, regionally dominant India.” (Telegram 12722 from New Delhi; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK)

The President concluded by asking whether there were any questions.

Mr. Sisco said that we had followed the three-pronged approach that the President had outlined. He would like to make an observation on one point. He hoped that the President did not intend to preclude having Farland go to President Yahya when we have concrete suggestions to communicate on steps that might help with the overall political settlement. Given our overall objective—admitting that the real Indian political objective is probably to establish an independent Bangla Desh by peace or by force—he hoped that within the framework of friendship with Yahya where we have concrete suggestions and could help Yahya move a little bit toward political accommodation, Farland could mention the suggestion.

Mr. Sisco expected serious repercussions from the Soviet-Indian Treaty. The Indians may feel constrained from conventional military moves across the border, but they may feel encouraged to support guerrilla crossings. “Relief alone won’t do the job.” President Yahya may not be able to go far enough. But if there is not some progress on the question of political accommodation, the guerrilla warfare would continue, Pakistani military reprisals would continue and the refugees would be unlikely to return to their homes. More important, Yahya may feel he has to attack guerrilla camps in India.

Mr. Sisco continued, noting that the Indians have behaved very badly. They have prevented the UN from working with the refugees on their side. He agreed that their real policy is one establishing an independent Bangla Desh. We don’t care how that turns out. Our interest is that, if it happens, it happens by peaceful means.

Mr. Sisco concluded by asking whether it will be all right if in a friendly posture—noting that we have no blueprint for a political solution—to make suggestions when we have them. One of these might be not to execute Mujibur Rahman [Awami League leader now on trial in West Pakistan for treason].

The President replied that in view of the fact that we have not cut off aid and have a good personal relationship with Yahya, it is possible that unless he is “totally trapped” he might be responsive. Yahya considers Ambassador Farland his friend. Any suggestions that we might have—such as “not shooting Mujib”—Farland might point out to him. The President said he had felt from talking to Ambassador Farland that it was his intention to try to persuade President Yahya to be “more flexible or more sophisticated” on the question of political settlement.

Dr. Kissinger interjected that we should not ask the President in this meeting to arbitrate the nuances of what we might ask President Yahya to do. The basic problem is not some specific proposition. It is

whether India links the return of the refugees to a political accommodation. If we go along and play that Indian game, then we are participating in the break-up of Pakistan. If the Indians genuinely need an excuse for calling off the guerrillas and some conciliatory move by Yahya would evoke that Indian response, then we might be justified in making that point to Yahya. But asking him to deal with the Awami Leaguers in Calcutta is "like asking Abraham Lincoln to deal with Jefferson Davis."

The President said we can't ask Yahya to do that. We can't allow India to dictate the political future of East Pakistan. Parenthetically, the President noted that the West Pakistanis probably could not dictate the political future of East Pakistan either. The President said that Ambassador Farland could talk privately with Yahya if we have some concrete suggestions.

Dr. Kissinger said that he thought Yahya would listen if the point were "hooked to" a refugee resettlement proposal. It is the kind of thing Maury Williams<sup>4</sup> could say if he goes to Pakistan. If Williams can hook proposals to the refugee problem then Yahya might listen to him. The proposal could be put in terms of maintaining the integrity of the people of Pakistan.

The President assented, agreeing that Mr. Williams could give Yahya an opportunity to "do something political in the name of humanitarian relief."

Dr. Kissinger illustrated by recalling that Mr. Williams had earlier made the point that the army had never had a big civil function in Pakistan. Now that a substantial civil effort in food distribution is necessary, one could argue that the restoration of civil administration is essential to food distribution. The emphasis could be put on restoration of civil administration by talking in terms of food distribution, yet in the knowledge that the restoration of civil administration would also have political implications.

Mr. Williams agreed that that might be a good entering wedge.

The President, returning an earlier theme, said that the other side of the coin is that Mr. Irwin and Mr. Sisco should "tell your people that it isn't going to help for them publicly to take a stand on the political issue. Our people have got to stay neutral on the question of political accommodation in public." Privately, we can tell President Yahya that he should not shoot Mujib.

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<sup>4</sup> Secretary Rogers announced on August 13 that Maurice Williams had been designated to coordinate all United States relief assistance to East Pakistan. (*Department of State Bulletin*, September 6, 1971, p. 259)

Mr. Irwin summarized Mr. Sisco's presentation by making the point that the degree to which we can get Yahya to move toward a political accommodation will increase the ease of moving toward a successful relief program. He noted that we could move behind the scenes in doing this.

The President asked Dr. Kissinger whether he had found "any give in Yahya."

Dr. Kissinger replied that he felt that Yahya would listen if we could put our suggestions in the form of suggestions on a refugee program. The issue is whether we are going to use relief to squeeze Yahya to set political conditions or whether we are going to use relief to deprive the Indians of an excuse to attack.

The President said that we do not care "who runs the place out there."<sup>5</sup> We can't answer that problem.

Dr. Kissinger noted that President Yahya is "not the brightest man in the world." But asking him to deal directly with the Awami League would be hard to do.

Mr. Irwin said that they had discussed with Secretary Rogers that morning the question of dealing with the Awami League. We have had reports in recent days of the possibility that some Awami League leaders in Calcutta want to negotiate with Yahya on the basis of giving up their claim for the independence of East Pakistan. The question being discussed is whether Ambassador Farland could talk to Yahya just suggesting that if the Awami League is serious about withdrawing its claim to independence Yahya might consider talking with them.

The President said that we have to remember that Ambassador Farland is the man on the spot. He suggested that Ambassador Farland not be ordered to say certain things to President Yahya. He suggested checking any ideas with the Ambassador to get his thoughts. We don't have to give him the final say because we might come up with some good ideas here but we ought to check with him.

Mr. Sisco said, changing the subject as the group rose to go, that he and Secretary Rogers had been reassured by what they had found at the United Nations Monday.<sup>6</sup> The UN's organization for the Pakistan relief effort is in better shape than anyone had thought.

Mr. Williams said that we would go all out in East Pakistan. The international contributions now, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, for the refugees in India now total \$170 million of

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to East Pakistan.

<sup>6</sup> August 9.

which the US contributed \$70 million. AID would be presenting to the President their recommendation for an additional package of assistance. The President said that he would be glad to receive it.

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**122. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 13, 1971.

SUBJECT

Instruction on Contacts with Bangla Desh Representatives in India—Cable for Clearance

As you know, Bangla Desh representatives in India have recently sought out and made contact with middle ranking U.S. officials in New Delhi and Calcutta concerning a settlement with the West Pakistanis. It is not at all clear, however, what they are really fishing for. The approach in Calcutta,<sup>2</sup> allegedly reflecting the Bangla Desh "Foreign Minister's" wishes, was along the lines of a settlement on the basis of something less than full independence, while the approach by the "Foreign Secretary" in New Delhi was based on the opposite outcome of total independence.<sup>3</sup> Another contact is scheduled for tomorrow in Calcutta.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul-30 Nov 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 115.

<sup>3</sup> On August 8 the Political Counselor of the Embassy in New Delhi met with M. Alam, "Foreign Secretary" of the Bangladesh movement. Alam requested a meeting with Ambassador Keating but accepted an informal meeting with the Political Counselor when informed that Keating's official position precluded him meeting with a Bangladesh representative. The thrust of Alam's remarks was that the goal of total independence for Bangladesh was firmly established, and he urged the United States to support that goal. (Telegram 12698 from New Delhi, August 9; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK)

In the attached cable<sup>4</sup> for your clearance State wishes to send the following instructions to New Delhi and Calcutta:

—No commitments, contingent or otherwise, should be made for future meetings with Bangla Desh representatives, unless or until these have first been checked with the Department.

—The already scheduled meeting tomorrow should be limited largely to another low-key listening exercise. A probe on the question of Awami League willingness to negotiate for less than independence is, however, authorized.<sup>5</sup>

—We must not get into a position where our contact with Bangla Desh representatives will be misunderstood or misread by them or Islamabad.<sup>6</sup>

This approach to the problem seems to make sense for today. There is some value in at least keeping our option open of informally talking with the Bangla Desh types, but we need control and we will need to square ourselves with Yahya before this goes further.

As the cable indicates, State's next move will be to consider informing Yahya of the contacts to date and passing along whatever seems worthwhile.

*Recommendation:* That you approve the attached cable. Just to make sure there are no slipups, you may wish to tell Sisco orally that you expect to clear any outgoing cables on this subject.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Attached but not printed. Sent to New Delhi and Calcutta on August 14 as telegram 149322. (Ibid.)

<sup>5</sup> An officer from the Consulate General in Calcutta met with Bangladesh representative Qaiyum on August 14. Qaiyum reaffirmed that he was acting under instructions from his Foreign Minister who was prepared to accept a negotiated settlement that provided for less than complete independence. Qaiyum emphasized that only Mujibur Rahman could negotiate on behalf of the people of East Bengal, and only he could get them to accept a political settlement. (Telegram 2321 from Calcutta, August 14; *ibid.*)

<sup>6</sup> The Embassy in Islamabad warned on August 12 that the Government of Pakistan was very sensitive about contacts between U.S. officials and Bangladesh representatives. The Embassy counseled that such contacts be kept as low level and unofficial as possible. (Telegram 8235 from Islamabad; *ibid.*)

<sup>7</sup> Haig initialed the approve option for Kissinger.

**123. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 14, 1971, 2226Z.

149411. Following is text of letter, dated August 14, 1971, from President to President Yahya to be delivered at Farland-Williams Meeting with Yahya.<sup>2</sup> Septel<sup>3</sup> contains full guidance on Williams visit and discussions.

“Dear Mr. President:

Dr. Kissinger has reported to me concerning his visit to Islamabad and the productive talks he had with you and other officials of your Government on the problems which are now facing South Asia. I greatly appreciate the candor with which you discussed the serious situation in that part of the world, particularly the danger of hostilities.

You are keenly aware that to the dangers which have previously existed must now be added the possibility of serious food shortages in East Pakistan later this fall. We have sought to do our part to help alleviate the dangers through our appeals for restraint and through our full and active support of the humanitarian relief efforts arranged by the Secretary General of the United Nations. We plan to make a maximum effort in this regard.

Nonetheless, the situation remains extremely tense and in order for the dangers to recede it will be necessary to stabilize conditions in East Pakistan and to see a significant number of refugees begin to return from India. We would like to be helpful, and it is for this reason that I have asked Mr. Williams to go to Pakistan. He is a friend of Pakistan, and he fully shares my views of the situation and of what is required.

Both your officials and ours recognize that the most immediate priority is to mount a major effort to avert famine in East Pakistan. This step is fundamental to progress in re-establishing normal conditions. It will help those of us who want to help and will reduce the pretext for interference. I am confident that you also share our judgment that

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL PAK-US. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Quainton and White (NEA/INC) on August 13; cleared by Sisco, Van Hollen, Saunders, and NSC staff secretary Jeanne Davis; and approved by Irwin. Repeated to New Delhi, Dacca, and London for Ambassador Farland.

<sup>2</sup> A signed copy of the letter presented by Williams to Yahya on August 19 is *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971).

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 149242 to Islamabad, August 14. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK)



it would also be helpful in this task for you to continue your efforts to build on the program announced in your June 28 address<sup>4</sup> for enlisting the support of the elected representatives of the East Pakistani people in the urgent work of national reconciliation.

All of these measures will be important in countering the corrosive threat of insurgency and restoring peace to your part of the world. They will also hasten the day when the United States and other countries can resume, within a revised national development plan, the task of assisting your country's economic development which has been so tragically complicated and slowed by recent events.

In addition, demonstrable progress on the political front will mean that our own counsels of restraint in New Delhi will have a greater chance of success.

I have asked Ambassador Farland and Mr. Williams to share with you some additional thoughts on these subjects, in the same spirit of friendship which you have so kindly shown for them in the past and which has also characterized our own discussions. Finally, let me extend my warm regards and assure you again that I appreciate fully the tremendous tasks that you and your countrymen face.

Sincerely,  
Richard Nixon"

**Rogers**

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 84.

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## 124. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 17, 1971.

### PARTICIPANTS

Anatoliy Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador  
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 7, Part 2. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The conversation was held during lunch in the Map Room at the White House. Kissinger summarized the conversation in an August 24 memorandum to the President. (Ibid.)

*Subcontinent*

We then turned the conversation to India. Dobrynin said he wanted us to be sure to understand that the Soviets were doing their best to restrain India. They wanted peace in the subcontinent. It was an ironic development where they were lined up with what looked like we had always thought was the pillar of democracy while we were lined up with the Chinese. I said as far as the subcontinent were concerned, we were not lined up with anybody. We above all wanted to prevent the outbreak of a war, and we hoped that they did not inadvertently give the Indians enough backing so that they felt it was safe to engage in war. Dobrynin said that their interest was stability, and in fact they had invited the Pakistani Foreign Secretary to come to Moscow in order to show that they were pursuing a balanced policy. I said that they should not encourage Indian pressures for an immediate political solution since that would only make the problem impossible. I stated it would be best if we worked on the refugee and relief problems first and on political accommodation later. Dobrynin said that he was certain that the Soviet Union basically agreed.

Dobrynin then asked me whether it was correct what the Indians had told them, namely that we would look at a Chinese attack on India as a matter of extreme gravity and might even give them some support. He said that the Indians had been puzzled by my comment but had then put it all together after my trip to Peking. I said that I never commented about meetings in other countries, but that we certainly were not aligned with any country against India. Dobrynin commented that he admired the general conduct of our foreign policy even when it was objectively directed against the Soviet Union, but he felt that our arms policy towards Pakistan escaped his understanding. We were paying a disproportionate amount for what we were shipping. I said that we never yielded to public pressure and that he knew very well that the arms we were shipping were minimal and inconsequential with respect to the strategic balance.

Dobrynin volunteered that the Soviet treaty with India was not in response to recent events but had been in preparation for a year.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

**125. Analytical Summary Prepared by the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 17, 1971.

CONTINGENCY PAPER—INDO-PAKISTAN HOSTILITIES

At the Senior Review Group meeting on July 30<sup>2</sup> concerned with NSSM 133<sup>3</sup> (Contingency Planning on South Asia), it was decided that those sections of the paper<sup>4</sup> dealing with U.S. actions in case of war should be updated and expanded. *The following summarizes and reviews the current state of our contingency planning for the possible outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan.* Actually this current paper<sup>5</sup> represents only slight progress beyond the earlier effort.

*I. The Prospects* (pp. 1–3)

The danger of a new war in South Asia “remains real.” If no progress is made toward (a) political accommodation between West and East Pakistan and (b) repatriation of Bengali refugees from India by September or October, the chances for hostilities “will increase.”

U.S. actions in the event of another Indo-Pak war would in part be conditioned by the circumstances in which the hostilities broke out. The most likely scenarios are:

—Indian military forces attack East Pakistan in an effort to, at a minimum, seize and hold part of the area and at a maximum to drive out the West Pakistani forces.

—India steps up more direct support for a major insurgent effort to seize and hold a portion of East Pakistan.

—A gradual process of escalation involving incidents along the East Pakistan-India border with confusion as to who is most at fault.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 8/17/71. Secret; Exdis. No drafting information appears on the summary, but an August 17 transmittal memorandum, attached but not printed, to Kissinger suggests it was drafted by Hoskinson and Kennedy.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 111.

<sup>3</sup> Document 88.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3, Document 111.

<sup>5</sup> On August 17 NSC staff secretary Jeanne Davis circulated to the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Chairman of the JCS an undated paper prepared in the State Department that revised sections V and VI of the contingency study referenced in footnote 4 above. The revisions, which are summarized in the analytical summary, are a refinement of the initial response to NSSM 133. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 8/17/71)

—West Pakistanis initiate hostilities by attacking guerrilla sanctuaries in eastern India and/or Indian military support bases.

—West Pakistanis, either to divert Indian attention or to demonstrate Indian vulnerability, attempt to stir up trouble in India-held Kashmir and/or along the Kashmir cease-fire line. As in 1965, the situation rapidly escalates to full scale hostilities. (The State paper does not include this possibility but it seems real enough to be considered since from a Pak point of view Kashmir is India's most vulnerable point.)

## II. *U.S. Interests* (p. 3)

Should war break out between India and Pakistan it would be in the U.S. interest that:

—the hostilities not expand to include third parties, particularly China (and the Soviets).

—to see that hostilities are not protracted since a prolonged war could do profound damage to the political, economic and social fabric of India and Pakistan.

Thus, the paper concludes, *U.S. interests would be best served by an early end to the conflict and by negotiations among all parties leading to a withdrawal of Indian troops and an overall political settlement.*

## III. *Options in the Event of Hostilities* (pp. 3–13)

The U.S., according to the paper, could pursue one of the following three broad strategies in the event of hostilities between India and Pakistan:

A. "*Passive International Role.*" (pp. 4–5) The U.S. would assume a "relatively passive" (or inactive) posture indicating our basic neutrality. Such a role might be particularly appropriate in circumstances where (a) responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities was unclear, (b) the likelihood of Chinese involvement was judged to be small and (c) the conflict appeared likely to be of short duration. Such a posture might involve:

—adopting a public position that we did not intend to become directly involved and would not provide assistance to either side;

—support of efforts in the Security Council to end hostilities and achieve a negotiated settlement;

—suspension of all economic and military aid;

—Presidential offer of good offices to both Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi;

—close consultation with Soviets and British;

—cautioning Chinese (and Soviets) against involvement (presumably only if they seemed to be heading in that direction).

The *argument for* is that U.S. involvement would be at a minimum and we would at the same time maintain maximum flexibility as events unfolded. Also, our relationship with both India and Pakistan would

be preserved. (As long as the Chinese stayed out and refrained from adopting a menacing posture toward India, there would be a hope for maintaining our own relationship with them.)

The *argument against* is that we would risk serious damage to our interests if the conflict were protracted. Indian dependence on the Soviets and Pakistani dependence on the Chinese could be increased without any significant gain for the U.S.

B. "*Military Support.*" (pp. 6–9) At the other extreme would be a decision to support with military assistance either India or Pakistan. We have limited commitments to both sides (through SEATO and CENTO with Pakistan, and through the 1964 Air Defense Agreement with India),<sup>6</sup> although there are no provisions for automatic U.S. involvement and these are practically speaking dead letters.

1. *To Pakistan.* (pp. 6–8) In the event of a clear-cut Indian attack on Pakistan, the Paks might well turn to us as they did in 1965. Short of providing U.S. combat personnel, we could:

- develop an emergency military supply program;
- terminate all U.S. programs in India;
- take the lead in mobilizing international pressure on India to halt its intervention;
- support a Security Council resolution condemning India.

The *argument for* is we would be supporting Pakistan's national unity, diminishing Chinese influence and strengthening our position elsewhere in the Muslim world.

The *argument against* is that U.S. interests in and relations with India would be "seriously damaged" and the Soviets would gain ground there. Moreover, our actions would probably have little effect on the military outcome of the conflict and there would be no basis for a U.S. conciliatory role.

2. *To India.* (pp. 8–9) The judgment of the paper is that military support to India is a "less likely" strategy in the context of a limited Indo-Pak conflict. However, if China were to intervene massively on Pakistan's side and seemed to threaten India in a major way "we would want to consider providing military assistance to India." Short of providing combat personnel the U.S. might:

- offer to consult with India under the 1964 Air Defense Agreement;

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<sup>6</sup> The reference is in error; the agreement was signed in New Delhi on July 9, 1963, by Prime Minister Nehru and Ambassador Galbraith. The text of the agreement was transmitted to the Department on July 10 in telegram 143 from New Delhi; for text, see *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XIX, Document 307.

- develop an emergency military assistance program focussed primarily on meeting the Chinese threat;
- [1 paragraph (1 line of source text) not declassified];
- coordinate with the British and the Soviets on additional assistance measures.

The *argument for* is that it would be consistent with our overall Asian policy of assisting states threatened by external aggression and would, perhaps at the expense of the Soviets, create a firm basis for a future close relationship with India.

The *argument against* is that very severe strains would be created in our relations with Pakistan and, more importantly, with China. There would also be the risk of creeping involvement leading to a more extensive commitment involving a direct U.S. confrontation with China.

C. *Political Intervention.* (pp. 10–13) Rather than assume a relatively passive political posture stressing our neutrality or intervening with military assistance to one side, we could intervene politically. The main purpose of an activist political role would be to first localize the hostilities and then work for a settlement which would remove the basic causes of the fighting.

*Immediately upon the outbreak of war we could:*

- call for a UN Security Council meeting and support a demand for an immediate cease-fire and negotiations between the parties;
- send immediate Presidential messages to Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi calling for an end to the fighting and a negotiated settlement;
- engage in immediate talks with the Soviets and British on ways to end the hostilities;
- privately and publicly urge restraint on the Chinese (and if possible engage them also in the peacemaking effort).

*If hostilities have broken out because of an Indian attack or because of Indian support to the Bengali insurgents “we should” also:*

- after carefully assessing the likelihood on a Chinese attack on India, move to terminate our residual military sales program for India;
- hold up on all shipments and licenses of military supplies destined for India;
- “prepare” to hold economic assistance to India in abeyance at least for the duration of the hostilities.

*If the circumstances of the outbreak of hostilities were thoroughly ambiguous then “we should” also:*

- publicly suspend military supply to both countries;
- consider suspending economic assistance to both sides;
- urge other major arms supplying countries (Soviets, Chinese, British and French) to suspend arms shipments to both sides.

The *arguments for* include:

- would provide maximum U.S. flexibility in a complex situation;
- would maximize use of U.S. programs and influence to shorten hostilities and inhibit external military intervention;
- would increase chances for U.S. to maintain relations with both India and Pakistan (and perhaps even “Bangla Desh”) in the aftermath of hostilities;
- might create conditions in which the U.S. and USSR (and possibly China) could cooperate fully in a common political and peace-making role.

The *arguments against* include:

- a heavy, perhaps unbearable, strain would be placed on our relations with India;
- at the same time the Paks could also feel sold out;
- might not succeed in shortening hostilities and encourage Chinese military intervention.

#### *IV. Pre-Hostilities Contingency Actions*

Irrespective of the posture we assumed upon the outbreak of hostilities, various U.S. programs and interests in both India and Pakistan would be immediately affected by the war. The paper, therefore, suggests the following operational contingency planning by appropriate U.S. agencies be undertaken soon:

1. Guidance for shipping companies, insurance agents, freight forwarders and customs agents should be prepared. Confiscated cargoes and other related complications caused endless problems after the 1965 war. (Presumably the main agencies involved would be AID, Defense and Agriculture.)
2. MAC should be instructed to review its contingency arrangements for overflying South Asia without any stops. Hostilities could involve extensive bombing of airfields on both sides.
3. Evacuation plans should be reviewed for all posts in India and Pakistan for implementation on short notice.
4. Intelligence coverage of Chinese intentions and capability to intervene in South Asia should be intensified to provide the maximum possible advance warning of any significant Chinese military move. [2 lines of source text not declassified]
5. Intelligence coverage of Indian and Pakistani military activities should be increased as much as possible.

## 126. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 17, 1971, 4:35–5:05 p.m.

### SUBJECT

India and Pakistan

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin

Joseph Sisco

Anthony C.E. Quainton

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

Brig. Gen. Devol Brett

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Lt. Gen. John Vogt

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

NSC Staff

Col. Richard Kennedy

Samuel Hoskinson

D. Keith Guthrie

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. The WSAG agreed that Option C of the contingency paper<sup>2</sup> on a possible India–Pakistan conflict seemed likely to be the most suitable strategy for the US.

2. The analysis of Option C will be expanded to include a scenario for US approaches to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China both before and after the outbreak of hostilities. The WSAG noted the importance of insuring that the Chinese are aware that it is our policy to seek to preserve the integrity of Pakistan. No action will be taken with either the Soviet or Chinese government, however, without prior clearance by the White House.

3. The State Department will prepare a study of a possible cut-off in economic assistance to India. This should set forth specific steps to be taken in implementing a cut-off and should evaluate anticipated consequences.

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret; Exdis; Code-word. Sent for information. No drafting information appears on the source text. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> The contingency paper on Indo-Pakistan hostilities is summarized in the August 17 analytical summary prepared for the WSAG meeting; see Document 125. Option C called for political intervention to localize the hostilities and to work for a settlement which would remove the basic causes of the fighting.



4. The emergency and evacuation plans for India and for East and West Pakistan will be reviewed and updated.

Mr. Kissinger: I just wanted to have a brief meeting on the contingency paper. It states three options, of which only one—Option 3—is likely to be operative. A passive international approach would not be tolerated by either side. The logic of events, taking into account the Soviet and Chinese involvement, would not permit such an approach. Does anyone disagree with this?

No one disagreed.

Mr. Kissinger: As for military support to India or Pakistan, that also does not seem to be a very probable course of action. So we are left with political intervention, and I would like to talk about that for a minute.

We have an overall interest in preventing hostilities. We do not want to be forced to choose between 800 million Chinese and 600 million Indians and Bengalis. We don't want India in the Soviet camp, even though the Indians may be driving themselves there deliberately through the creation of a phony crisis.

Let's discuss this issue in two categories: (1) what we can do to minimize the danger of an outbreak of war and (2) what we can do in case there is an attack.

We need to consider what we would say to the Soviets and to the Chinese and how we could cooperate with the Soviets to prevent a war. Both the President and the Secretary of State have warned the Indians that we will cut off economic aid in case of war. But do we know what that means? No one has looked at the consequences or examined the means of implementing a cutoff. This is something that it is imperative to examine. Could we have some discussion on some of these problems? What preventive actions can we take? What steps can we take to limit the damage in case hostilities occur?

(to Helms) Dick, do we have enough intelligence on what the Chinese, Indians, and Pakistanis are doing?

Mr. Helms: I would like to ask John Waller to discuss that.

Mr. Waller: [8 lines of source text not declassified] The overt reporting speaks for itself. [1 line of source text not declassified]

Mr. Kissinger: Do you lose them to the *New York Times* faster than you can recruit them?

Mr. Waller: The intelligence community has been assessing the critical collection problems.

Mr. Helms: These are all being scrubbed down in our committee.

Mr. Kissinger: Do you think the Indians will attack?

Mr. Helms: My personal feeling is that they will not do so.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) What do you think?

Mr. Sisco: I don't think they will launch an attack across the border. However, I believe they will feel free to support the liberation movement in East Pakistan now that they have the treaty with the Soviets. This will be more likely to happen if the liberation movement picks up steam, the relief problem continues, and there is no political accommodation. My reaction is that in no circumstances will the Pakistanis initiate hostilities in the West. If the Indian objective is to achieve a Bangla Desh that they can work with, they will continue to support the liberation movement.

Adm. Moorer: [6 lines of source text not declassified]

Mr. Kissinger: Are the Chinese reinforcing?

Mr. Helms: No.

Adm. Moorer: There are no indications yet that they are. We do know that the Indians have activated some airfields near West Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: How quickly would the Chinese be able to reinforce?

Adm. Moorer: It would be very difficult for them.

Mr. Helms: The terrain is bad, and they don't have the necessary equipment. We would know ahead of time.

Mr. Kissinger: Did they reinforce in 1962?

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: Did we know?

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: What did the Indians think was going to happen?

Mr. Helms: As I recall, the Indians had sort of decided to take on the Chinese before the attack took place.

Mr. Kissinger: Thus, their surprise was the result of a judgmental factor.

Mr. Helms: In that part of the world one still has the problem of passions outrunning good judgment.

Mr. Kissinger: Passions don't have to run very far to do that in India.

Mr. Irwin: If Joe's [Sisco's]<sup>3</sup> scenario is correct, what steps could be taken to reduce that possibility [that the Indians will stir up trouble].

Adm. Moorer: Doesn't it all boil down to whether the Indians take overt action? The Pakistanis are outnumbered four to one. They certainly are not going to attack.

Mr. Irwin: What would cause the Indians to take action?

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<sup>3</sup> These and following brackets are in the source text.

Adm. Moorer: The emotion you were talking about. Also the refugee problem.

Mr. Irwin: There are several possible contingencies that could cause the Indians to act. There could be a famine in East Pakistan which would stimulate a large wave of refugees. Failure to reach a political accommodation would be another factor. The execution of Mujibur Rahman might touch off something.

Mr. Kissinger: Do we know what is going on at the trial?

Adm. Moorer: It is expected to last two months.

Mr. Helms: Until October.

Mr. Irwin: All we can do with India is to urge restraint and threaten. The things that might cause the Indians to move are some military incident, a famine, or the execution of Mujibur Rahman.

Mr. Helms: I think US policy has been just right on this occasion. We are urging the Indians not to attack, we are taking action to prevent famine, and we are getting the UN engaged. It doesn't look like we are doing a lot, but what else is there to do? The only other thing we should do is get Ted Kennedy home.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: I'm not sure they would agree about that [Kennedy's return] upstairs.

Mr. Sisco: In this contingency paper there are a lot of unilateral steps indicated. I think we ought to realize that in case of war there is really very little that we can do unilaterally. We will have to rely on what parallel interests the US, the USSR, and China may have in localizing the war. What bothers me is that we have channels to the Soviets, but we have to find ways to talk to the Chinese.

Mr. Kissinger: We can figure that out.

Mr. Sisco: By ourselves we have a limited capacity to influence the situation.

Mr. Kissinger: What should we tell the Soviets and Chinese that we want them to do?

Mr. Sisco: Before or after hostilities?

Mr. Kissinger: Before and after. Has anyone talked to the Soviet Union?

Mr. Sisco: It is difficult to say exactly what we would tell them at the present juncture.

Mr. Kissinger: Couldn't we say: "Cool your new friends?" Am I missing something here? Why not say that to them?

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<sup>4</sup> Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) completed on August 17 an 8-day fact-finding trip to India undertaken in his capacity as Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees. The results of the trip were summarized in telegram 13221 from New Delhi, August 18. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-US)

Mr. Helms: Sure. Why not? Conversation is cheap.

Mr. Irwin: I see no problem. At some point we might move to that. The Secretary [Rogers] was planning on seeing the Soviets, but the Soviet treaty with India intervened.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) You shake your head. Why?

Mr. Helms: This is the time [to talk to the Soviets]. If you don't turn that stone and a serious problem develops later, you will kick yourself.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) Is there something going on that eludes me, Joe? Why are you so mysterious?

Mr. Sisco: I have no problem with talking to the Soviets. Two weeks ago we prepared talking points for that.

Mr. Kissinger: Well, can I assume that we [the White House] will be told if you decide to approach the Soviets?

Mr. Sisco: Naturally we will have to talk to the Secretary [Rogers] about this.

Mr. Irwin: Certainly.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) What should we tell the Chinese? It is so out of character for you to be reticent.

Mr. Sisco: We have such good direct relations with the Pakistanis that we don't have to go to the Chinese to ask them to urge restraint on the Pakistanis. I don't see any immediate need to talk to the Chinese.

Mr. Kissinger: When you think the time has come, will you give us a hint? A reticent Joe Sisco is unknown. Usually when you come here you have already done whatever is to be done. Maybe you have decided to change your strategy from one of telling us afterward to not telling us at all. Anyway, we assume the State Department will let us know when a message is to be passed to the Chinese. What do we do when a war starts?

Adm. Moorer: As for evacuation, there are 7,698 US nationals to be evacuated from India, some 2,000 from West Pakistan, and 242 in East Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: We should look at the evacuation plans.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we get these plans in shape?

Mr. Sisco: Some of the things we do in connection with evacuation are standard. We need to get suggestions on what to tell the Soviets and Chinese.

Mr. Kissinger: Can someone study what we mean when we say we are going to cut out economic aid [to India]? We should look at the consequences.

Mr. Irwin: What we do is cut down on Indian possibilities for economic development. This increases the burden on the Indian

governmental system, may stop their democratic evolution, and might lead them to make a pact with the Soviet Union.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we cut off aid through the consortium?

Mr. Sisco: We will produce a paper on this. Some of the steps might be to delay a commitment on the 1972 development loan program, to mobilize other aid donors to delay their assistance, to delay signing a PL-480 agreement, and to stop things that are in the pipeline.

Mr. Kissinger: Could you do that [prepare a paper]? We will also be getting talking points for the Soviets and Chinese both before and after an attack. You will let us know what you are doing on this, and we in turn will let you know about anything we are doing here that may affect the situation.

Mr. Sisco: We and the Chinese and the Russians have certain common interests in this.

Mr. Kissinger: We can't have solo efforts on this.

Mr. Irwin: Yes, we should coordinate as much as possible with the Chinese and Soviets.

Mr. Kissinger: I mean bureaucratically.

Mr. Irwin: Oh. I was looking at it from a somewhat broader perspective.

Mr. Helms: Can we assume that the Chinese know about our efforts to keep Pakistan together?

Mr. Sisco: I think they ought to know that our basic policy is to be helpful in maintaining the integrity of Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree. We should make sure that they don't misread us. Everyone can get together and assemble these talking points. Let us have those for the Chinese fairly soon.

**127. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 18, 1971.

## SUBJECT

Implications of the Situation in South Asia

As Ambassador Farland and Deputy AID Administrator Williams prepare for their approach to President Yahya, this memo explores some of the implications of the situation in South Asia for our strategy. I am sending you separately another analytical memo dealing solely with the Indo-Soviet Friendship treaty.<sup>2</sup>

*Situation Within South Asia*

You are familiar with the situation, but it seems worth stating some of the key elements that govern it.

—President Yahya is committed to preventing Bengali independence. Since this is probably futile over time, the issue is how to get through the transitional period without a blow-up.

—In East Pakistan, a serious insurgency movement is now underway in the countryside and is beginning to penetrate the major cities. This has been fed by the Indians in terms of logistics, training and some arms, but basically reflects a strong Bengali will to resist the West Pakistanis. This in turn provokes an army response which stimulates further refugee flow.

—The refugee flow to India continues. This has increased to a rate of some 50,000 per day after a drop in late July. This could be a temporary aberration; it could result from a new increase in violence; or it could reflect hunger in some pockets, although there is enough food overall in East Pakistan now.

—The Indians before March preferred a united Pakistan when they thought the Bengalis might play a dominant role, but now that they judge this is no longer possible they would like to see an independent Bangla Desh as soon as possible. The problem with their policy is that they may be able through their support for the guerrillas to do enough

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 1/1/71-9/30/71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it; Nixon put a checkmark on the memorandum to show that he had read it.

<sup>2</sup> Document 132.

to stalemate a political settlement in East Pakistan but not enough to produce independence. Increased guerrilla activity will also slow food distribution and increase the flow of refugees.

—Also affecting Indian policy entirely apart from any broader political strategy are important economic considerations. Just maintaining the present number of refugees is projected to cost \$600 million in a year, a figure larger than the net flow of foreign aid from consortium donors. With their economic development program threatened with disruption anyway, they may give much more weight to political considerations than to how the aid givers might react to any military move.

—The determining factor in stemming and then hopefully reversing the refugee flow is the economic and political situation in East Pakistan. Few if any refugees will return under present conditions and more will probably leave East Pakistan. A major international effort can be made to avert famine, but the cycle of guerrilla attack and army reprisal will affect not only food distribution but also the restoration of normal conditions in which refugees or potential refugees can feel safe.

—The UN has taken an unexpectedly (for it) bold step in ordering a substantial staff to East Pakistan. If violence continues, they could well get cold feet and leave the US alone.

#### *A US Strategy*

The dilemma that derives from this situation is that:

—it is crucial to provide relief against famine if a new flood of refugees and an intensified excuse for Indian interference is to be avoided *but*

—even food distribution could be thwarted if President Yahya is unable either to regain absolute control militarily or to undercut the guerrillas politically.

The only strategy for us to follow in this situation is to concentrate the world's attention on averting famine as an umbrella under which hopefully enough might be done to deprive India of an excuse for intervention and to give Yahya a face-saving way of taking some of the political steps he may have to take if he has to rely on political measures rather than on military control to re-establish normal conditions.

At this stage in our stance toward China, a US effort to split off part of Pakistan in the name of self-determination would have implications for Taiwan and Tibet in Peking's eyes. It is also important that they not feel that we are lining up with India and the USSR against them. That is why for the moment it is important that we stay one step behind the Soviets in India, although over the longer run, we have no interest in writing off 600 million Indians and Bengalis.

At the same time, we must make a maximum effort to deprive India of an excuse to attack Pakistan. We do not want to lose our position in India altogether or to have to take sides between the USSR and China. At this stage in our China exercise we would be presented with excruciating choices if the Chinese were to attack India following an outbreak of Indo-Pakistani hostilities.

The situation is complicated by our uncertain leverage in India. The Indians still want the US as a balance to the USSR and, paradoxically, for our influence in Pakistan. The response I got in India was: "You say your policy is directed at preserving your influence in Pakistan; please use it." But we are unlikely to deter them from moves which they regard to be in their vital interests. US economic assistance is important to their development under normal circumstances, but they may well see the costs of the refugee influx as absorbing their development resources and energies anyway. Also, they react negatively to any suggestion that aid is being used as pressure. Still the Indians know they will get more help for the refugees from us than from all the rest of the world.

What would do us the most good now is to have from Yahya a comprehensive package that we could claim some credit for both in New Delhi and in our Congress. Then we would be in a position to tell the Indians that (a) we are taking at face value their concern about the refugee burden and (b) if that is their real concern, then we expect their cooperation in moving the refugees back and in helping to create the conditions, insofar as they can, to make that possible. Once we have Yahya's response, renewed efforts to restrain the Indians can be made, but for the moment it seems wise to concentrate on improving the program for East Pakistan.



**128. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 19, 1971.

SUBJECT

Letter From Mrs. Gandhi

Mrs. Gandhi has written in response to your two most recent letters to her concerning the situation in South Asia (Tab A). There is nothing new in this letter. Also attached (Tab B)<sup>2</sup> is her appeal sent to you and other major heads of state to use your influence with President Yahya concerning the fate of Mujibur Rahman.

Specifically, Mrs. Gandhi makes the following major points:

—It is not for India to object to the US maintaining a “constructive relationship” with Pakistan with a view toward retaining some influence in the present situation. She implies, however, that this has yet to produce anything tangible. Nothing, she says, would give India a greater sense of relief than saying that the US is “working toward a viable settlement which would restore peace and a semblance of civilized government in East Bengal which would enable Pakistan citizens to return to their homes.”

—She rejects our idea of posting UN observers on both sides of the India–East Pakistan border. Essentially her argument is that anyone is free to travel and visit the refugee camps and that it is “unrealistic” to think that UN observers could help stem the flow of refugees. “Would,” she asks, “the League of Nations Observers have succeeded in persuading the refugees who fled from Hitler’s tyranny to return even whilst the pogroms against the Jews and political opponents of Nazism continued unabated?”

—Her government was “greatly embarrassed” by the revelation, right after her Foreign Minister returned from Washington, that the US was still shipping arms to Pakistan. She characterizes all our arms shipments to Pakistan as a “sad chapter in the history of our subcontinent.”

—She thanks you for informing her of the China initiative, welcomes this move and wishes you well.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). Confidential. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it; Nixon put a checkmark on the memorandum to show that he had read it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 119.

Despite Mrs. Gandhi's obvious disagreement with our policy toward South Asia, the generally moderate and somewhat defensive tone of her letter is perhaps significant. It is also interesting that it was dispatched just prior to the signing of the new Indo-Soviet "friendship" treaty and on the same day she also accepted your invitation that she visit here in November. This coincides with other indications that despite recent events, Mrs. Gandhi is by no means prepared to write off the US.

State has been asked to draft a suggested response. They will do this after seeing what comes out of the discussions that Maury Williams and Ambassador Farland will be having in Islamabad this week. If these produce something positive we will then be in a better position to go back at the Indians.

### **Attachment**

#### **Letter from Indian Prime Minister Gandhi to President Nixon<sup>3</sup>**

New Delhi, August 7, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your letters—one dated May 29<sup>4</sup> and the other brought by Dr. Kissinger, dated July 1.<sup>5</sup> I have read them with interest. Dr. Kissinger has no doubt spoken to you about his wide-ranging discussions in New Delhi.

Since I wrote to you on May 13,<sup>6</sup> the situation has not improved. Sanguinary conflict continues unabated in East Bengal. The number of Pakistani citizens fleeing their homeland and seeking shelter in India is steadily augmenting. We now have more than seven million registered evacuees. The West Pakistani army has driven out the greater part of the minority community as well as more than a million Moslem citizens of East Bengal. In recent weeks, the number of the latter is increasing.

It is not for us to object to the United States maintaining, as you, Mr. President, have put it, "a constructive relationship with Pakistan" so that the U.S. may "retain some influence in working with them

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<sup>3</sup> No classification marking.

<sup>4</sup> The letter, dated May 28, was delivered to Gandhi on May 29; see Document 62.

<sup>5</sup> Document 86.

<sup>6</sup> Document 46.

towards important decisions to be made in that country." We have waited patiently and with restraint, hoping for a turn in the tide of events which the Government, Parliament and people of India could recognize as a step towards a political settlement.

Your letter of May 29 referred hopefully to President Yahya Khan's press conference of May 24. Since then, we have carefully considered his statement of June 28 and his utterances on television. These pronouncements show a hardening of attitude and it seems to us that they do not take us nearer a solution.

Nothing would give me, my colleagues in the Government and the Indian people a greater sense of relief than to be able to say that the United States was working towards a viable settlement which would restore peace and the semblance of civilized Government in East Bengal which would enable Pakistani citizens to return to their homes.

However, the malaise afflicting the socio-political structure of Pakistan and the tensions prevailing between the various parts of it are deep rooted. The present attempt is to solve chronic problems, arising out of political, social and economic disparities, by force. I believe that the Government of the United States supports the view that the posting of U.N. observers on either side of the frontiers of India and East Bengal could solve the problem of the refugees. We regret that we do not see the situation in this light. India is an open democracy. We have a large diplomatic corps and many representatives of the world press. We have had visits of parliamentary delegations from various countries. All are free to travel and to visit the refugee camps. They see for themselves that although we are doing all we can for the refugees, life in the camps is one of deprivation and acute discomfort. Hence it is unrealistic to think that the presence of a group of U.N. observers could give any feeling of assurance to the evacuees when every day they see new evacuees pouring in with stories of atrocities. Would the League of Nations Observers have succeeded in persuading the refugees who fled from Hitler's tyranny to return even whilst the pogroms against the Jews and political opponents of Nazism continued unabated? In our view, the intentions of the U.N. Observers might be more credible if their efforts were directed at stopping the continuing outflow of these unfortunate people and at creating conditions which, to any reasonable person, would assure the safety of life and liberty of the refugee who wishes to return to East Bengal.

Mr. President, I am touched by your generous references to the vitality of Indian democracy and the strength of purpose of our Government in meeting the complex social and economic problems which confront India. These problems have been rendered more complex

by the action of the Pakistan Army and the burden on us is almost unbearable. It is by sheer act of will that we are able to hold on.

I should like to mention one other matter. Our Government was greatly embarrassed that soon after our Foreign Minister's return from his Washington visit and despite the statements made by Ambassador Keating in Bombay on April 16 and by the State Department's spokesman on April 15, 1971, came the news of fresh supplies of U.S. arms to Pakistan.

It was a sad chapter in the history of our subcontinent when the United States began to supply arms to Pakistan in 1954 and continued doing so up to 1965. These arms have been used against us, as indeed we feared they would be. And now these arms are being used against their own people whose only fault appears to be that they took seriously President Yahya Khan's promises to restore democracy.

In the midst of all the human tragedy, it is some relief to contemplate the voyage of the astronauts in the Apollo-15. These valiant men and the team of scientists supporting them represent man's eternal longing to break from the constraints of time and space. As I write this, the astronauts are heading homewards, back to our earth. We pray for their safety and success. Please accept, Mr. President, our warm felicitations.

I was glad to have your message regarding your initiative to normalise relations with the People's Republic of China. We have welcomed this move and we wish you well.

With best wishes and regards,  
Yours sincerely,

**Indira Gandhi**

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### **129. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, August 20, 1971, 1320Z.

8534. From Williams. Subject: Meeting with President Yahya, August 19, 1971 (M.M. Ahmad, Ambassador Farland and Williams attending).

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Maurice Williams visited Pakistan August 17-23.

1. After reading President Nixon's letter of August 14,<sup>2</sup> President Yahya said he is deeply appreciative of President Nixon's continuing understanding, warm support and friendship. Williams briefly underlined President Nixon's concern of possibility of serious food shortage in EP, the danger that this would bring further large scale outflow of refugees to India, and that continued flow of refugees to India would create an explosive situation and could be seized as pretext for war by India. President Nixon seeks to alleviate this danger by pressing the Indians for restraint—and more will be done in this regard—and by all-out support for relief assistance, both through the United Nations and directly.

2. President Yahya stated he fully alerted to danger of hostilities. Indeed, he was the one who had sounded the alarm. He wished to make one thing clear. There was not at this time a continuing flow of refugees leaving East Pakistan. These were erroneous charges by India. His army was on the border and he could assure us that no refugees were leaving. Indians were mounting attacks against Pakistan, preventing refugees from returning, arming guerrillas, and misleading the world as to the nature of the refugee situation. He said the Indians had shown damn little restraint to date.

3. Williams welcomed reassurance that the refugee flow being stopped, and repeated importance of dealing with potential food shortages as continuing deterrent to large movement of refugees in future. It was clear from discussions of past two days that President Yahya's appreciation of danger of famine was same as ours and that he was launching an energetic program to assure continued supply of food to the people of East Pakistan. We also recognized his statesmanlike step in accepting the United Nations field team.

4. President Yahya said that initiative in calling for international relief had been his. It had been slow in coming. Considering the delays that had taken place in the UN response, it was fortunate that food stocks in East Pakistan had been adequate. He said the U.S. and other countries are providing coastal vessels and mini-bulkers to transport food by river, but only a few had arrived. Williams responded that if foodstocks had not been adequate to cover needs of last four weeks, the U.S. would have airlifted food, and that massive efforts were underway to supply U.S. food assistance to East Pakistan. Pakistan's own efforts in the relief program under President's direction were outstanding. Williams stressed that relief program strengthens the government's position in East Pakistan, helps to correct international misimpression that Pakistan's major efforts in East Pakistan are primarily military, and partially deals with the critical problem of refugees.

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 123.

President Yahya said that to date his government had not been successful in getting its case across to the international press of the many constructive things that they were attempting to do in East Pakistan. Government makes the information available but the *New York Times* doesn't print it. In order to put their case forward they have to buy space in American newspapers. However, he fully appreciated U.S. help with the relief effort and welcomed Williams visit as means of reviewing adequacy of their own plans and preparation.

5. Williams said priority which Pres. Yahya placed on the relief effort was evident from the very able civil officers now being assigned to the relief effort. He would focus on five specific operational areas which had been the subject of discussion with M.M. Ahmad.<sup>3</sup> The first concerned the movement of food from the ports. The government recognized it would take an all-out effort, and had assigned Commodore Bajwa as advisor to the Governor on Food and Transport. President Yahya replied that river transport must be effectively organized and he had recalled Bajwa from retirement to take on this task; with the limited movement possible by rail and road the movement of water transport assumed priority importance and every effort would be made to see that the required tonnages were moved. He regretted that such a low priority had been placed in the past on river transport.

6. Second concern, beyond movement from the ports to the main centers which was going to strain capacity to the utmost, was the problem of local distribution. Here he understood that the government's plan was to mobilize small boats and trucks. Up to now smaller country boats had not been moving in adequate numbers. Williams welcomed appointment of Muzafar Husain as chief secretary who had outlined a plan for bringing small boats and commercial trucks back into service by high incentive payments. Williams said this was first sensible proposal he has heard on the subject of local transport and distribution and believed it could do the job. President Yahya replied Muzafar Husain was the man for this job. The former chief secretary was a Bengali and the Bengali administrative service was still dispirited and ineffectual. He pointed out that they had had a request with UN for trucks which were essential. Williams replied that he had asked for and expected receive list of overall requirements, including trucks, which we would seek to provide through the UN or directly.

The third operational problem concerned the low level of economic activity in East Pakistan. There is need rapidly increase relief programs and expand incomes if people are to be able to buy food, recognizing

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<sup>3</sup> Williams met twice with Ahmad on August 18 to discuss an economic relief program for East Pakistan and measures to prevent famine. (Telegrams 8471 and 8480 from Islamabad, August 19; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 PAK)

that the government's program was one of providing works relief rather than free distribution. M.M. Ahmad said our initial \$10 million in rupees had been recently provided for relief works. He agreed there was need rapidly and flexibly to expand relief work as a means of restoring purchasing power and confidence.

7. A critical problem in effectiveness of relief operation was the question of administration which had always been weak in EP. The President's assignment of outstanding civil officers to key positions recognized this need. However Williams respectfully suggested that one officer be designated as being operationally charged with overall supervision of food transport and relief. Some eight different senior officials below governor were concerned with various aspects of program. President Yahya replied that he was in charge and that he held the governor responsible for the program and he had assigned different officers to different aspects of it, yet he realized the governor was too busy to be directly concerned. Turning to M.M. Ahmad he asked if there was a need as he saw it to designate one overall responsible official. Ahmad replied that he believed it would be helpful and suggested that the new chief secretary, Muzafar Husain be given this assignment. President Yahya so ordered.

8. To extent that responsibility for civil affairs could continue to be transferred from military to civil officers both military and civil efforts would benefit, Williams observed. Was it possible to consider separating functions of MLA and civil authority which were now combined in the single position held by Tikka Khan? President Yahya turned to Ahmad and said that this was a shrewd guess at his intentions. He would shortly announce a civilian Bengali Governor<sup>4</sup> for Civil Affairs and a new Martial Law Administrator for Military Affairs.

9. A further operational problem was that of equity in distribution of relief supplies. Williams said that one of our observers had reported that relief in cyclone disaster area was being refused to Hindus. Perhaps this was a local problem but it was matter of concern since if Hindus throughout province were being discriminated against they almost certainly would all leave EP which would mean that flow of refugees could rise to over 10 million. President Yahya replied that it

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<sup>4</sup> In a private conversation with President Yahya after his meeting with Williams, Ambassador Farland pressed for a more definitive response to the question of who would replace General Tikka Khan. Yahya indicated that he intended to name Dr. A.M. Malik as civilian governor and said he would make the announcement by September 1. (Telegram 8502 from Islamabad, August 20; *ibid.*, POL 18 PAK) Williams subsequently inspected conditions in East Pakistan and met in Dacca on August 21 to discuss them with General Tikka Khan and A.M. Malik. (Telegrams 3365 and 3369 from Dacca, August 23; *ibid.*, POL INDIA-PAK and SOC 10 PAK, respectively)

was not his policy to discriminate against Hindus. He had given firm instructions to this effect and he would reaffirm these instructions.

10. President Yahya went on to discuss his plans to associate Bengalis in administration of province by clearing 88 of former Awami League representatives to National Assembly. Asked if it was possible that more than 88 might be cleared he said all the others were being specifically charged with crimes but that it was possible that they could clear themselves of these charges and then take their seat in next National Assembly. He said that only some 15 or 16 of the 88 were presently in Dacca and they were being protected by the government since they feared for their lives. The rest of 88 were either in the countryside or in India. He did not know how many of them would come forward to claim their seat but he supposed he would have to set some kind of a deadline on this.

11. Williams wondered if reluctance to come forward might not be related to fact that AL was an outlawed party. Perhaps if the President recognized that AL had been cleansed of old leadership he could lift ban on party and deal with the 88 as members of a reconstructed AL. After some discussion of this point from several angles it was quite clear that President Yahya refused to deal with any group however cleansed under name of Awami League.<sup>5</sup> He regarded the 88 as having been certified as individuals and indeed said that he was severely criticized in West Pakistan for having cleared as many as 88 of former AL members to take their seats in next assembly if they came forward.

12. It was agreed that M.M. Ahmad and Williams should consult further concerning a consortium meeting, perhaps in September in Washington at the time of the World Bank meeting to consider Pakistan's debt problem and the need for relief and reconstruction assistance in EP. Williams urged that a possible third agenda item be prepared concerning the overall needs for economic assistance which would be brought forward at the time of the meeting if circumstances seem favorable.

13. As the meeting drew to a conclusion the Ambassador made reference to a casual remark made by Pres. Yahya to the effect that he was hoping to move towards a civilian government at an early date. Using this as a point of departure, he re-opened the general discussion of the GOP's moves on refugees and food distribution. The Ambassador stated that, taken together, the numerous specific acts promulgated by the MLA

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<sup>5</sup> In telegram 1031 from Islamabad, August 20, Farland informed Kissinger that the effort by Williams to persuade Yahya to reinstate the outlawed Awami League proved to be an "out and out non-starter", as Kissinger had anticipated. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland)



add up to a major effort on both subjects. However, he added, the manner in which these various actions were taken and the piecemeal announcement of each through the press had created little or no impact on world understanding of what the GOP was actually doing nor on the problem of the refugee outflow. At this juncture Yahya said that in his opinion his government had failed miserably vis-à-vis India in its public relations effort, that perhaps it was partly his fault since he, as a military man, had not been raised with a public relations textbook at his side; nevertheless, whosever fault it may be, the fact remained that the GOP lacks expertise in all aspects of PR relationships. The Ambassador hastened to agree, saying that he had made mention of this problem to various high GOP authorities, beginning with Ambassador Agha Hilaly even prior to accreditation to Pakistan. The Ambassador then went on to say that, even though the GOP and Pres. Yahya had promulgated various MLA regulations and had made various statements concerning both the problem of refugees and the problem of food, it was imperative that all of these promulgations of state must be reiterated time and time again in order for the message to get across and the refugees impressed with the factual authenticity which the GOP meant to convey.

14. Referring thereafter to Yahya's comment re civilian participation in the GOEP, the Ambassador suggested that any announcement which Yahya planned to make on this subject should carry with it a re-statement of the entire "package" which the GOP had promulgated to date, and that the same should be so tailored as to get maximum news impact both in Pakistan, India and in the Western world. Yahya replied by stating that, "I think this is an excellent suggestion and I'll do it; I will couple it with my planned announcement." Yahya then turned to M.M. Ahmad, who continued to take extensive notes on the conversation, and said, "Be sure that this is done." A general conversation then ensued concerning the fact that Pakistan had poorly presented its side of the case before the world, that the press by and large today was antagonistic as to Pakistan's actions and purposes towards East Pakistan, and the difficulties which ensued to those nations which sought to help Pakistan regain its status in the world community.

**Farland**

**130. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, August 20, 1971, 1000Z.

8501. Eyes Only for Secretary Rogers and Assistant Secretary Sisco.  
Subj: Trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

1. Based on my assumption that Pres. Yahya would speak more freely to me alone, I introduced the delicate subject of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's future in a conversation with Pres. Yahya which ensued immediately after a meeting which concluded at noon Aug. 19, the participants of which were Pres. Yahya, AID Deputy Administrator Maurice Williams, presidential adviser M.M. Ahmad and myself.

2. Broaching the matter, I indicated to Yahya that I realized that I was involving myself in a discussion which was completely an internal affair, but nonetheless I felt bold so to do inasmuch as the manner in which it was handled by his government would definitely and decisively affect virtually all assistance, humanitarian and economic, which my government could institute; and, further, it would have a bearing upon the refugee problem which had become international in character.

3. I told Yahya that most, if not all, nations of the world were watching with intense interest and anxiety how the in-camera trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was proceeding, and most, if not all, were seized with concern as to its outcome.<sup>2</sup> I concluded by stating that I, as a friend, felt strongly obligated to suggest (RFR [?] to admonish) that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman not be executed. Such an action, I said, would be in my belief contrary to the best interests of his government as well as to his own best personal interests.

4. Pres. Yahya said that he wanted me to know (and for my government to know, but only on the highest levels) that my concern in this regard was unfounded. He said that he had gotten the most qualified Pakistani attorney, A.K. Brohi, to act as defense counsel, that the military tribunal had been advised that the trial must be conducted with the greatest care, without bias or prejudice, and that the record

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 29 PAK. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> On August 11 Secretary Rogers telephoned Ambassador Hilaly and expressed the widespread concern felt in the United States over the trial as well as his hope that it might be delayed. Hilaly said that he would report the Secretary's concern to Islamabad. Kissinger summarized the exchange in an August 24 memorandum to Nixon. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Pakistan, Vol. VI, 1 Aug 71-31 Aug 71)

must be in full substantiation of whatever verdict was reached. Yahya further stated that because the charge carried the possibility of a death sentence, it was his plan that if such the verdict be, a request for mercy would be made in the Sheikh's behalf, and he, Yahya, would accept the petition. Yahya observed that when this request for mercy, as aforesaid, reached him it was his intent to "sit on it for a few months" without making a decision until power was turned over to a civilian government.

5. It was Yahya's further observation that once the problem of Mujibur's mercy petition became the problem of a civilian government, there was little or no possibility that Mujibur would be executed. I finished my comments with the remark that, "from what you have told me it is obvious that you have given considerable thought to a solution of this problem." Yahya replied, "I have, and you can stop worrying because I am not going to execute the man even though he is a traitor."<sup>3</sup>

**Farland**

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<sup>3</sup> Farland discussed the trial of Mujibur Rahman with Yahya again on September 21. Farland asked about press reports that the trial had ended and the tribunal had submitted its recommendations to Yahya. Yahya responded that the trial was ongoing, and added that at its conclusion he planned to make a transcript available to the public to confirm that the trial had been fair and complete. Farland asked if Yahya had given any consideration to using Mujibur after the trial as a "trump card" in negotiating a political settlement in East Pakistan. Yahya indicated that he had given considerable thought to the possibility but was constrained by the weight of the evidence of treason being compiled against Mujibur which was so explicit that the reaction in West Pakistan to his release could be explosive. (Telegram 9599 from Islamabad, September 21; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 29 PAK)

**131. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 20, 1971.

## SUBJECT

Military Supply Pipeline in Pakistan

## PARTICIPANTS

His Excellency Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan

Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary, NEA

Peter D. Constable, Pakistani Desk Officer

Ambassador Hilaly called at Mr. Sisco's request. Mr. Sisco said he wanted to raise a difficult problem in an unorthodox and personal way and to seek Ambassador Hilaly's advice as to whether any further steps should be taken at this time. Mr. Sisco then referred to the problem of the military supply pipeline to Pakistan, which has now declined to about \$2.6 million. Mr. Sisco reviewed the political price that the United States Government is paying for the continuation of the pipeline, even though the actual military supplies are not now of any great significance to Pakistan. Mr. Sisco referred particularly to the actions in Congress to impose an embargo on military shipments and to terminate economic assistance to Pakistan. He said that our efforts to preserve our flexibility on economic assistance, on debt rescheduling, and other problems were being jeopardized by the continuing pressure against our military supply pipeline.

Mr. Sisco then asked Ambassador Hilaly if the USG and the GOP could work out together a mutually satisfactory way to dry up the existing pipeline over the next few weeks. Pointing out that we had no intention of imposing an embargo against the military supply pipeline, nevertheless we thought it possible that it might be dried up by some joint steps that would satisfy Pakistan's minimal needs but at the same time end the political liability that the pipeline represents. Mr. Sisco described to the Ambassador the three categories of items in the pipeline (Foreign Military Sales, commercial sales to the Government of Pakistan, and commercial sales to commercial importers in Pakistan), and suggested possible ways that particular licensed items might be dealt with. Some examples cited included: speeding up shipment of FMS items of which Pakistani commercial agents have already taken possession of; examination of commercial contracts to see which ones

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Constable; Sisco initialed the memorandum indicating that he had reviewed it.

might yield quick deliveries; careful scrutiny of the outstanding licenses to see if there are items that Pakistan no longer needs, or if some items might be purchased elsewhere; voluntary withdrawal of some licenses in the interests of terminating the pipeline quickly.

Mr. Sisco assured the Ambassador that any movement in this direction would be given only minimal low-key publicity to point out that the pipeline had “run-out”. There would be no suggestion that the USG or the GOP had responded to any untoward pressure in phasing down the pipeline. Mr. Sisco also reiterated that there has been no policy change on military supply, that it remains under review and that a mutually worked out program to terminate the present pipeline would not prejudice future consideration of military supply for Pakistan.

Ambassador Hilaly responded that he fully recognized the political problems in the United States which our military supply policy posed. He felt, nevertheless, that a great deal of the adverse publicity was based on a misunderstanding of the facts, that this misunderstanding was in some cases deliberate, and that the enemies of Pakistan would continue to hammer against American policies favorable to Pakistan even if the pipeline issue were removed. Mr. Sisco noted that there was, however, great psychological importance in the military supply issue and that if it could be removed, then much of the other argumentation against American policies toward Pakistan would lose their force. Ambassador Hilaly acknowledged this to be so.

After some thought and choosing his words with care, the Ambassador suggested that he put the case to President Yahya directly—not as an official suggestion from the USG but simply as a proposal informally discussed. Hilaly used much the same phraseology as Mr. Sisco had earlier in describing the way he would put the matter to the President, e.g., a mutual effort to find a way to preserve the flexibility of the American Government in dealing with problems of economic assistance to Pakistan. He then said that he would recommend that President Yahya send the Director of Military Supply on a secret visit to Washington to review with USG officials just what specifically might be involved in drying up the pipeline. Emphasizing that he was in no position to speak at this point for the Government of Pakistan, the Ambassador nevertheless made it clear that he thought the exercise could be put to President Yahya in the framework of a friendly suggestion informally put forward.

Ambassador Hilaly and Mr. Sisco agreed that the matter would be extremely closely held since any premature disclosure could jeopardize consideration of the question.

## 132. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 24, 1971.

### SUBJECT

Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty

We have received some analysis of the Indian-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation signed August 9.<sup>2</sup> A short memo from Under Secretary Irwin is at Tab A and a CIA analysis at Tab B.<sup>3</sup> The following are some of the more important observations that can be made at this point.

### *Provisions of the Treaty*

Most of the 12 articles of the treaty, which will be in effect for an initial period of 20 years, seem to do little more than record formally the existing Indo-Soviet relationship. The preamble and about half of the articles are similar to those of the recently concluded Soviet-Egyptian "friendship" treaty.<sup>4</sup>

There are, for instance, the usual clauses on lasting friendship and noninterference in each other's internal affairs and virtually the same denunciations of colonialism and racialism as appear in the Soviet-Egyptian treaty. The two sides also agreed to continue expanding their cooperation in economic, scientific, technical and cultural matters, and to consult regularly "on major international problems" affecting both sides.

Unlike the Egyptian treaty, however, there is no clause which commits Moscow to a continuing role in strengthening India's "defense capacity."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the Indian treaty seems a degree less strong in that it calls only for consultation if hostilities threaten while the UAR treaty

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul-30 Nov 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 116.

<sup>3</sup> A 3-page analysis of the treaty, sent by Irwin to the President on August 9, was attached at Tab A; a 9-page analysis prepared in the CIA on August 11 was attached at Tab B; neither printed. It is the CIA assessment of the treaty that Kissinger refers to in his memoirs as a "fatuous estimate." (*White House Years*, pp. 866-867)

<sup>4</sup> A Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed in Cairo on May 27 by Presidents Sadat and Podgorny. (*New York Times*, May 28, 1971)

<sup>5</sup> On August 18 Sonnenfeldt sent a memorandum to Kissinger assessing a report that a secret section of the Indo-Soviet treaty called for the Soviet Union to provide nuclear-capable bombers to India and nuclear weapons under Soviet control. Sonnenfeldt noted that to station nuclear weapons in a non-Communist country, where no Soviet forces were garrisoned, would represent a "dangerous break in Soviet policy," and

calls for the two sides to “concert” their positions. India’s concern about nuclear disarmament gets a nod in one of the articles. Even though it has been seriously undercut by the treaty, India’s non-alignment is specifically endorsed by the Soviets.

The most important operative clauses (article 9) call for the two sides to refrain from giving assistance to any party taking part in an armed conflict with the other. This is the same article that then goes on to commit each side to consult immediately with a view toward taking effective measures in case either party is attacked or threatened with attack.

This does not add up to the language of a traditional mutual defense or security pact, since there is no specific obligation to assist militarily in case of conflict with a third party. Nevertheless, the impression is left that the Soviets would, if necessary, join in on India’s side in a conflict involving Pakistan and/or Communist China. At a minimum the operative clauses insure Soviet neutrality toward an Indo-Pakistani conflict and hold out the strong prospect of Soviet assistance or support to India against both Pakistan and the Chinese. Also, in practice, the treaty creates a stronger obligation for India to follow the Soviet policy lead on developments elsewhere in the world.

#### *Soviet Motivations*

The idea of a treaty was first broached by the Soviets over two years ago in a clearly anti-Chinese context when the Sino-Soviet border tension was at its height. Talks concerning the treaty apparently continued from March 1969 well into 1970 but by then both sides seem to have lost interest. The Soviets had broken their logjam with the Chinese and the Indians had raised the ante by attempting to include several directly anti-Pakistan measures. The Indians at that time were also engaged in their own hesitant moves to perhaps improve their relationship with the Chinese.

From all indications, the Soviets only recently and hastily took up the treaty again, primarily to meet short term objectives.<sup>6</sup> They seem to have thought that the Indians were on the brink of taking some precipitate move, such as formally recognizing “Bangla Desh”, that could have led to an early outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan and perhaps result in Chinese intervention. They seem to have calculated

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he judged that the report was open to serious doubt with regard to the nuclear weapons. He found it more credible that the Soviet Union would agree to provide India with a medium-range bomber to offset China’s capability to launch air strikes into India. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71)

<sup>6</sup> During their conversation on August 17 Ambassador Dobrynin had assured Kissinger that the Soviet treaty with India had not been negotiated in response to recent events; see Document 124.

that the treaty will provide both reassurances to India and, at the same time, give them the influence to restrain India. In short, the Soviets seem to have gambled that, by simultaneously strengthening India's position and making New Delhi more beholden to Soviet counsel, they can best restrain India and also deter Pakistan from taking steps likely to lead to war.

However, the Soviets must also have seen the treaty as a way of solidifying their position in South Asia at the expense of the US and China. One of Moscow's recurrent concerns is the possibility, over the longer term, of a Sino-Indian rapprochement, and the new treaty would seem to put the brakes on Indian receptivity to recent tentative moves by Peking in that direction. As far as the US is concerned, by seeming to spring to India's side in her hour of need—while in Indian eyes the US stands aloof or worse—the Soviets have secured a position as India's "first friend" from which they will not be easily dislodged. In the wake of new movement in Sino-American relations, the Soviets also probably believed that a formal treaty relationship would constitute a warning to Peking and a setback for US diplomacy.

#### *Indian Motivations*

By concluding the treaty, the Indians probably feel that they have bought both time and insurance as they confront the problem of war with Pakistan. Pressure had been mounting rapidly on Mrs. Gandhi to "do something" positive about the East Pakistan and refugee situation and the treaty, which has met with almost universal acclaim in India, has relieved this some. Moreover, the Indians seem to feel that the treaty puts both the Pakistanis and Chinese on notice that India does not stand alone. If Indo-Pak hostilities do break out, the Indians are probably hoping that the treaty will at least serve to limit Chinese intervention and perhaps even bring the Soviets in directly on their side. Finally, the Indians may hope that the treaty will instill in the West Pakistanis a greater sense of urgency to halt the refugee flow and reach a political accommodation in East Pakistan.

This consolidation of the Indo-Soviet relationship, at the expense of India's cherished non-alignment, is indicative of the fact that they think their vital interests are at stake in the present situation. However, the Indians do not seem at all prepared to write off the US. They have been at pains to make clear that the treaty is not directed at the US. Two days before the signing of the treaty, Mrs. Gandhi suddenly informed us that she would be pleased to accept your invitation for an official visit here in November thereby signaling her interest in maintaining a significant relationship with us.

Having made a lurch toward the Soviets it would now be in character for the Indians to begin balancing this off by moving to improve



relations with the US and West in general. In fact, if we do not roll over too quickly, the Indians may think of compensating moves towards us. The Indians may also attempt to balance off their relationship with the Soviets by minor gestures toward the Chinese.

*The Treaty—On Balance*

The treaty seems to reduce the danger that Indo-Pakistani hostilities will break out in the next several weeks, but not necessarily over the longer run.

It is very possible that over the slightly longer run the treaty could be manipulated by Mrs. Gandhi's opponents in such a way as to defeat the short-term purposes for which it was signed and make it more difficult for the Soviets both to restrain the Indians and to avoid becoming overinvolved. It is only a short step from (a) Mrs. Gandhi's boasting of having secured Soviet support to (b) her opposition, once the euphoria wears off, pressing her to take advantage of that support by taking more direct action against Pakistan. In short, the Soviets may, by inserting themselves into this situation, bring about a situation similar to that of the Middle East in 1967 where contrary to their intentions they contributed to the outbreak of war.

On the other hand, the treaty should have given the Pakistanis pause for reflection if they had, for instance, been thinking of punitive raids against guerrillas in India. Previously they might have hoped that China would fully support Pakistan in a war with India, but they must have somewhat less confidence that China would attack India now that it would mean risking hostilities with the Soviets on their behalf. However, the Pakistanis may have a better idea from the Chinese as to precisely what the latter may do than can be determined from our intelligence.

The Chinese, for their part, will not miss the point that their growing role in South Asia has, at least for the moment, been countered by the Soviets, both by nailing down the Indians and raising the risks of military intervention. Whether or not the treaty would deter the Chinese in a crunch, however, is another matter. At stake would not only be the Chinese and Soviet positions in South Asia, but, perhaps more importantly, in all of Asia. Moreover, neither the Soviets or Chinese are easily bluffed and they could rapidly move toward the brink of a confrontation should India and Pakistan go to war.

We have been considering in the WSAG and SRG the operational implications for US policy of this complicated situation. If we play our cards right, there might be a small opening for us to play a crucial moderating role if the situation does polarize along Soviet-India and China-Pakistan lines. Above all we must avoid being forced to choose between our policy toward the government of 700 million Chinese and over 600 million Indians and Bengalis.

**133. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, August 24, 1971, 1255Z.

8631. For Asst. Secretary Sisco. Subj: Contacts With Bangla Desh Reps—Pres. Yahya's Reaction. Ref: State 154078.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary. Pres. Yahya indicated his approval quiet USG contacts with individuals formerly associated with Awami League and indicated appreciation for receipt present and future info obtained through said contacts. Looked with favor upon an unpublicized meeting between GOP and Bangla Desh group for purpose seeking political rapprochement. Embassy disinclined to issue visa to "Foreign Minister." End summary.

2. Immediately following Aug. 24 call by Ambassador David Popper<sup>3</sup> and me upon Pres. Yahya to discuss narcotic drug problems and purposes of Popper's mission as related thereto, I requested a private conversation with Yahya in order to discuss matters suggested reftel.

3. In accordance reftel I stated that the U.S. Consulate General in Calcutta had been picking up "signals" from various Bangla Desh sympathizers, particularly Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan,<sup>4</sup> a former attorney in Comilla. These signals seemed to indicate that a substantial number of MPA's and MNA's presently in Calcutta and elsewhere were seriously amenable to the acceptance of an agreement which would maintain the integrity and unity of Pakistan, within the general concept of the so-called "six points," if such an agreement could be somehow

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 23-9 PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, London, and New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 154078 to Islamabad, August 22, which was cleared by Sisco, Irwin, and Kissinger, authorized the Embassy to inform Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan about the contacts with Qaiyum in Calcutta "on off chance that Qaiyum proposals might provide glimmer of hope for negotiated political settlement between GOP and Awami League." The Embassy was instructed to stress that U.S. officials had listened to Qaiyum but had formed no judgment on the value of his proposals. The United States was not seeking to play a role as a mediator but was willing to help "as a friend." (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador to Cyprus David H. Popper visited India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in August and September 1971 to press for measures to limit the illicit production of opium in the area and to encourage planning to control the production and distribution of a wide range of narcotics. Popper's mission was coordinated by Nelson G. Gross, Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotics Matters. Documentation on Popper's mission is *ibid.*, SOC 11-5 INDIA, SOC 11-5 PAK, and SOC 11-5 AFG.

<sup>4</sup> The Consulate General in Calcutta pointed out on August 25 that this reference to Qaiyum was in error. The contact in Calcutta was with Qazi Zahirul Qaiyum, an industrialist rather than an attorney. (Telegram 2389 from Calcutta; *ibid.*, POL 23-9 PAK)

reached between Mujibur and Yahya, given the circumstances of Mujibur's ongoing trial. I told Yahya that in making mention of this I wanted him fully to understand that USG had taken no initiative whatsoever in gathering this information nor was the USG seeking to play a mediatory role between the GOP and the outlawed Awami League. Conversely, I stated that USG had consistently maintained a diplomatic stance of non-involvement and had in no way sought out or solicited contacts with "Bangla Desh Govt" reps. However, I noted Yahya's many conversations with me during which he emphasized his hope for a return to normalcy and his additional hope that with such a climate he could turn power back to the people. Since USG was now privy to this information, I thought that in the interests of the much sought for peace I should bring it to his attention.

4. Yahya's reaction was favorable and positive. He said that he was most happy that I had provided him with this type of intelligence and he felt that the U.S. had been correct in its political and diplomatic posture, adding that he hoped our officials "with their customary care and exercise of discretion" would maintain appropriate contacts. Yahya noted that his overriding desire was to bring harmony back into the body politic of Pakistan with such adjustments therein as would be for the greatest possible good of both wings. That included, he said, widespread economic and political adjustments in the east wing which he stood prepared to make. He opined, however, that he could not understand why those MPA's and MNA's who had been fully cleared did not come forward and take over the organization of a GOEP so that he could transfer power soonest.

5. Following the general discussion on the aforesaid aspect, I asked Yahya if he saw any major obstacle to a select group of GOP members, unpublicized and on neutral ground in a foreign country, meeting with a few of the key people for whom Qaiyum indicated he spoke. I said the purpose of such a hypothetical meeting could be to ascertain jointly whether or not there existed areas in which political rapprochement could be effected. This would serve its own purpose, and in addition the related matters of refugees, food distribution and rehabilitation could get under way meaningfully and with full purpose. Yahya replied he would favor such a development wholeheartedly, asking that in case such a contingency developed, I keep closely in touch with him on this matter generally.

6. It would seem that several forces are at play in this present situation. (A) At least some of the Bangla Deshers are realizing that their independence would be sorely limited by the interests of India; as such independence may be an illusion. And (B) Yahya may be coming to the conclusion that his appetite wasn't commensurate with the bite he took. In any event the foregoing represents a glimmer of light amidst the

encircling gloom, and a hoped for vindication of U.S. policy vis-à-vis Pakistan.

7. Re paragraph 4 of reftel,<sup>5</sup> it is the Embassy's strongly held belief that we should avoid problems involved in issuing visa to Bangla Desh "Foreign Minister." To do so would almost inevitably raise concerns here about our good faith in not encouraging separatist movement. These concerns would be enhanced by inevitable U.S. and world press/television coverage which "Foreign Minister" visit would receive in U.S. rather than have Bangla Desh "FonMin" in U.S., Embassy believes it highly preferable that he take his story to interested GOP representatives in London, where reportedly he will soon be going. He would be less visible in London than in New York or Washington, and it should be easier there to make covert contacts with GOP representatives.

**Farland**

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<sup>5</sup> In paragraph 4 of telegram 154078, the Department asked for an opinion from the Embassy on the suggestion put forward through Qaiyum that designated Foreign Minister Mustaq Ahmad be granted a visa to visit the United States and meet with U.S. officials.

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### **134. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

San Clemente, California, August 25, 1971.

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

Indian Ambassador L.K. Jha  
Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting took place at Ambassador Jha's request. When Dr. Kissinger had told the Ambassador that he would be on the West Coast, the Ambassador had eagerly jumped at the opportunity of seeing him out there.

Ambassador Jha opened the meeting by asking Dr. Kissinger what he thought of the state of Indian-American relations. Dr. Kissinger replied that they were in a very curious phase right now. On the one

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Aug-Oct 1971. Secret. Drafted by Kissinger on August 30. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office in the Western White House.

hand, as he had explained to Indian officials on his trip to New Delhi, the United States considered India a potentially great power and one of the permanent crucial factors in American foreign policy. We wanted nothing so much as good relationships with India and we thought that our interests in the long term were congruent. On the other hand, Dr. Kissinger continued, it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that a deliberate campaign was being mounted to undermine our relations. Ambassador Jha knew very well that the arms program to Pakistan was totally insignificant. We had explained the circumstances; we had given the major amount of economic aid for the refugees, more than the rest of the world combined. And nevertheless the attacks continued. Even his visit to India had been used not to stress the positive aspects but to make more of a point of the Indian grievances. And this was before his side trip to China was known. Now the argument was that our policy towards China was the cause of the treaty with the Soviet Union.

Dr. Kissinger said he did not really know what India wanted. If India wanted to become an extension of Soviet foreign policy, then inevitably the American interest in India was bound to decline and India would have to look to the Soviet Union for the greater part of its economic and other assistance. He could not understand why India would want to be drawn into the Sino-Soviet rivalry, or why it would deliberately antagonize the one country that had no national interests in the Subcontinent except an independent and healthy India and an independent Subcontinent.

Ambassador Jha replied that the situation in India was very difficult. First of all, Madame Gandhi was not at all pro-Soviet. She had for a long time resisted the proposal—that had first been thought up by Djinesh Singh, the former Foreign Minister—of this treaty of friendship. (In fact, Jha said on a personal basis, he wouldn't be a bit surprised if Djinesh Singh actually received pay from the Communists.) At the same time he also thought that Kaul and Haksar were very much under Soviet influence. In short, for both these reasons Madame Gandhi was under great pressure. The project had been going along for about a year, and recently Madame Gandhi felt she needed some dramatic foreign policy, so she picked it up, but Dr. Kissinger could be certain that she did not have her heart in it.

That might be so, Dr. Kissinger said, but the problem is how she would carry out the policy. Dr. Kissinger could tell her that from our selfish point of view it did not hurt us to have India pursue such a pro-Soviet line in relation to our China policy, nor should the Ambassador have any illusions that it was possible to stir up any basic American public support on the Bengal issue. Still, in order to score temporary points, India was running a tremendous risk of permanently alienating the United States.

The Ambassador repeated that Haksar and Kaul were the real obstacles in India and that in the Foreign Office there were many pro-Soviet elements. The big issue was whether we could use Madame Gandhi's visit in some positive sense. He asked Dr. Kissinger what he suggested. Dr. Kissinger said he thought that it was important for the Prime Minister and the President to have a very frank talk. He did not recommend that they necessarily agree now on any very specific measures, nor would we want India to sign any documents that limited its freedom of action. We did, however, believe that it was important that we understood where each side was going and that the actions that followed would be consistent with these expectations.

The Ambassador then asked a number of technical questions: Could we pick up Madame Gandhi after she arrives in New York with a military airplane? Dr. Kissinger told him we could. Could the President come to some social function at the Indian Embassy or at Blair House? Dr. Kissinger said dinner was absolutely out of the question, and whether the President might call on Madame Gandhi at Blair House would depend on the then state of relationships. It was imperative, however, that India do nothing to upset the equilibrium before Madame Gandhi's visit, and that the Indian press campaign be muted in anticipation of that visit. The Ambassador agreed that we would meet in Washington to work out the agenda and other details.

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**135. Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Rogers-Dobrynin Talk on South Asia<sup>2</sup>

You may have already seen the account of Secretary Rogers' talk with Dobrynin on Wednesday. (attached)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 1/1/71-9/30/71. Secret. Sent for information.

<sup>2</sup> The portion of the conversation that dealt with South Asia was summarized in telegram 156613 to Moscow, August 25. (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> August 25; attached but not printed.

In response to the Secretary's probing concerning the Soviet position on South Asia, Dobrynin made the following major points:

—The USSR has no interest in conflict in the area and Soviet policy has been directed toward reducing the danger of conflict.

—Some recent developments make it appear to the public, perhaps erroneously, that the US favors Pakistan. After hearing the Secretary's explanation of our arms policy toward Pakistan, Dobrynin implied he understood that in fact that issue was relatively insignificant but that press reports had inflamed tempers.

—The intent of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty was to calm the Indians by assuring them that they had friends at a time when they suspected the Pakistanis of planning hostilities. Dobrynin added the treaty seemed in fact to have had the intended effect.

—The guerrilla action in East Pakistan is "practically over" and the real problem is coping with seven million refugees. Dobrynin further volunteered that the Soviets were giving no encouragement to the separatist movement in East Pakistan and said the Soviets had informed the Indians that they will not support demands for a separatist state.

—As for Soviet involvement with the Bengali guerrillas, Dobrynin stated, "we do not like to be involved in such things."

Contrary to the WSAG discussions on August 17 and the subsequent memo<sup>4</sup> you sent to each of the members, State never cleared this approach to the Soviets with us. I have raised this matter with Acting Assistant Secretary Atherton (acting for Sisco) who said it was "out of his hands." I also said that despite the Rogers–Dobrynin talk, we were still expecting to receive the broader scenario for a US approach to the Soviets "before" the outbreak of hostilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Kissinger circulated a memorandum on August 18 to the CIA, the JCS, and the Departments of State and Defense in which he reiterated the decisions reached by the WSAG in their meeting on August 17. He stipulated that in drawing up scenarios for U.S. approaches to China and the Soviet Union on the crisis in South Asia the State Department should clear any such approach with the White House before taking action. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 8/17/71)

**136. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 31, 1971, 0025Z.

159587. Subject: Contacts with Bangla Desh Reps. Ref: Islamabad 8631;<sup>2</sup> Calcutta 2204.<sup>3</sup>

1. We agree that President Yahya's reaction to Ambassador Farland's presentation of Bangla Desh rep's negotiation feeler is a "glimmer" of hope. We do not, however, believe that the time has come for U.S. to play any mediatory role. On the other hand, there may be some merit in carrying our present honest broker role one step further, i.e., by helping two sides communicate with each other on arrangements for meeting on neutral territory for exploratory session on possibility of serious negotiation.

2. The first order of business should be for Ambassador Farland, if he has no big problems, to inform President Yahya of our ideas (outlined paras 3 and 4 below) and without being an advocate, ask for his reaction. This approach should be couched in terms of our willingness as a friend to help. It should be stressed that we will not go any further in our contacts with Bangla Desh reps than Yahya desires.

3. Our thinking is that it may be useful to further test temperature of water by attempt at verification of Qaiyum's bona fides. We see no better way to accomplish this quickly than to contact the Bangla Desh "Foreign Minister" Mushtaq Ahmed directly in Calcutta. If he in effect verifies content of approaches previously made by Qaiyum, we would then want to inform him that substance of talks with Qaiyum has been passed to President Yahya.

4. We would also inform Mushtaq Ahmed that Yahya showed interest in a meeting of GOP reps and BD reps and volunteer to pass back to President Yahya any response Mushtaq may have. Should reactions from both sides to meeting prove favorable, we could then examine question whether further US role in providing communication link between them would be necessary or desirable.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Constable (NEA/PAF) on August 25 and revised in the White House on August 30; cleared by Laingen, Schneider, and Atherton; and approved for transmission by Eliot. Also sent to Calcutta and repeated to New Delhi, London, and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> Document 133.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.



5. Caveats—We are confident posts share Department's awareness need for utmost caution and discretion in carrying out these next steps. Publicity concerning possibility of direct contacts between GOP and BD reps; exposure of our role; or knowledge of our contacts with Mush-taq Ahmed could cause sudden termination of this exercise. Furthermore, we should all keep in mind at every step that what may appear sincere desire to negotiate on one or both sides might in fact prove to be little more than tactical maneuver in complex process of pursuing greater influence over US policy. We will also need to bear in mind those who would want to see negotiations fail. We presume such elements would exist in Pakistan, India, and in BD movement.

6. *For Calcutta*: If Ambassador Farland receives Yahya's approval, you should at earliest opportunity contact BD Foreign Minister Mush-taq Ahmed with object accomplishing purposes outlined in paras 3 and 4 above, at same time reiterating that we are passing messages but not acting as mediator. If subject of visa for Mushtaq Ahmed surfaces, you should follow guidance State 154078,<sup>4</sup> i.e., request has been referred to Washington and he should be given no encouragement. You may also suggest Ahmed's visit might better be deferred while present effort to arrange BD and GOP contacts under way. If Mushtaq Ahmed out of India, report info on whereabouts soonest.

7. *For all addressees*: We will welcome continuing analysis and comments on: (a) possibilities for negotiation between BD reps and GOP; (b) dynamics of possibly troublesome divisions within BD movement (including Mukti Bahini) over "independence vs. accommodation"; (c) GOI attitudes toward negotiated settlement in lieu of independent Bangla Desh; (d) kind of settlement Yahya could sell in West Pakistan to military and politicians; and (e) ways in which apparent BD insistence on central role for Mujib (Calcutta 2204) might be reconciled with Yahya's apparent need for "secessionist scapegoat." Any other observations or contributions would of course also be welcome.<sup>5</sup>

8. Messages this subject should be transmitted Nodis.

**Rogers**

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<sup>4</sup> See footnote 5, Document 133.

<sup>5</sup> Ambassador Farland endorsed the Department's scenario and indicated that he would put it forward during his meeting with Yahya scheduled for September 4. He stated that he would stress that U.S. contacts with Bangladesh representatives would be conditioned by what Yahya considered appropriate. (Telegram 8909 from Islamabad, August 31; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VI, 1 Aug 71–31 Aug 71) Yahya gave his approval on September 4 to discreet U.S. contacts with Bangladesh representatives and the Department instructed the Consulate General in Calcutta to proceed along the lines of paragraphs 3 and 4 of telegram 159587. (Telegram 163594 to Calcutta, September 4; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

137. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 31, 1971, 1551Z.

159706. Subj: Trial of Mujibur Rahman. Ref: State 149347.<sup>2</sup>

Because of possibility that Indians might attempt to exploit any written reply to Mrs. Gandhi's August 11 message<sup>3</sup> on trial of Mujibur Rahman, we have decided that it would be preferable for Ambassador to make oral response on behalf of President to Foreign Secretary Kaul. Ambassador should make following points: the President has received Mrs. Gandhi's message and has considered it with care. There has been extensive interest in United States in trial of Mujib. Secretary Rogers has conveyed our concern about summary treatment of Mujib to GOP. We intend to continue to indicate our concern on appropriate future occasions, not only for humanitarian reasons, but also because we recognize importance which trial, and possible execution of Mujib, would have in broader context of search for peace and stability in South Asia.

**Johnson**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 29 PAK. Confidential; Exdis. Drafted by Quainton on August 19; cleared by Schneider, Laingen, and Kissinger; and approved by Sisco. Repeated to Islamabad.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 149347 to New Delhi, August 14, transmitted the text of the letter sent to President Nixon on August 7 by Prime Minister Gandhi; see the attachment to Document 128.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 119.

**138. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 1, 1971.

Attached is a memo from Saunders which deals with the subject the Secretary has been talking to you about personally and which confirms what Sisco indicated to me last week. You will note that Yahya is sending over a personal emissary<sup>2</sup> to discuss with Sisco the actual status of items remaining in the pipeline as a further refinement of the proposal.

As you know, Secretary Rogers has done this on his own despite contrary hints. Very few people in the Department are aware of the project according to Eliot. I told Eliot that this project could upset the President a great deal and that it would be well for us to take stock of the situation in the light of Yahya's response and his obviously cooperative but apparently concerned attitude. I believe you will want to focus on this as soon as possible before it progresses any further.<sup>3</sup> The real problem is the large number of unfilled military requests which have been stonewalled by Defense.

**Attachment**

**Memorandum From Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>4</sup>**

Washington, September 1, 1971.

SUBJECT

Sisco–Hilaly–Yahya on the Military Aid Pipeline

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971. Secret; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Major General Inam-ul Haq, Director General of Defense Procurement in Pakistan's Ministry of Defense. On September 3 Kissinger sent a special channel telegram to Farland instructing him to make certain General Haq understood that he should contact Kissinger personally to obtain an accurate appraisal of President Nixon's thinking with respect to arms shipments. (Ibid., Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971)

<sup>3</sup> Kissinger responded in the margin with the following handwritten note: "Al— They cannot play fairly. Make sure we are cut in & that Paks know what must be done." Haig added a handwritten note in the margin that reads: "Saunders will be sure Pak General sees HAK."

<sup>4</sup> Secret; Nodis. Sent for information.

Ambassador Farland has cabled to you Yahya's reaction to a recent conversation between Assistant Secretary Sisco and Ambassador Hilaly in which Sisco indicated that the possibility of the stoppage of economic aid to Pakistan could be averted if the arms flow were shut off. We have no record of the Sisco-Hilaly talk—although the Paks have now provided us with the text of Hilaly's report<sup>5</sup>—and were not previously informed about this approach.

#### *Sisco's Proposition*

According to Hilaly, Sisco called him in on August 23 and made the following major points:

—the question of arms shipments had become an important internal political issue in the US with the passage of the Gallagher amendment.<sup>6</sup> There was every likelihood that the Senate would pass a similar restriction which would also insist on the stoppage of economic aid until there is a satisfactory political settlement in East Pakistan.

—The possibility of such a stoppage of economic aid could be averted if the Administration agreed to cut off military supply to Pakistan. If the delivery of some of what little remained in the pipeline could be speeded up and the Paks agreed to sacrifice the remainder, the Administration could then placate the Senate by saying the pipeline had been closed and that "no Defense stores whatsoever would move to Pakistan in the future."

—Pakistan's stake in the "immediate resumption" of economic aid from the consortium was much longer than its stake in the small amount of arms remaining in the pipeline.

—It was a mutual problem and both governments needed to help each other and devise a political strategy that could ensure the resumption and increase of economic aid. Sisco, "confidentially and unofficially" suggested that both governments sit together secretly as friends to look at what remained in the pipeline with a view to "announcing" its final close.

#### *Yahya's Response*

According to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan, Yahya instructed Hilaly to inform Sisco<sup>7</sup> that (1) the gesture of initiating prior unofficial

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<sup>5</sup> Ambassador Farland reported on September 1 that Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan had made available Hilaly's account of his recent conversation with Sisco. (Telegram 8934 from Islamabad; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK) Because of the practice of reducing the size of telegrams by eliminating words considered to be obvious, Farland's report of receiving Hilaly's account on August 23 was taken to mean that the conversation was held that day. The conversation between Sisco and Hilaly took place on August 20; see Document 131.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 7, Document 105.

<sup>7</sup> Yahya's reaction was reported in telegram 8934, cited in footnote 5 above.

and confidential consultation on this matter of “vital importance” is appreciated; (2) he agreed that this was a mutual problem which required a common political strategy.

Yahya then went on to ask that President Nixon be informed that:

—“We” would do well to consider the effect a public announcement of the kind suggested by Sisco would have on Pakistan internally and externally and on the image of US-Pak relations. Internally, it would be a “setback” to the “strengthened good feeling toward the Nixon Government” in Pakistan. Externally, other states might also cut off military supply and the impact would “merit very serious consideration.”

—Pakistan’s difficulties with India would be “compounded.” It is for “serious consideration” whether it would not be in the US interests in South Asia to prevent development of a “precarious imbalance” between India and Pakistan.

—Then (almost as an afterthought in his instructions to Hilaly) Yahya added that the President be informed that he “in no way wishes to weaken the position of the Nixon Government. Therefore, should President Nixon feel that the proposed announcement would enable him to defeat the Democratic designs to make the existing position a political issue for the Presidential election, Pakistan will accept it despite the sacrifices it involves.” If this is the case, then Yahya would at least hope that the announcement would say “shipments of military stores to Pakistan have terminated, and their resumption will depend upon the improvement of the situation in East Pakistan,” and he would hope that under these circumstances “essential supplies” could later be “quietly resumed.”

—Finally, Yahya “notes with deep appreciation” the assurances that the cut off would help the Administration to (1) save economic aid for Pakistan (2) take a stronger line with Congress for resumption of economic aid to Pakistan and (3) to take the lead in the consortium for immediate resumption of international aid to Pakistan.

### *Comments*

Unless you have talked to Sisco or Secretary Rogers had the permission of the President, Sisco has been free-wheeling again. We had no idea until this cable was received from Islamabad today (September 1) that he had made this approach on August 23.

That issue aside, however, Yahya’s response raises some important substantive questions.

1. Yahya realizes that there is very little (about \$2.6 million) in the pipeline and that there is virtually no chance with Congressional pressure that more will be made available in the foreseeable future. This being the case he may well see this as a unique opportunity to trade

virtually nothing in military supply for vital US economic aid and leadership in the consortium.

2. Resumption of economic aid to Pakistan and US pressure on the consortium governments to resume aid raises bureaucratic, Congressional and policy problems. As Sisco indicates, we might save the possibility of resuming aid by cutting off military supply but we will be right back in the soup again with Congress if we do this without first having some sort of national development plan such as the Congress expects. Taking the lead in the consortium raises the same problem and it is doubtful we could achieve much anyway in the consortium without such a plan. Finally, AID is no more aware of this approach than we. Sisco has promised much more than we may be able to deliver soon.

—A cut-off of military supply to Pakistan might gain us some points in India but we have already been so damaged there on this issue that a cut-off when the pipeline is almost dry will not recoup much. Moreover, there is some question whether we really want to send the Indians this kind of a signal now.

In short, Sisco is talking about a trade-off that might make sense when the Senate reconvenes. But he has raised it with the Paks without authority, without much sense of what it would take to resume aid and over-arousing Pak expectations about resumption.

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### 139. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 2, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Supply Pipeline for Pakistan

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary

Christopher Van Hollen, Deputy Assistant Secretary, NEA

Peter D. Constable, Senior Political Officer, Pakistan–Afghanistan Affairs

Maj. Gen. Inam-ul Haq, Director General, Defense Procurement; Pakistan  
Ministry of Defense

Mr. Z.M. Farooqi, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971. Secret; Nodis. Drafted on September 8 by Constable (NEA/PAF).

The Secretary welcomed General Haq to Washington and expressed his deep appreciation for President Yahya's prompt response to Mr. Sisco's suggestion that our two governments look at ways to deal with the remaining military supply pipeline. He also expressed appreciation of President Yahya's understanding of the problems that military supply pipeline presents. The Secretary stated, however, that he wanted to make clear Mr. Sisco's suggestion was just that. We are not pressing the Government of Pakistan. We want to take a look at the problem together. We do not want to change our policy toward Pakistan or to do anything that will hurt Pakistan. If it does work out, it would be to our mutual advantage, since it would give us an opportunity to try to play a constructive role in economic assistance. Comparing the military supply pipeline of \$2.6 million with the economic assistance pipeline of \$80 million, it is apparent which is the more important. While the military supply question is not an important issue in domestic politics, Congressional opposition to military supply has created a potential political problem in U.S.-Pakistan relations. The pipeline question may impair our ability to be helpful with economic assistance. It is in this context that Mr. Sisco asked Ambassador Hilaly if shipments from the remaining small pipeline might be speeded up or items ordered elsewhere. If that were done, then we could make a low-key statement to the effect that shipments from the pipeline had been completed.

Major General Haq replied by expressing President Yahya's deep appreciation for being taken into confidence. He does not want to cause any difficulties for President Nixon and he is aware of the political pressures. President Yahya had instructed him to cooperate fully with us. There is tremendous good will in Pakistan for the United States and there might be some bafflement when the public learns the United States is no longer shipping military items to Pakistan. However, he hoped the announcement can be worded in such a way as to avoid any impression that we have joined hands with India. The General noted that the recent Indo-Soviet treaty had caused an imbalance in the Subcontinent and he alleged that the Indians would be receiving 400 T-60 series tanks from the Soviets as a result of the treaty, while the Soviets had now cut off spares for the inferior tanks they had previously supplied to Pakistan. It was obvious, according to the General, that the new Soviet tanks were for Indian use on the plains of the Punjab. The imbalance of power could be increased by Pakistan's difficulties in maintaining U.S. equipment, particularly aircraft. He added, however, that they would try for the time being to find alternate sources for the spares. He concluded by saying they would try to ship out as much as possible in as short a time as possible. He also raised a question as to the feasibility of air cargo shipments out by MATS flights, but also recognized possible problems with this method.

The Secretary then emphasized our interest in a low-key announcement, perhaps by the State Department spokesman, noting simply that Pakistan had completed its shipments of military supply items, or some similar formulation that we could mutually agree on. The General and Mr. Farooqi expressed their agreement with and appreciation for this kind of formulation.

Mr. Farooqi asked whether the resolution of the military supply question would enable the United States to take the lead with the Consortium countries in economic assistance questions. The Secretary replied that it would make it easier. In response to Farooqi's observation that President Yahya also hoped there could be a resumption of arms shipments when conditions settled down, the Secretary noted that while we need not go into that question now, relations between the United States and Pakistan and their leaders were very close and cordial.

(*Note:* In an earlier conversation with the General, Mr. Van Hollen sketched out briefly the mechanics of the "drying out" exercise as we saw it, pointing out the need for rapid movement, if there were to be advantage in an announcement before the Senate considered the foreign assistance legislation. Subsequently in the technical discussions with General Haq, Mr. Constable pointed out that we were thinking in terms of completion of shipments by the end of September.)

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**140. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Eliot) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 3, 1971.

SUBJECT

Cut-Off of Aid to India

The Washington Special Action Group meeting on August 17, 1971 agreed on the need to prepare a study of a possible cut-off in economic assistance to India setting out the specific steps which might be taken

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 8/17/71. Secret; Exdis.



in gradually implementing a cut-off and evaluating the anticipated consequences.

The possible actions set forth in the attached paper<sup>2</sup> range from a total cut-off, which we would impose automatically if India clearly instigated hostilities, through a series of partial steps that might be used in an attempt to gain influence over Indian policy by using our aid program.

This analysis shows that a restrictive use of aid, in the short run at least, would provide us with some marginal influence but would be unlikely to affect significantly policies that India saw to be in its vital interest.

The paper does not consider alternative strategies. One such alternative might be based on supportive political and economic policies, paralleling those we are currently pursuing with respect to Pakistan.

We will be prepared to discuss these issues at the September 8 meeting of the WSAG.

Ted E.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed. Attached was a 15-page paper entitled "Economic Assistance Cut-off for India." The paper is undated and no drafting information is provided.

<sup>3</sup> Deputy Executive Secretary Robert T. Curran signed for Eliot.

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#### **141. Paper Prepared by Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 3, 1971.

##### NEW ISSUES

In addition to the issues arising from the continuing refinement of our contingency planning, there are several other issues that should be considered at this point. These arise either from actions we have already taken or may wish to take in the relatively near future.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 9/8/71. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. It was sent to Kissinger by Saunders and Hoskinson on September 3 under cover of a memorandum that refers to a paper they were preparing on the Williams report. (Ibid.)

*Williams' Trip.* As you know, Maury Williams has returned from his trip to Pakistan. His written report<sup>2</sup> is attached to this memo, and he is prepared to report orally to the WSAG.

On the basis of his experiences, Williams has some specific recommendations for future action. He feels that refugees and relief in both India and Pakistan are integral parts of the same problem. On the relief side, the critical element for the success of our efforts is the acceptance, or tolerance, by all parties—Pakistan, Bengali insurgents and India—that food and humanitarian concern for the Bengalis is “above the battle.” On the refugee question, Williams sees the need for an equivalent “cease and stand fast” situation to break the vicious circle of the refugee influx leading to increased Indian support to the insurgents and the Pak army fighting back with policies encouraging more Hindu refugees to leave and never return. Specifically, Williams suggests that:

1. We urge on Yahya a public declaration of protection for all minorities and that he back up the new Bengali Governor, Dr. A.M. Malik, in measures to reduce the emotions against the remaining Hindus.

2. [We] parallel our approach to Pakistan on relief needs and administration with similar discussions in India at the appropriate level. Among other things, we would (a) encourage the Indians to help exempt the movement of relief supplies within East Pakistan from insurgent attack; (b) seek Indian recognition that intensification of the insurgency only produces more refugees; (c) seek help in obtaining a 60-day “dampening” of insurgent activity to permit a cooling of anti-Hindu passions in East Pakistan and improve the atmosphere for possible negotiations between Pakistani and “Bangla Desh” representatives; and (d) seek acceptance of UN observers statement [*stationed*] in East Pakistan having the freedom to cross into India on valid refugee business.

*Comment:* The security of food distribution in East Pakistan is a crucial issue. Our next step should be to devise approaches to persuade the insurgents not to attack it.

*Arms Supply to Pakistan.* This is an old issue returned with new problems because of Joe Sisco's discussion with Hilaly.<sup>3</sup> *The basic issue at this point is whether Sisco's proposition to the Paks of trading our “cut-*

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<sup>2</sup> Maurice Williams submitted a report to Secretary Rogers on September 3 on the trip he made to Pakistan August 17–23. Rogers sent a copy of the report to President Nixon on September 13. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, SOC 10 PAK) The report is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 143.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 131.

off" of military supply for a resumption of economic assistance is tenable. It could well turn out that Sisco has given an empty promise of economic aid in exchange for a cut-off of virtually nothing in the military supply pipeline. If this is true, Yahya's willingness to give up quietly what little military supply remains for vital economic aid could quickly turn to pique if he comes to believe that in fact aid may not be forthcoming in the large and fairly immediate quantities Sisco seemed to indicate.

*Bangla Desh-West Pakistani Talks.* If Yahya gives the signal to go ahead (Ambassador Farland will see him on Saturday)<sup>4</sup> and the "Bangla Desh" representatives agree, we may soon be on the sidelines of secret exploratory talks between them. *The main issue then for us will be at what moment, if ever, and how we should use our influence to help produce a settlement.* Sisco's inclination, as in the Middle East, will probably be to jump right into a mediatory role just as soon as there is any opportunity. However, to make our limited influence count most will require careful timing and employment of it with Yahya, if at all.

*New Approach to India.* As you know, Under-Secretary Irwin would like to make a trip to India before too long to parallel Williams' trip to Pakistan. *The main issue here is not so much the principle of a new high-level approach to India but its substance and who makes the pitch.* Irwin seems to have in mind using the same old refrain of restraint and mild threat, but, just as we were with Pakistan, we may well want to consider a new approach to India. There may be some new elements we can add. Williams, for example, seems to have some thoughts worthy of consideration. As for who does the job, State, especially after the Williams trip, will insist that they do it and Irwin would be much better than unleashing Sisco on the Indians.

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<sup>4</sup> September 4.

142. **Analytical Summary Prepared by Harold Saunders and Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 3, 1971.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING—INDO-PAK HOSTILITIES

*The Papers*

At the last WSAG meeting on contingency planning for possible Indo-Pak hostilities (August 17) it was agreed that the *State Department would prepare scenarios for US approaches to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and the United Nations*. Most of this work has now been completed and is incorporated in the several papers that follow this analytical summary.

The papers that State has drafted analyze the problems and suggest diplomatic moves *within the separate* and artificial categories of "before" and "after" hostilities. This makes it difficult to devise a present strategy toward the Chinese and Soviets with a clear view in mind of where we want to be if there is an extended war. This approach also makes it difficult to calculate the possible inter-play of interests among the great powers at the various stages of a South Asian crisis.

This analytical summary, therefore, is organized so as to raise the issues that the State papers seem to miss. These will be highlighted in your talking points.<sup>2</sup> *The summary will cut across the several papers State has produced and construct from them the separate but related approaches we might wish to take toward China and the USSR at the major stages of the South Asian crisis and our derivative postures at the UN*. In other words, instead of using State's "before hostilities" and "after hostilities" approach, this summary deals first with China, then with the USSR and finally with the UN.

You should not be handicapped by this at the meeting since you will be focusing on issues rather than on papers per se. Our approach makes it a lot easier to get to the ultimate issues which the papers generally miss.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 9/8/71. Secret; Exdis. No drafting information appears on the source text. The summary was sent to Kissinger by Saunders and Hoskinson on September 3 under cover of a memorandum that refers to the papers cited in the summary. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Saunders and Hoskinson sent a memorandum to Kissinger on September 3 outlining talking points for the WSAG meeting scheduled for September 8. (Ibid.)

Just so you will know what State has done, here is the list of papers which this summary covers. They follow the summary *at sub-tabs under the general tab marked "Contingency Papers"*:<sup>3</sup>

—"China." A proposed line to take with the Chinese now *before hostilities*.

—"Soviet." This is a proposed approach to the Soviets now *before hostilities*, both in New York and Moscow. Also at this tab is the report of the August 25 Rogers–Dobrynin meeting.

—"UN." A posture at the UN *before hostilities*.<sup>4</sup>

—"After Hostilities." Approaches to the Soviets and Chinese and actions at the UN after hostilities break out. This concentrates on getting a cease-fire. It does not deal with the tough question of Chicom intervention.

### *I. Approach Toward China*

State's scenario for dealing with the Chinese on South Asia is contained in two papers—"Contacts with the Chinese on the South Asian Crisis" considers what we might wish to say to the Chinese before the outbreak of hostilities and a scenario for approaching the Chinese after the outbreak of an Indo-Pak war is included in the paper entitled "China, the Soviet Union and the UN—Post Outbreak-of-Hostilities Diplomacy" (pp. 7–9). The following summary draws together the main points made in both of these papers and identifies issues that should be considered.

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<sup>3</sup> The papers cited here are identified and summarized in the text by Saunders and Hoskinson, with the exception of the paper dealing with the approach to take to the South Asian crisis at the United Nations before hostilities developed, and the report on the meeting between Rogers and Dobrynin on August 25. For a memorandum reporting on the meeting between Rogers and Dobrynin, see Document 135. On August 27 Eliot sent to Kissinger the paper entitled "Contact with the Chinese on the South Asian Crisis." On September 1 he sent him the papers entitled "Conversation with the Soviets on South Asia" and "China, the Soviet Union, and the UN—Post Outbreak-of-Hostilities Diplomacy." All three are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 8/17/71. Eliot sent "South Asia at the United Nations" to Kissinger on September 3. (Ibid., Box H-115, WSAG Minutes Originals, 1971)

<sup>4</sup> The paper entitled "South Asia at the United Nations" laid out what was seen in the Department of State as the potential offered by the United Nations to try to contain the crisis short of war. The United Nations provided a channel for famine relief for East Pakistan and refugee relief for India. The United States could use the United Nations to stress the gravity of the situation and the danger of war, to express concern to India about Indian reluctance to accept a UN presence in India, and to emphasize the importance of a political accommodation in Pakistan to defuse the crisis.

### A. *Contacts with Chinese Prior to Hostilities*

The paper on contact with the Chinese prior to hostilities asserts that the *principal purpose* would be to:

- make sure the Chinese were fully informed of our policies on South Asia;
- stress parallel interests we have in discouraging a war between India and Pakistan.

In any such contact, State believes that it *should be made clear that we are not challenging the Sino-Pakistani relationship nor threatening China* but simply trying to insure that there are no misunderstandings of each other's policies.

Specifically, *State suggests that the following points be communicated to the Chinese through "appropriate" channels:*

1. We are seriously concerned about the dangers of war in South Asia.
2. Hostilities may not only result from military over-reaction to provocations but also from the flow of refugees into India.
3. Our actions are designed to ease the burden of the refugees on India and mitigate the prospect of a major famine in East Pakistan.
4. Our efforts are primarily humanitarian and we will not be a party to any effort to capitalize on relief for political purposes.
5. We have urged the Indians to act with restraint and have pointed out to Pakistan the importance of working for a political accommodation in East Pakistan as the best hope for preserving the unity and integrity of the country.
6. We regard the East Pakistan situation as an internal matter, although we recognize that it has international dimensions with involvement of the US, Soviet Union and China.
7. Indo-Pak hostilities would not be to anyone's benefit. Moreover, if external powers did become involved, it would contribute to rising international tensions that would make it difficult for the US to reduce the level of confrontation in Asia and move toward an era of consultation and détente.
8. For our part we are (a) making sure both India and Pakistan are aware that we would not support an attack by one of them against the other, (b) pursuing an extremely restrained military supply policy and (c) using our influence to prevent border incidents from escalating into general war.
9. As the President made clear in his foreign policy report to Congress,<sup>5</sup> we will do nothing to harm legitimate Chinese (or Soviet) interests in South Asia. No outside power, however, has a claim to pre-

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the report submitted to the Congress on February 25, 1971. For text, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1971*, pp. 219–345.

dominant influence in the region, and each can serve its own interest best by acting accordingly.

10. We are making similar points to the Soviets and would be interested in China's overall view of the South Asian situation.

*These suggestions appear to be reasonable as far as they go but some very important contingencies and related issues are not addressed.* As State suggests the Chinese should probably know what our general approach to the South Asian crisis is but more important to them, and to us, would be our specific reaction should China and India seem to be heading for a military confrontation or even war. It is difficult to sharpen our present approach to the Chinese (or to the Indians, for that matter) unless we have some idea what stance we would take in a Sino-Indian confrontation. Some of the more important issues that would arise in such a situation would include:

—Should the Chinese provoke border incidents with India and/or make threatening noises in support of Pakistan, what would be the US private and public positions? Even strong anti-Indian propaganda, ultimatums and border incidents without a Chinese military buildup along the frontiers could conceivably raise serious problems for the China trip. Should this be pointed out to the Chinese now? (Who wants the China trip more—we or they?)

—How would we react to a gradual buildup of Chinese forces along India's borders, especially at strategic points? The Indians might regard such a development as a serious threat, or at least would bill it as such in public. Again the spectre of China threatening India could raise some serious problems for the China trip. Would we want to point this out to the Chinese as soon as we detected the beginning of their military buildup or even before they begin to move?

#### *B. Contacts with Chinese After Hostilities*

The State paper is premised on the assumption that:

1. *In the immediate aftermath* of the outbreak of hostilities, we should attempt to prevent China from intervening directly and militarily on the side of Pakistan by military action against India;

2. *In the post-hostilities peace-keeping phase* we should move "energetically" to limit the influence the Chinese may have gained in South Asia, and ensure that they accept and will not disrupt whatever political settlement may be achieved between India and Pakistan.

1. *Actions in Immediate Aftermath.* State believes that there are a "variety of factors" encouraging the Chinese to limit their intervention, like fear of a possible Soviet riposte along the Sino-Soviet border and the damage that bellicose behavior might do to China's foreign policy posture in general and the prospects for the President's trip in particular. Therefore, *State believes that should Indo-Pak fighting break out "these constraining factors, reinforced by statements of our concern, are more likely to be effective than direct preemptive moves."*

State suggests the following *specific actions*:

—Through the most direct and rapid channel of communication, convey our concern, our determination not to seek advantages from the crisis and hope that China will influence the Paks to bring hostilities to an early end. We would also indicate the bilateral steps we were taking in Moscow, New Delhi and Islamabad to the same end and particularly express the hope that the Chinese would also cut off arms shipments. Finally, we would suggest our willingness to cooperate in seeking an early settlement.

—If the PRC is a member of the Security Council, seek its support for a resolution calling for an early end to hostilities and creating a basis for a political settlement.

—If PRC is not in Security Council, we would keep it informed of our activities there and seek at least tacit endorsement of any resolution we might favor.

—Include the Chinese in any other international mechanism that might be developed to cope with the crisis.

2. *Post-Hostilities Peace-Keeping Phase.* State offers no specific suggestions on how we might wish to cut our diplomatic losses to the Chinese in South Asia and insure that they accept and will not disrupt the peace settlement. It is probably assumed, however, that if we succeed in involving the Chinese in putting out the fire, they will then have a vested interest in maintaining the peace in the future.

*Again the State paper seems reasonable as far as it goes but some very important contingencies and related issues are not addressed.* It makes good sense to involve Chinese in stopping the fighting and working on a peace settlement, but what if they do not see it that way? It would seem to be far too rosy a prognosis to base US policy on a judgment that the Chinese will not line up, at a minimum with threats and propaganda, on Pakistan's side should there be a war. Certainly there are constraining factors but *there are also factors that could impel the Chinese toward deeper and more direct involvement.* In this connection, it is instructive to note that the Chinese have quietly stepped up their support to the Paks, almost across the board, since last March. Some of the more important issues this raises are:

—Are there any pre-emptive moves we can take with the Chinese immediately after the outbreak of hostilities to prevent them from intervening?

—If the Chinese do come in on Pakistan's side what should our posture be? Would we provide military assistance to India against China if we judged that India was the target of generally unprovoked aggression?

It is the answers to these questions that we have to think about not only to deal with the contingency if it arises but to sharpen whatever we may say now.



## II. Approach to Soviets

State's scenario for dealing with the Soviets on South Asia is contained in two papers—"Conversation with the Soviets on South Asia" and "China, the Soviet Union and the UN—Post-Outbreak-of-Hostilities Diplomacy" (pp. 4–7). The following summary draws together the main points made in both of these papers and identifies issues that should be covered.

### A. Contacts with Soviets Prior to Hostilities

At the last WSAG meeting on South Asia (August 17) there was some hesitancy on the part of Under Secretary Irwin and Assistant Secretary Sisco to agree to produce a scenario for approaching the Soviets and especially on the specific issue of prior clearance of any actions with the White House. We attempted to nail both these points down with a subsequent memo from you to the WSAG members,<sup>6</sup> but Secretary Rogers and Ambassador Beam went ahead with apparently already planned approaches to Ambassador Dobrynin and Gromyko. With some prodding, *State has sent over a short paper on further approaches but it falls far short of being the comprehensive scenario we were looking for.*

You will recall that Ambassador Beam in his August 23 talk with Gromyko and Secretary Rogers in his August 25 meeting with Dobrynin did little more than to convey our concern about the dangers of war in South Asia and gently probe Soviet intentions. They both, not unexpectedly, got back platitudes and positive statements of Soviet intention to exercise restraint and to urge restraint on the Indians. The Soviets also said they were not working towards the dismemberment of Pakistan and do not support separatist and guerrilla operations in East Pakistan.

*State "proposes" that our next move with the Soviets should be to attempt to elicit support for, or at least not opposition to, the UN relief effort. They note the apparent close identity of Soviet and Indian negative attitudes toward UN involvement in any aspect of the current situation, and apparently (without so stating) hope that a shift in the Soviet position would also help to bring the Indians around. Specifically, State proposes to instruct Ambassador Bush to discuss these issues with the Soviets at an early date along the following lines:*

—Express our concern about the refugees in India and famine in East Pakistan.

—Note the limited Soviet contribution and hope that they will provide support to the concept of an international relief effort as the best way to separate humanitarian relief from political problems.

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<sup>6</sup> See footnote 4, Document 135.

—Express hope the Soviets will not continue to oppose UN moves designed to reduce tensions and cope with refugee problems.

—Note that if there is famine in East Pakistan there will be an increased flow of refugees to India and the danger of hostilities will increase.

—Recognize our common interests in peace and stability in South Asia and hope for working with the Soviets to de-escalate the crisis.

*Then, after we have talked with the Chinese along the lines State suggests, they would go back to the Soviets and reiterate our "basic position," i.e. that we have common interests in the peace and stability of the region and that we will continue to take such actions as we can to de-escalate the crisis. State also proposes saying:*

—We have made our commitment to peace and restraint clear to the Chinese and would hope that the Soviets will do the same.

—As the President made clear in his report to Congress in February, we will do nothing to harm legitimate Soviet (and Chinese) interests in South Asia, but no outside power has a claim to predominant influence and all should conduct their activities in the region accordingly.

*This is hardly the detailed scenario we were looking for and it would seem to be largely diplomatic eyewash. Now that we and the Soviets have said the appropriate peace and restraint phrases to each other something more substantive would seem to be in order. We might be able to score a few propaganda points on the UN issue but the basic fact is that the Indians are leading the Soviets on this one and our efforts to be most effective should be concentrated on New Delhi, although making the Soviets feel uncomfortable will not hurt. Bush's point on recognizing our common interest in peace and stability in South Asia and opening the door to Soviet cooperation would seem to be a good one, but it needs to be said at a higher level where we can be sure it will have an impact.*

Beyond these comments, *there are other issues that should be addressed now, such as:*

—Can we and should we maneuver the Soviets into using their negative influence with the Chinese to keep them from getting directly involved on the side of Pakistan?

—How can we achieve our objective in South Asia and contain the current thrust of Soviet influence?

—What can we do to encourage the Soviets to use more boldly their substantial influence to restrain the Indians?

—Is there a potential trade-off whereby we squeeze Yahya and they do the same to Mrs. Gandhi and, if so, how do we approach the Soviets on this delicate issue?

### *B. Contacts with Soviets after Hostilities*

State's thinking on how we should approach the Soviets after the outbreak of hostilities is based on the following assumptions:

1. *In the immediate aftermath* of the outbreak of hostilities we should see that Soviet support to India does not encourage India to keep on fighting until its maximum political demands are met.

2. *In the post-hostilities peace-keeping phase*, as with the Chinese, we should more “energetically” limit the influence the Soviets may have gained in South Asia and ensure that they accept and will not disrupt whatever political settlement may be achieved between India and Pakistan.

3. *Actions in Immediate Aftermath*. As in the case of the Chinese, State believes that these are a “variety of factors” encouraging the Soviets to limit their intervention, like their presumed desire not to force the Chinese to intervene on Pakistan’s side and the fact that India can probably handle Pakistan alone without direct Soviet military support. Therefore, again as in the Chinese case, *State believes that should Indo-Pak fighting break out “these constraining factors, reinforced by statements of our concern, are more likely to be effective than direct preemptive moves.”*

State suggests the following *specific actions toward the Soviets*:

—Approach them immediately, perhaps on the hot line, with a message from the President stressing our concern with the gravity of the situation, our determination not to seek advantages from the situation, our hope that the USSR will act likewise and will use its influence to end hostilities.

—Issue immediate Presidential statement deploring the resort to violence, calling for a cessation of hostilities and requesting other interested external powers to work toward this end. The statement, however, would be couched in generalities, not foreclose any of our options and not attempt to get the Soviets to condemn one side or the other.

—Call in Ambassador Dobrynin at the highest appropriate level and [say?] soon we hope that the Soviets will associate themselves with our call for an end of hostilities, support Security Council discussion and reasonable resolutions, and cut off arms shipments. We would inform him of our intention to make a parallel approach to the Chinese.

—In public statements at the UN and elsewhere, hit hard on such themes as:

- Soviet responsibilities to bring an end to the fighting;
- need for Soviets to suspend military and economic aid as we have;
- we seek no special advantage from the conflict.

2. *Post-Hostilities Peacekeeping Phase*. As with the Chinese, State offers no specific suggestions on how we might cut our diplomatic losses to the Soviets in South Asia and ensure that they accept and will not disrupt a peace settlement. It is probably assumed, however, that if we succeed in involving them in putting out the fire, the Soviets will then have a stronger vested interest in maintaining the place in the future.

Viewed from today’s perspective *this is probably the right tone and type of posture we should take toward the Soviets in the immediate aftermath of the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan*. The whole point would be to encourage them to use their influence with the Indians to halt the fighting, or at least not to let it drag out and see tensions increase among

the great powers as a result. There may be other things that we might wish to do but this objective seems right.

*The question which remains, but which State does not address, is what if the Soviets do not choose to use their leverage with India. This is very possible and we need to develop our thinking on this subject.*

### III. The UN—Before and After Hostilities

Whatever is done at the UN is in the nature of being supportive of rather than independent from the major thrust of bilateral policies toward the major actors—India, Pakistan, China and the Soviet Union. *The important thing about our UN posture at this point is that it backs up, or at a minimum, runs parallel to our positions in the major capitals. The details are for the technicians to figure out.*

State has developed a scenario for a number of things that could be done at the UN after the outbreak of hostilities. (pp. 9–11 of paper on “China, the Soviet Union and the UN—Post Outbreak-of-Hostilities Diplomacy”.) These are largely the normal moves of going to the Security Council and supporting a resolution calling for the end of hostilities and seeking a basis for a peace settlement. *Again, the important thing about our UN posture after the outbreak of hostilities is also that it supports and is not independent of other actions we may be taking elsewhere.*

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### 143. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 7, 1971.

#### SUBJECT

Guidance for Keating—US Policy Toward China and India

You will recall from our brief of August 31<sup>2</sup> that Foreign Minister Singh asked Ambassador Keating and Senator Percy for clarification

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> Apparent reference to an oral briefing done by Saunders and Hoskinson.

of the US position in the event of Sino-Indian hostilities. He recalled that:

—in July he and the Defense Minister had the impression from your talks in Delhi that India “could be reassured concerning continued US support against China;”<sup>3</sup>

—after your return, in connection with a talk you had with Ambassador Jha, the US position “was conveyed that if China intervened as the result of an Indo-Pakistan confrontation, the US reaction could not be assured.”

Singh said he was surprised at the apparent change and told Keating: “We would definitely like to know where it now stands” [Tab A, para. 6].<sup>4</sup> Keating reports he is seeing Singh tomorrow, September 8, and asks for guidance [Tab B].<sup>5</sup>

I assume that you were at least making a distinction between unprovoked and provoked Chinese attack and, perhaps more, attempting to unsettle any Indian planning for attacking Pakistan. I also assume that Singh’s question is a serious one since past Indian contingency plans have been based on the assumption of some sort of US help in the end.

It seems to me there are three generally possible ways to respond:

1. Remain silent and leave the Indians uncertain.
2. Instruct Keating to reply that there is no ground for confusion. The US has often expressed its interest in India’s independence and its consequent concern over an unprovoked Chinese attack (your first statement). But if India started a war, obviously the situation would be different.
3. Add to the explanation in para. 2 above some comment that the Soviet-Indian treaty has injected further complications into our review of the situation.

*Recommendation:*

I am not in favor of a big exercise and a formal reply to Singh. My own suggestion would be to instruct Keating to use paragraph 2 above as his own explanation and pass Singh’s question off that way. Since this is a serious question, the Indians may continue to ask it until they

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 93.

<sup>4</sup> All brackets in the source text. Telegram 13793 from New Delhi, August 29, which reported on a conversation that Keating and Senator Charles Percy (R-Illinois) had on August 28 with Foreign Minister Singh, was attached at Tab A but is not printed.

<sup>5</sup> Tab B, telegram 14180 from New Delhi, September 6, was attached but not printed.

are satisfied that they understand our answer but this way we may be able to preserve some of our flexibility.

Approve<sup>6</sup>

Let's remain silent

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<sup>6</sup> Neither recommendation is initialed. In a September 7 note to Kissinger, which is attached to the memorandum, Haig wrote: "You will recall I told State at your direction that you did not make such a statement." Haig was referring to Kissinger's exchange with Jha on July 17. Haig concluded that Kissinger's recollection of his exchange with Jha had not been passed to Keating.

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#### 144. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 8, 1971, 3:07–4:25 p.m.

##### SUBJECT

South Asia

##### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin

Joseph Sisco

Bruce Laingen

David Schneider

Defense

G. Warren Nutter

James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Captain Howard N. Kay

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

John Hannah

Maurice Williams

Donald MacDonald

NSC Staff

Col. Kennedy

Mr. Saunders

Mr. Hoskinson

Adm. Welander

Jeanne Davis

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. No drafting information appears on the source text. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. Another record of the meeting was prepared on September 13 by James Noyes (OASD/ISA). (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971)

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that

- 1) We would make another approach to India to try to establish a common interest in avoiding famine and try to get an accurate count of the refugees;
- 2) State and AID will prepare a joint memorandum on an approach to the Congress for additional aid funds;
- 3) We should repeat the warning to India about military activity;
- 4) We should avoid giving any assurances to the Indians that we would support them in the event of a Chinese attack; nor should we make any threatening noises to the Indians.

Dr. Kissinger: I thought we could ask Maury Williams to give us a brief rundown on relief, then discuss what I thought was to be a feeler on arms supply policy. I wonder what we would do if we were instructed to use a baseball bat—go to nuclear war?

Mr. Williams: As you know, I had discussions in Islamabad and Dacca from August 17 to 23. We nailed down a number of points. We got agreement with Yahya on the priority of the relief effort. He agreed that this was important to his objective of maintaining a Government position in East Pakistan. We also got Yahya to agree, although grudgingly, to the first UN field mission of some 40 people. Also, Yahya said that his policy was for a “civilianization of the Government in East Pakistan” which means deemphasizing the role of the military in running the place. He has now appointed Dr. A.M. Malik, a Bengali, as Governor of East Pakistan in place of the Commanding General there.

Dr. Kissinger: If I may interrupt—Senator Kennedy was in to see me today and claims there is a good possibility that Mujibur is already dead. Is that possible?

Mr. Sisco: Yahya told (Ambassador) Farland categorically that Mujib would not be hanged.

Mr. Helms: We have no information to support the rumor that he is dead.

Dr. Kissinger: I told (Senator) Kennedy that, and he asked why there has been no picture of him published to still the rumors. So we are reasonably sure he is alive?

Mr. Williams: It is inconceivable to me that they would announce a trial and arrange for a well-known defense attorney if he were dead.

Mr. Sisco: It's even more inconceivable for the President of the country to tell our Ambassador to relax—that Mujib would not be killed.

Dr. Kissinger: I can't imagine that he is dead. Go on with your briefing Maury.

Mr. Williams: With regard to political accommodation, the amnesty does not extend to most of the Awami League. Only 88 of the elected League members of the General Assembly and 94 League members of the Provincial Assembly have been cleared of criminal charges and therefore included in the amnesty. Most of these are in India—only 16 of the 88 General Assembly members are in Dacca. The remaining 79 General Assembly members and 60 Provincial Assembly members are on trial either in person or in absentia. There has been some blunting of anti-Hindu practices and some improvement in a more balanced distribution of relief supplies.

With regard to Pakistan's relations with the consortium, we got agreement to try to have a consortium meeting in early October, at the time of the IBRD Executive Directors meeting in Washington, and some agreement on strategy and tactics for such a meeting as well as a sense of the agenda. We proposed they consider: a) immediate relief requirements for East Pakistan and the need for more international help; b) debt relief by common donor action; and c) longer term relief and rehabilitation needs, particularly for agriculture. As of yesterday, McNamara agreed to this.

Dr. Kissinger: Were the Paks happy?

Mr. Sisco: Yes, they asked us to help them and are pleased that we are carrying the load for them.

Mr. Williams: They're delighted—the debt rescheduling is worth \$75 million to them this year. They assured me Mujib would be tried. He's worth more to them alive than dead. With regard to the security situation in East Pakistan, there is much guerrilla activity on the eastern border, primarily directed against transportation lines.

Dr. Kissinger: Is this parallel to the Indian border?

Mr. Williams: Yes—it's a battle for the life-line, with the guerrillas trying to cut the railroad and blow up the bridges. This will make the East Pakistanis dependent on water transport. In the north, the bands seem to be operating independently. To the south, there are bands of 3–600, well equipped and using sophisticated tactics. Their targets are transportation lines, bridges, police stations and the administrative structure generally. The first step in the communal violence may have been the killing by the Bangla Desh of the Urdu-speaking Bihari Minister. The counter-reaction when the Pak troops arrived led to the communal riots. The exact number of casualties is not known, but the deaths in the communal riots were probably in the thousands and in the later attacks on the Hindus, probably in the ten-thousands.

Dr. Kissinger: I didn't understand they had attacked the Hindus.

Mr. Williams: They were raped twice—once by the Bangla Desh, then by the troops.



Dr. Kissinger: Why didn't this story come out?

Mr. Williams: I can't tell you.

Mr. Hannah: The journalists don't see that side of it.

Mr. Williams: I lived there for four years and have many friends there, and this is their assessment.

Dr. Kissinger: But you believe it?

Mr. Williams: Yes. The guerrilla activity has been slowly intensifying, thus forcing the Army to exercise increasing control. Army officers have been assigned down to the district level, and the Army is arming some anti-Hindu elements.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the infiltrators mostly Hindu?

Mr. Williams: Not necessarily. But the Urdu and the orthodox Moslems are more loyal to the Pakistan Government. They are being armed at the village level through what they call Peace Committees. They are the least experienced in leadership but are considered the most reliable by the central Government. These elements tend to be anti-Hindu, and this has generated fear and continued flight on the part of the Hindus.

With regard to a relief program, transport is the key. We have provided 25 coastal steamers which were much appreciated by Yahya. These will move food as it arrives. The security of the transport is of great concern, since the guerrillas are attacking the food and relief ships. The Paks want to arm the ships. We have tried to convince the UN and the military people in Dacca to use the UN emblem. They have agreed reluctantly to rely on the UN emblem and the attitude that "food is above the battle", but if the UN doesn't get moving soon, the operation will fail.

Dr. Kissinger: Have we approached the Indians about assuming the security of the Hindus?

Mr. Williams: Alex Johnson spoke to (Indian Ambassador) Jha but he was brushed off.

Dr. Kissinger: When did this happen?

Mr. Irwin: About 10 days ago, but I don't know that Alex emphasized the point.

Mr. Schneider: He put it pretty directly.

Dr. Kissinger: Did he make the specific point, or say it would be a nice thing?

Mr. Schneider: He asked Jha to ask the Bangla Desh to assure the security of the remaining Hindus.

Mr. Williams: Jha brushed him off. He claimed these things were happening deep in East Pakistan territory and India had nothing to do with it.

Mr. Sisco: It was an unsatisfactory response. We think we should go back to the Indians. Jack (Irwin) could call in the Indians this week.

Dr. Kissinger: Would you show him the map of guerrilla activity? Or we could give it to the *New York Times*, but they wouldn't print it.

Mr. Williams: The coordination of a relief program with the UN is no picnic, but it can be handled if the security situation is okay.

On the aid requirements, Yahya has asked for a massive effort of some \$250–315 million, with a proposed US share of 75%, or \$160–235 million. This would include \$115 million in PL-480 funds, \$25 million in US-owned excess rupees, and up to \$95 million in appropriated dollars to come from the \$100 million special contingency fund. The variable is the cost for the returnees. (to Dr. Kissinger) You asked if \$100 million is enough. The answer is (yes) for East Pakistan. I have two specific recommendations: we should talk to the Indians urgently, trying to nail down the idea of a common interest in avoiding famine. We also need to settle on the number of refugees in order to calculate refugee needs. India claims 8 million, the Pakistanis say over 2 million. We need an impartial third-party verification.

Dr. Kissinger: What do you think?

Mr. Williams: Probably around 6 million. The question is how to stop the flow of refugees. Secondly, we need a decision on how to approach the Congress for the funds required for the refugees, principally in India. If there are 8 million refugees, they will need about \$830 million.

Dr. Kissinger: How should we approach the Indians?

Mr. Irwin: We can make a two-fold approach—I can talk to Ambassador Jha here or (Ambassador) Keating can make the approach in New Delhi.

Dr. Kissinger: It would probably be better for you to do it here with Jha.

Mr. Irwin: I agree—maybe we can do both.

Dr. Kissinger: How can we get an impartial refugee count? Would the Indians agree?

Mr. Irwin: They haven't agreed to the UN presence yet. We can do it at the border and try to get a count in the camps.

Dr. Kissinger: (Ambassador) Keating said the Indians had agreed to travelling teams.

Mr. Williams: Yes, but they can't move very far out.

Dr. Kissinger: How can they object to counting the numbers we're supposed to support? Will they load up the camps? How can we establish that they are genuine?

Mr. Hannah: We would know in a range between 2 million and 8 million.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's make the approach to India. Let's try to establish the principle of a common interest in relief measures in East Pakistan to prevent a further exodus into India. Then let's get an impartial count of what they are asking us to support in India. Why not show them the map of guerrilla activity? We can say we understand they can't do much about the forces deep in East Pakistan, but how about the ones at the India border. Would that be useful?

Mr. Irwin: We have already talked partially in these terms but didn't get far. We should try again.

Dr. Kissinger: They will diddle us to death if we don't talk energetically.

Mr. Sisco: Energetically and specifically. We could tell Jha that we have committed \$7 million and are prepared to move. But we have to be satisfied of at least minimum cooperation from India. How can we be more responsive if we are not assured of minimum cooperation? There is no need for us to throw money away.

Mr. Hannah: Congress is at the appropriation stage. They have been told \$100 million would take care of East Pakistan. Now we will need more for Pak refugees in India. Eight million refugees at 25¢ a day amounts to \$2 million a day. We will be stuck with at least 50% of this.

Dr. Kissinger: If there is a continued heavy outflow of refugees, India will use it as a pretext to go to war. This will blow our China policy. They are already killing us in the press and lobbying with the Congress. We have to be firm. What else can they do to us? I'd do it myself, but I think it's a State Department responsibility.

Mr. Irwin: Sure it is.

Dr. Kissinger: We're not asking them to give up anything essential.

Mr. Sisco: These little probes might offer a ray of light that we might get the Bangla Desh together with the Pak Government.

Mr. Irwin: We'll hit the Indians on this and push the UN to move.

Dr. Kissinger: The Indians are playing an absolutely ruthless game.

Mr. Williams: We have to indicate to the Congress what additional appropriations we want. For 8 million refugees, the non-food costs will be about \$390 million. We have already provided \$30 million in non-food costs and \$40 million in food leaving a requirement of \$100–120 million. In the next week or so we need to ask for two things: 1) \$100–150 million under the relief act<sup>2</sup> to be used as we wish; and 2) an

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<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962. (76 Stat. 121)

addition to the \$100 million under the contingency fund of the foreign assistance act.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: How will we get it? (to Mr. Williams) Are you making a recommendation?

Mr. Williams: OMB is formulating one.

Mr. Sisco: There will be input from State and AID on how to proceed. It will be a joint memo from Mr. Hannah and Secretary Rogers.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's have it this week.

Mr. Irwin: We will get in touch with OMB.

Dr. Kissinger: Talk to Hal Saunders before it is all wrapped up. Can we talk now about the Bangla Desh feelers?

Mr. Sisco: We are trying to get the Bangla Desh to think in the direction of trying to look at political accommodation within the framework of the integrity of Pakistan. We think the six points are within the ballpark. We sent the cable<sup>4</sup> to the Bangla Desh at Yahya's request. He appreciates our position and we have assured him that we have taken no substantive position.

Dr. Kissinger: This can be very helpful.

Mr. Irwin: So much depends on the treatment of Mujib.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Williams) If we can get economic aid through the Senate wrapped in a relief program for Pakistan, would this be agreeable to the Paks?

Mr. Williams: They understand. It would be a case of broadening humanitarian assistance to include commodity assistance for agriculture.

Mr. Sisco: Isn't something further needed? What about the Gallagher Amendment?<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Hannah: The legislative history in the House is clear. In the Senate, we would not like to see the \$18 million taken out—we would like to have it available.

Mr. Sisco: Secretary Rogers is appearing before the Proxmire Committee<sup>6</sup> today.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Sisco) I understand you suggested to the Paks that we might give economic aid in return for a complete shut-off of arms shipments.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. (75 Stat. 424)

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 5, Document 136.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 7, Document 105.

<sup>6</sup> Senator William Proxmire (D-Wisconsin) chaired the Joint Economic Committee and a subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Mr. Sisco: No. I told them if they were willing to look at the possibility of drying up the military pipeline it would help us in dealing with the Gallagher Amendment. That's as far as I went.

Dr. Kissinger: We have a report from the Pak Embassy about discussions at the State Department.

Mr. Laingen: The Secretary talked to them initially, and now we have been talking to one of their Generals.<sup>7</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: May the President be informed? He has a personal relationship with Yahya. We will either get our reports from our own bureaucracy or from the Paks, but we won't be uninformed. We want to know what is being said to the Paks.

Mr. Irwin: You should have been. We will send you the memcons.

Mr. Hannah: Relief for the refugees in India is another matter. We need an appropriation for that. The \$100 million will take care of East Pakistan, but we need more for the refugees in India.

Mr. Laingen: Our discussions with the General are continuing. We're looking now at FMS. They understand what we are up to.

Dr. Kissinger: What are we up to?

Mr. Laingen: We're trying to dry up the pipeline. That's where we stand.

Dr. Kissinger: That's not where we stand. *You* are trying to dry up the pipeline. You are asking them to dry up the pipeline.

Mr. Sisco: We'll send you the memorandum of the Secretary's conversation.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: The President has ruled on this 500 times. He thought this was to be an exploratory conversation.

Mr. Sisco: That's what's going on. There has been no decision.

Dr. Kissinger: What does the General think is going on?

Mr. Sisco: We're trying to determine if it is *technically* feasible. The Secretary checked this out with you. I'm not aware that there is any information that hasn't been provided you. There's been no recommendation from State or Defense. The Secretary merely wanted to know if it was technically feasible.

Mr. Irwin: It's a question of what you mean by "drying up." Some of the things we can deliver quickly. How long will it take to deliver what's left over? The question is should we cut off the pipeline when most of the material has been delivered or drag it out. If we drag it out, we should be prepared to take the heat.

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<sup>7</sup> General Inam-ul Haq.

<sup>8</sup> Document 139.

Mr. Sisco: The US will be in a better position to be helpful if we are freed of the yoke of continued military shipments.

Dr. Kissinger: How?

Mr. Sisco: We haven't gotten into specifics. We can be helpful in the consortium with debt rescheduling, providing dollars for humanitarian relief, as well as normal programs.

Mr. Williams: Normal programs are held up by the Gallagher Amendment.

Dr. Kissinger: I'm trying to get the President's orders carried out. Doesn't the Gallagher Amendment block economic aid? We're trading what for what—arms shipments for no arms shipments?

Mr. Sisco: It depends on how you interpret the Gallagher Amendment.

Mr. Hannah: There is no intention of cutting off the \$75 million loan funds for Pakistan held over from 1971. The Kennedy Amendment<sup>9</sup> applies to the 1972 appropriation. It's possible we could do some maneuvering. Even if the Gallagher Amendment is retroactive, it won't be effective until the appropriation is passed. There are indications Senator Fulbright will hold the authorization in bondage until he gets a commitment from State and Defense to provide him certain information he wants. We have the \$75 million which I don't think is affected by the Gallagher Amendment.

Dr. Kissinger: Are we saying we would make this available?

Mr. Sisco: We're not saying anything. We will consider it and make a recommendation.

Dr. Kissinger: You're talking about a dried-up pipeline for a dried-up economic aid policy.

Mr. Sisco: I hope not. We're going ahead on humanitarian relief and we have the \$75 million. The Paks understand this.

Mr. Williams: They're sympathetic to our situation. They have a \$30 million loan from 1971 funds for agriculture—pesticides, fertilizer, etc. With the other money, they would be getting a fair-sized program. That is satisfactory to the Paks.

Dr. Kissinger: I understand the relationship to economic assistance. Let's find out what's going on and I will find out from the President what he wants.

Mr. Sisco: I'll talk to the Secretary.

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<sup>9</sup> On September 23 Senator Edward Kennedy introduced an amendment to section 302 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 authorizing \$400,000 to assist the international refugee effort in India. (S. 2568. *Congressional Record*, September 23, 1971, pp. S14876-14877)

Mr. Hannah: We have a little maneuvering room from the 1971 funds.

Mr. Irwin: (to Kissinger) You're implying that this is an attempt to do what was previously recommended and turned down. That's not true.

Dr. Kissinger: This is a technical study of how to turn off the pipeline?

Mr. Irwin: There is a small amount left in the pipeline that will stretch over 8 to 10 months. The Gallagher Amendment stands in the way of doing anything.

Dr. Kissinger: What are we studying? How to turn off \$5 million in supplies?

Mr. Irwin: We're studying what the items are, when they will be delivered, how significant they are to the Paks. We may decide to do nothing to the pipeline. Or we may decide it is to our advantage, or to our mutual advantage, to modify the pipeline if it will have an effect on aid.

Dr. Kissinger: As soon as we find out what is going on we will have a basis for discussion. There are two separate problems—they are not linked.

Mr. Irwin: Could I raise the point of UN neutrality?

Mr. Williams: We can't mix relief and non-relief cargoes. We discussed this in Dacca. The river boats that are carrying food will either have to fight their way up or use the UN emblem. In the latter case they can't have armed guards. We need Indian support for an agreement with the guerrillas, and Pak agreement that the ships will not carry jute back down the river.

Dr. Kissinger: Have the Paks agreed?

Mr. Williams: In Dacca.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's put it to the Indians.

Mr. Irwin: We will (1) call in the Indian Ambassador; (2) proceed on the relief situation; and (3) be sure you (Mr. Kissinger) are informed; I apologize if you have not been.

Dr. Kissinger: We should also warn India against military activity.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Helms: This would be a good time to repeat the warning.

Mr. Irwin: During the Secretary's talk with Dobrynin, Dobrynin said they were restraining India but were taking no positive action.

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<sup>10</sup> In the minutes of the meeting taken by Noyes, this statement by Kissinger is preceded by the following comment by Helms: "As the monsoon ends in a few months, we will reach the moment of truth regarding the possibility of military operations on dry land."

They were negative in the UN. They may be helpful but in a limited way.

Dr. Kissinger: It depends on the price they think they will have to pay if they are unhelpful.

On the contingency situation with regard to China, the basic points in State's paper<sup>11</sup> are well taken. I don't think the Chinese rate political accommodation very high. They're not too eager to establish a principle that might create turmoil in one part of a country. Is fear of China one of the factors deterring India?

Mr. Helms: That's all that deters India.

Dr. Kissinger: Then should we ease their worries that much?

Mr. Sisco: No.

Mr. Helms: That should be part of our game plan—to make the Indians wonder what China might do.

Mr. Sisco: I don't see why we should reassure the Indians on this score.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) I'll talk to you about the basic cable later.

Mr. Sisco: We can't speak to what the Chinese might do.

Dr. Kissinger: India is trying to get us to say that we would support them in the event of a Chinese attack. We should avoid saying it, since it might encourage them. Does anyone disagree?

Mr. Sisco: I hope not.

Dr. Kissinger: Are we all agreed that there should be no solo efforts? No one should make any reassuring noises to the Indians without some central point knowing about it. We should make no threatening noises either.

Mr. Sisco: We'll leave any contacts with the Chinese with you.

Dr. Kissinger: I will follow up on that. I don't think they're worried about us. They're worried that someone else will take advantage of the crisis.

Mr. Helms: There's no evidence that the Chinese are gearing up their military for anything.

Dr. Kissinger: How long would it take them?

Mr. Helms: A long time. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Sisco: (to Kissinger) You'll keep us informed of the Chinese aspects?

Dr. Kissinger: I have made arrangements with the Secretary (Rogers). The "no solo" edict applies to everyone. I will flag any developments for the Secretary and make sure you know. If anything is

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<sup>11</sup> See Document 142.



said to the Indians here, which I don't foresee, you will know. We will undertake no solo efforts here.

Would it be effective to approach the Soviets through (Ambassador) Bush on relief efforts? I think it's a good idea, but is there anyone for him to talk to?

Mr. Irwin: Dobrynin will be back in two weeks. We should wait until he gets back.

Dr. Kissinger: No matter what the newspapers say, if India should jump on Pakistan, the President will try to cut off aid.

Mr. Sisco: That would be the least he could do.

Mr. Hannah: There would be no objection if there were a war situation.

Mr. Sisco: As we begin to look at aid, we can't divorce it from present Indian behavior—support of the guerrillas, lack of cooperation in contributing to stability in East Pakistan. Did we make the right decision in providing \$7 million for the refugees in India? If we hadn't moved so fast, would India's attitude have been different? We have to look at this in the context of the situation.

Mr. Williams: We have a chance to test our thesis in the discussion of relief requirements. If we can exercise some influence with regard to aid, we should do it—not as a threat but in a constructive way.

Mr. Sisco: We should say "Here are the needs; we must work together. We're not putting conditions on this, but you've got to help us in creating some stability."

Dr. Kissinger: They're not that tender-hearted.

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**145. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 10, 1971, 4:20–4:50 p.m.

## PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President  
Samuel M. Hoskinson, NSC Staff  
Major General Inam-ul Haq, Director General, Defense Procurement, Pakistan  
Ministry of Defense  
Z.M. Farooqi, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan

Following the initial exchange of pleasantries, General Haq led off by saying he knew that Dr. Kissinger was very busy and that his remarks would be brief and to the point. He had been discussing the technical aspects elsewhere and did not want to get into these. First of all, he wanted to say that President Yahya was very appreciative of this opportunity for consultation on the military supply problem. Consequently, he had sent General Haq to Washington to determine what could be shipped now and our thoughts. President Yahya does not want an embargo, but he had instructed him to determine what, if necessary, could be shipped by the end of this month.

Dr. Kissinger, after indicating the US desire not to pressure Pakistan on this issue, said he wanted to make sure it was understood that the President was not placing any arbitrary deadline on a possible cut-off of military shipments to Pakistan. If Pakistan needed two or three weeks beyond the end of September to wind things up, that was perfectly alright. We were not holding a gun at Pakistan's head on this problem. Our only point was that if the pipeline were dried up in the relatively near future, it could remove some constraints on us and might make it easier for the US to be more forthcoming on economic matters. Dr. Kissinger concluded this series of comments by asking Mr. Hoskinson to make sure that they were fully understood by the remainder of the US Government.

General Haq indicated his understanding and agreement with Dr. Kissinger's remarks. He especially welcomed the opportunity to have more time for shipping items in the pipeline to Pakistan. He then noted that Pakistan also has some 50 tons of presently unlicensed military supplies in warehouses in New York.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Hoskinson on September 13. 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)

These, he said, were important shipments that Pakistan would like very much to obtain. (While Dr. Kissinger left the room for a moment, General Haq explained to Mr. Hoskinson that they were mainly aircraft spares and valued at about \$1 million.) Dr. Kissinger responded that “we will look into these shipments.” He added that, while we would like to help as much as possible, we would not want to limit our capacity to help in other areas by our actions on one limited aspect of the arms supply problem. Again, Dr. Kissinger stressed that we were not attempting to force or pressure Pakistan. General Haq indicated his full understanding of Dr. Kissinger’s comments.

Dr. Kissinger then went on to explain that we are trying to promote the resumption of economic aid to Pakistan and will do our best on this. Mr. Farooqi, at this point, said that Pakistan hoped that if we can get over the arms supply problem it would be easier for the US to take the lead in the consultations. Dr. Kissinger replied that indeed this was our intention and, after indicating that Deputy AID Administrator Williams had discussed the consortium question in Islamabad, he asked Mr. Hoskinson to explain what we had in mind. Mr. Hoskinson said that Williams had indicated we were pressing for a consortium meeting right after the forthcoming World Bank/IMF meeting here during which debt relief and humanitarian relief would be discussed. Dr. Kissinger added that there might be something we could also do with some of the \$75 million held over from last year’s appropriation.

General Haq shifted the subject by saying that Pakistan would like to have US assistance in obtaining vital military supplies through third countries. Dr. Kissinger replied that we would look at this with sympathy but there were problems and complications.

The conversation ended with General Haq explaining, at some length, the West Pakistani view of the situation in East Pakistan. Among other things, he alleged that the number of refugees was really much lower than the Indians claimed and that this is why they would not accept UN observers; the Mukti Fauj were mostly Indians, and India wanted to cut off the northwestern tip of East Pakistan to establish the “Bangla Desh” government. The General also asserted that the military imbalance between India and Pakistan was growing, especially since India was receiving new shipments of tanks from the Soviets as a result of the friendship treaty.

(After leaving Dr. Kissinger’s office, General Haq told Mr. Hoskinson he thought he would be staying on longer in Washington since he now had more time and would at least want to settle the “50 ton problem” before he reported the results of his trip to President Yahya.)

## 146. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 11, 1971, 9:30–10:10 a.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador L.K. Jha  
Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting was arranged at the request of Ambassador Jha.

Ambassador Jha began by saying he wanted to review the arrangements for the forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Gandhi (November 4–5, 1971).<sup>2</sup> Specifically, could the Prime Minister be picked up in New York by an airplane and brought to Andrews AFB on the morning of the arrival ceremony? Dr. Kissinger said that he thought this was possible and he would let the Ambassador know if there were any difficulty. The Ambassador then wanted to review the conduct of the meeting.<sup>3</sup> He agreed that it would be best if the Prime Minister and the President met alone with one adviser entering after the photographers had left through a side door.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Geopolitical File, Box CL 150, India, 21 May 1971–21 Dec 1971. Secret; Sensitive. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office at the White House. The time of the meeting is from Kissinger's appointment book. (Ibid., Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

<sup>2</sup> A letter of invitation from Nixon to Gandhi, signed on September 11, was given by Kissinger to Jha at this meeting. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971)) The text of the letter was transmitted to New Delhi on September 17 in telegram 171338. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 INDIA)

<sup>3</sup> On September 29 former Ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith telephoned Kissinger to say that he had met with Prime Minister Gandhi and she was uncertain about the kind of reception she was going to receive in Washington. Galbraith said that one of her assistants told him that "she was afraid of some brush-off at the White House which would be very damaging." Galbraith urged that Nixon send her a personal note "saying he is looking forward to her visit, getting better acquainted, understanding her problems on the subcontinent." Kissinger assured Galbraith that Gandhi would be received with "special courtesy" and added that the type of note Galbraith was suggesting had been sent to the Prime Minister more than 2 weeks earlier. In the September 11 letter to which Kissinger referred, Nixon wrote of looking forward to wide-ranging discussions which had taken on "a new urgency and a new importance" in light of the events of recent months. Nixon noted his pleasure that Gandhi would be visiting Washington November 4–5, but his letter was not the informal note of reassurance Galbraith proposed. (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 369, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

Ambassador Jha then asked what interest the United States had in keeping East Bengal a part of Pakistan. Dr. Kissinger replied that the Ambassador misunderstood our policy. We had no interest in keeping East Bengal a part of Pakistan. We did have an interest in preventing the outbreak of a war and preventing that issue from turning into an international conflict. As for the rest, we would not take any active position one way or another. Ambassador Jha pointed out that the pressures on the Indian Government were very great. Dr. Kissinger replied that some of them were self-generated.

The Ambassador noted that Haksar was on his way out; maybe Kaul was also in difficulty, but it was not easy to tell who would replace him and whether the man who would replace him would be any better.

If we played our hand intelligently, the Ambassador continued, it would even turn out that India might now look for a compensating move<sup>4</sup> to take towards the United States. Dr. Kissinger responded that we would certainly be ready, but it was important for India not to be playing with the President. If it turned out that some of our reports were correct, that India was using the visit to the President to cover an imminent attack on Pakistan, our relations would not recover so soon.

Dr. Kissinger also said he could not understand the Indian press reports and official reports according to which he had told Jha that India would have no American support in the case of a Chinese attack. The Ambassador replied that what he had reported was the following: Dr. Kissinger had said that in the case of a Chinese attack that was unprovoked, the United States' interest in India would be very great; in the case of a Chinese attack produced by an Indian attack on Pakistan, it would be much harder for the United States to do something. Dr. Kissinger stated that this was essentially correct.

Dr. Kissinger and the Ambassador promised to stay in touch with each other in preparing the Prime Minister's visit, and the meeting then ended.

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<sup>4</sup> The compensating move suggested by Jha implied an initiative to offset to some extent the treaty India had signed with the Soviet Union on August 9.

**147. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 15, 1971, 2005Z.

169506. Subj: Refugee and East Pakistan Relief.

1. Summary: Under Secretary Irwin called in Indian Ambassador Jha September 13 for general review of current relief situation in India and East Pakistan. Under Secretary stressed importance of India and US working together toward common goal of averting famine in East Pakistan. He expressed hope that GOI would publicly indicate its support for neutral UN relief effort and would use its influence with Bangla Desh leadership to persuade it to support UN relief on Bangla Desh Radio and to avoid guerrilla activities aimed at relief personnel. Under Secretary pointed to dangers of increased guerrilla activity, Indian support therefore and increase of tension flowing from precautionary actions taken by both India and Pakistan. Jha said ultimate solution of refugee problem rested on an East Bengali government which the refugees would trust. Under Secretary also raised with Jha desirability of some kind of verification system to determine number of refugees and their needs. Jha indicated GOI did not wish to see starvation in East Pakistan, and suggested that USG and other countries approach Bangla Desh representatives on subject of relief. Jha reacted negatively to verification proposal which appeared to impugn veracity of GOI. End summary.

2. At Under Secretary Irwin's request, Indian Ambassador Jha called September 13 to discuss famine situation in East Pakistan and relief needs. Jha accompanied by Minister Rasgotra and First Secretary Verma. AID Deputy Administrator Williams, Deputy Assistant Secretary Van Hollen and Quainton of NEA/INC also present.

3. Under Secretary began by emphasizing common USG and GOI interest in working toward goal of averting famine in East Pakistan. USG, he said, recognized excellent job which India had done in organizing refugee relief. We also recognize political and economic pressures which refugees represent. As we see it, however, most immediate issue is famine which will come unless active measures taken to avert it. This will require energetic, extensive and effective UN effort. We hope this effort will be supported and accepted by GOI and Bangla

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, REF PAK. Secret; Exdis. Drafted on September 14 by Quainton; cleared by C. Herbert Rees, Director of the Office of South Asian Affairs (AID/NESA); and approved by Irwin. Repeated to Islamabad, London, Moscow, USUN, Calcutta, and Dacca.

Desh (BD) leaders. If relief effort is disrupted, famine is likely and refugee flow will be increased. Greatest present danger is guerrilla attacks on relief assistance. Guerrillas have been most active all along East Pakistan's eastern border with India and have successfully disrupted rail line along eastern border. Only shipping remains and if that is attacked as well, it will destroy whatever relief effort we can make.

4. Under Secretary noted that Foreign Secretary Kaul in discussion with Ambassador Keating and Professor Galbraith had recognized need for relief as long as it was not bound up with Pak military. We strongly agree that relief must be above the battle. We believe that Pak military can be kept away from relief effort. We hope very much GOI will be willing to back neutral relief effort. We would not expect it to back relief which was part of military operations. We would also hope BD leaders would support truly independent UN relief effort and would not continue to insist that BD reps be associated with relief effort. We recognize in asking GOI to use its influence with BD leaders that it may not have full control over guerrilla movement and that BD leaders may not fully control their own military. Nonetheless, if BD leaders would use BD radio to support UN relief effort this would be constructive.

5. AID Deputy Administrator Williams then reviewed achievements of his recent Pakistan trip, noting that the UN effort now accepted by GOP. It had also accepted UN's need to monitor its relief and agreed that there would be no discrimination in allocation of relief to Hindus and Muslims. Williams noted that in response to UNSYG's request, 17 coastal vessels of up to 800 tons and nine mini-bunkers, all with foreign crews, would be distributing relief. There would be no mixed cargoes, neither military nor industrial goods would be carried, and no jute would be brought back on return trips. Ships would operate under UN emblem.

6. Jha responded by stating that GOI anxious that there be no starvation deaths to add to others that have already taken place. He expressed appreciation for assessment of relief plans. He said question was how could GOI help, and wondered whether talking to Bangla Desh people would really help. He expressed view that relief operation needed to be projected in more positive way and thought that East Pakistani people with experience of slow cyclone relief effort had little confidence in UN. Recalling his earlier suggestion, Jha said that relief should begin in areas such as Barisal where logistics were not vital. In addition, he suggested that relief officials on both sides of border establish informal contact with BD representatives. Jha thought it would be preferable to convey our concerns directly to BD leaders rather than have them diluted through GOI. Williams noted that UN Mission in East Pakistan obviously could not deal with BD reps, but he thought UNSYG might be approaching them elsewhere. In any

event, GOI good offices with BD reps and clear public acceptance of UN relief effort would be helpful, although it would not substitute for direct UN contacts. He thought it would be particularly helpful if BD radio would state that battle was not against hungry people. Van Hollen added that it was important in terms of India's public posture that it reaffirm publicly it wanted no one to starve and supported international relief effort. Since India's influence with BD leaders is relatively the greatest, if GOI convinced that UN effort is neutral it could use its influence effectively with them.

7. Jha also expressed view that it would be helpful if other countries taking part in humanitarian relief effort contacted BD reps. He said that this would make it easier for GOI politically, since it would prefer to be joining international chorus rather than playing first fiddle. Under Secretary noted that some countries reluctant to take action which GOI opposes, particularly USSR. They will follow what GOI wants to do.

8. Jha said he was unaware to what extent UN had raised security issue with GOI in New York. Foreign Minister and Foreign Secretary will be in New York in next few weeks and will then have very direct discussions on this issue.

9. Jha asked Williams for his assessment of causes of current refugee flow. Williams said he was puzzled by number of refugees and differing GOP and GOI claims. Famine did not appear to be a major factor. First wave of refugees were political, second came because of communal fear and insecurity. There seemed to be direct correlation between insurgency and tensions which led to refugees. He said we were encouraged by Dr. Malik's appointment since he had a reputation as a moderate on Hindu-Muslim matters.

10. Under Secretary said that the Ambassador's question to Williams led to another item he wished to discuss, namely India's support to guerrillas. He commented that to degree that there is continuous fighting it seems communal problem is enhanced and the refugee flow increases. We recognize position GOI has taken with respect to support of BD movement, but fighting creates refugees. Further additional support to guerrillas or recognition of BD as independent government would increase refugee danger and danger of radicalization. Under Secretary noted that both India and Pakistan seemed to be taking precautionary action in case other side takes offensive action. Such actions can only increase tensions and lead to possibly more dangerous situation. We hope GOI will do all it can to avoid increasing tension.

11. Jha said that it was grave misreading of situation to think that guerrilla activity can be curbed or stopped by GOI in order to limit refugee influx. Large numbers of East Pakistani military personnel de-



fects in March and they will not give up or accept mere civilian administration in East Pakistan. Similarly, bulk of refugees will not go back if there is no fighting, but only if there is truly Bengali government. Jha noted that Hindu refugee flow threatened India's entire secular policy. This was far more serious than question of whether fighting a bad thing. If that were to happen, it could be even more disastrous than conflict with Pakistan. GOI was committed, however, to avoid fighting and had tried to maintain degree of propriety in its relations with GOP. Rasgotra noted that cause of refugee exodus was systematic Pakistani campaign to evict Hindus. There was nothing GOI or guerrillas could do to stop this exodus.

12. Conversation then turned to question of numbers of refugees. Under Secretary noted GOP claim of two million. All of our plans had been based on GOI figure of 8 million. It would be very helpful for us in dealing with Congress if we could have independent system or count by UN team. Such a count would probably come out with recognition of excellent job done by GOI. Jha replied that GOI had kept careful register of refugees and if anything figures were under-estimates. If purpose of verification was to carry weight with Congress, he thought Chairman of Refugee Subcommittee<sup>2</sup> who had recently visited India might be more helpful. Jha said GOI was not asking Congress for money and he concerned that USG felt Pak figures somehow more credible. Williams said what we had in mind was to have UNHCR representative review basis on which GOI counts refugees. This would be helpful in preparing estimates of how refugee burden affects development program. There is a feeling that GOI figures might perhaps be somewhat high and since we do not understand GOI procedures it would be useful if UNHCR could evaluate them.

13. Williams noted that in consortium operation World Bank had frequently carried out assessment of Indian economic performance and had sent teams to India. Jha said that consortium review had never been designed to question basis for GOI statistics. Getting satisfactory proof of numbers of refugees is irrelevant exercise if it is merely designed to keep foreign legislatures happy. There is no point at all in engaging in statistical exercise for this purpose. Until now level of aid from world as a whole only a fraction of what India has done. Principal constraint on contributions has not been lack of information about magnitude of problem but domestic preoccupations in donor countries. Unless USG proposal was part of new approach designed to mobilize massive international aid, there would be no point in counting exercise. Williams said we hoped larger international effort could be undertaken. Under

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<sup>2</sup> Senator Edward Kennedy.

Secretary Irwin said he hoped USG proposal would be considered not as questioning of Indian estimates but in context of total development program which India faces. Jha reiterated that from his point of view verification of national data had never been international responsibility. Evaluation and appraisal, yes; but verification, no. This would be a wholly new chapter for UN.

14. Rasgotra noted that UN seemed to be mounting major programs in East Pakistan but had not done much in India. Van Hollen replied that this reflected different attitudes of GOI and GOP on this issue. He pointed out that since May, GOP had accepted substantial UN relief programs and personnel, whereas on Indian side there had been only a limited UN presence in New Delhi and apparent GOI disinterest in major UN activity in Eastern India. Williams noted that what we sought was common assessment in order to give us basis for providing resources. This was the way we had always operated in the past. Jha said if there were going to be a major international commitment to support of refugees on scale commensurate with problem, then clearly there would need to be discussion between administering agency and GOI on what was needed; but if it merely a matter of token contributions then dialogue on this subject would not be necessary. Under Secretary concluded by saying he had noted Jha's strong reaction to proposal for UN counting. We had made proposal because we considered it as step which could be helpful in supporting India's case in Congress.

**Rogers**

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

Washington, September 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation in South Asia

We have recently received a series of related reports suggesting that relations between India and Pakistan could again be moving to-

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<sup>1</sup>Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 641, Country Files, Middle East, South Asia, Vol. II, Jan–Oct 1971. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information. Kissinger initialed the memorandum indicating he read it.

ward a flash point. The evidence is still highly circumstantial, but there is enough at least to warrant increased concern.

### *New Developments*

As you know, both the Indians and the Pakistanis have in recent weeks been taking increased measures of military preparedness. In some cases, these surpass those made before the war in 1965. Forces on both sides are now at a high state of alert, and other related measures have been taken against the contingency of the outbreak of war.

The most recent, and most worrisome, report is that units of India's armored division and an independent armored brigade have begun moving from the interior toward the border with West Pakistan, opposite Lahore. This move reportedly is intended to signal the Pakistanis that New Delhi is prepared to meet and deal with any Pakistani incursion and to discourage any thoughts Islamabad may have that a pre-emptive strike against India could succeed. It could also, however, lead the Paks to believe that the Indians are preparing to attack and stimulate some drastic reaction, perhaps along the cease-fire line in Kashmir.

The Indians also seem to be stepping up the pace on the political front. As you know, they apparently played a guiding role in the recent formation of a multi-party Bangla Desh "National Liberation Front" which is to function as an overall steering committee. The Front includes—among others—pro-Moscow Communists, who knowledgeable sources believe were brought in at Indian and Soviet insistence. At a minimum, it broadens the base of the Bangla Desh movement and strengthens the hand of the leftist hardliners against the remaining pro-West moderates. In a related move, T.N. Kaul is being publicly quoted as saying India will recognize Bangla Desh "very soon," and in private Kaul and other major foreign policy advisors to Mrs. Gandhi are reported to be talking about the inevitability of war.

There may also be a degree of Indian coordination with the Soviets on bringing pressure to bear on Pakistan. Gromyko, for instance, recently issued a stern warning to Sultan Khan to refrain from any kind of hostilities or use of arms but offered no solution to Pakistan's problems. As you know, Mrs. Gandhi plans to travel to Moscow for a visit toward the end of the month, possibly to assess Soviet reactions and support.

It is difficult to say exactly what this situation adds up to. Most observers doubt that the Indians are preparing to initiate a direct attack on either East or West Pakistan. Many of the moves taken could be viewed as defensive moves against the possibility of attack. It is possible, however, and there have been persistent rumors that the Indians are planning to increase significantly their support to Bengali insurgents, perhaps even involving the use of Indian "volunteers." This

could involve an attempt to capture some of the more isolated border areas in northwest East Pakistan and establish the Bangla Desh "government" there. Now would be about the right time to begin preparing for the likely Pakistani reaction by moving armour up to the Western Front if the operation in the East were to begin in early October. The rains in East Pakistan will be ending soon, and the area will by early October be more conducive to military operations.

At a minimum, it appears that the level of tension and the danger of war, at least by accident, has increased another notch in recent weeks. War may not yet be inevitable, but there is a certain grave sense of inevitability hovering over the subcontinent and influencing actions on both sides. Under these conditions and with tensions running so high, events can gain a momentum of their own and lead to a war that no one really wants but all are willing to fight out of fear of losing if they do not mobilize and go on the offensive.

#### *What Can We Do*

It seems to us the framework for policy-making falls into two parts:

—Contingency planning can now be sharpened somewhat by attempting a more refined estimate of the ways in which hostilities might begin. CIA/ONE is drafting a memo which covers these points. That done, we can draw together the papers already done.

—Further diplomatic steps in the longer term, of course, lead to the President's talk with Mrs. Gandhi if the situation holds that long. But there is the more immediate question of what more should be done in the immediate future. State is producing a paper on this, and I shall send you a separate memo. Secretary Rogers' talk with Gromyko will come a couple of days before Mrs. Gandhi is in Moscow.

149. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General in Calcutta<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 18, 1971, 1738Z.

172246. Ref: Calcutta 2513, 2510.<sup>2</sup>

1. As Calcutta has noted, Qaiyum's reluctance or inability produce Bangla Desh "Foreign Minister" Mushtaq Ahmed for meeting indicates considerable cooling Mushtaq's initiative. While there may be many reasons for this development, point for us seems to be that we should not seek to lead unwilling BD reps into negotiation.

2. At this time, we see little merit in Qaiyum's alternative suggestion of meeting with "Prime Minister" Tajuddin Ahmed or with "Acting President" Nazrul Islam who were presumably not instigators of Mushtaq's initiative. You should, therefore, avoid giving Qaiyum any encouragement that you wish to see these BD reps. If, however, he should on his own produce appointment with one or both, hold option open and report soonest so that Dept can consider what, if any, use might be made of such contacts.

3. We do, however, see point in continuing to seek meeting with Mushtaq if for no other reason than to verify whether Qaiyum's reporting of Mushtaq's earlier and current positions has been accurate. Dept, therefore, suggests you continue discreetly seek contact with Mushtaq via any appropriate channel available to you (given Qaiyum's increasingly emotional and seemingly erratic outbursts, it may be well

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Constable on September 16; cleared by Laingen, Schneider, Van Hollen, Sisco, and Saunders; and approved by Irwin. Repeated to Islamabad, London, New Delhi, and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 2510 from Calcutta, September 15, reported on a September 14 meeting between a political officer of the Consulate General and Bangladesh representative Qaiyum. According to Qaiyum, Foreign Minister Mushtaq Ahmed had discussed with the Bangladesh Cabinet a proposed meeting between Mushtaq and the political officer. The Cabinet questioned the purpose of the meeting, and Mushtaq asked Qaiyum to find out why the political officer wanted to speak to him. The political officer replied that he had been instructed to discuss the Bangladesh position directly with Mushtaq, and "implied that he might subsequently have something to say to FonMin." Qaiyum said he would stress the importance of such a meeting, and, if Mushtaq remained reluctant to meet, he would approach Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed or Acting President Islam to take his place.

On September 16 the political officer met with Qaiyum again. Qaiyum said that Mushtaq was still questioning the need for a personal meeting, but wanted to know what would be discussed if the meeting did take place. The officer replied that he was prepared to listen to anything Mushtaq wanted to discuss. (Telegram 2513 from Calcutta, September 16; both *ibid.*)

to avoid pursuing contact through him). You should, however, continue to be cautious in avoiding implication we have "important" message to pass Mushtaq lest latter seek hold out for higher level meeting there or elsewhere, e.g., as part of visit to UNGA, New York. Should meeting with Mushtaq take place, believe you should pass on indication of President Yahya's interest in negotiation, whether or not Mushtaq verifies past BD interest in negotiation.

Irwin

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**150. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General in Calcutta<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 21, 1971, 2347Z.

173942. Subject: Contact with Bangla Desh Reps. Ref: Calcutta 2527,<sup>2</sup> State 172246.<sup>3</sup>

1. In view of fact no USG official has yet had contact with any member political leadership of BD, PolOff authorized meet with BD "Acting President" Nazrul Islam. We see meeting as means: (a) to establish whether any interest in BD "govt" in negotiated settlement at this stage; (b) to learn what are current negotiating demands of BD reps and (c) to inform Nazrul Islam, and through him BD cabinet, that we have already passed on to Pres. Yahya word of possible BD interest in negotiation and that latter's reaction was one of interest.<sup>4</sup>

2. We believe it is important at this stage that high level official in BD govt be at least aware there has been expression of interest in ne-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Constable; cleared by Laingen, Schneider, Van Hollen, Sisco, and Saunders; and approved by Irwin. Repeated to New Delhi, Islamabad, Dacca, and London.

<sup>2</sup> On September 20 the Consulate General in Calcutta reported that the Bangladesh leadership in the city were divided over whether to meet with representatives of the U.S. Government. Qaiyum sent word through a messenger that, while Mushtaq Ahmed and Tajuddin Ahmed were not interested in such a meeting, Acting President Nazrul Islam was "keen" to meet with a political officer of the Consulate General. (Telegram 2527 from Calcutta, September 20; *ibid.*)

<sup>3</sup> Document 149.

<sup>4</sup> Yahya reiterated his interest on September 21. (Telegram 9582 from Islamabad, September 21; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep-Oct 1971)

gotiated settlement on part of Yahya govt. You should, of course, continue to take stance that we are neither proposing negotiations nor taking any part other than that of messenger. In this role, you may if occasion warrants offer to pass any BD message on negotiation or reaction to your information on Yahya's position back to President Yahya.

3. You should also use opportunity of meeting to urge BD "govt" and Mukti Bahini to respect UN relief operations in East Pakistan as per State 165031.<sup>5</sup>

4. Dept believes it would be useful, if opportunity arises in meeting with Nazrul Islam, determine if there is channel other than Qaiyum to Nazrul and BD cabinet.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> An instruction to this effect was transmitted on September 8 to Calcutta in telegram 165031. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

<sup>6</sup> Printed from an unsigned copy. A week after receiving this instruction, the Consulate General indicated that it was "stymied" in its efforts to arrange a meeting with Islam. The only channel to Islam remained through Qaiyum. Qaiyum sent a message that Islam was still keen to talk to a political officer but was seeking permission from the Indian Government to do so. (Telegram 2570 from Calcutta, September 28; *ibid.*)

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## 151. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi, September 25, 1971, 1530Z.

15268. Subj: Indo-U.S. Relations in Indian Public Arena: There's No Place To Go But Up.

1. Summary. During previous troughs in Indo-U.S. relations, American officials and private Americans caring about health of Indo-U.S. relations frequently comforted selves that while government-to-government relations temporarily low, there such substantial bedrock of goodwill for America among Indian people, equilibrium bound to be re-established in time, almost as law of nature. Most competent Indian and foreign observers today agree with Senator Percy's comment in August 9 *Indian Express* that Indo-U.S. relations at "all-time low." What makes present crisis in confidence particularly important and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–US. Limited Official Use. Repeated to Islamabad, London, USUN, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and Dacca.

disturbing is accumulating evidence that old easy-going assumption about unshakableness of Indians' private fondness for America is outdated, and that events of past six-months have seriously drawn down fund of goodwill. Recognizing that during this period there have been, as always, some Indian officials, media representatives, and other influential intelligentsia working overtime to place U.S. policies in worst possible light, fact is that even after American spokesmen's careful, cogent explanations of those policies, vast majority of Indians who have commented, including many old friends, profess confusion about American purposes in South Asia and chagrin about American actions. Single most damaging factors during past spring and summer, from which most other specific criticisms of U.S. derive, concern military sales: (a) U.S. decision not to ban all military shipments to Pakistan upon outbreak hostilities East Bengal, and (b) subsequent public fuzzing of specifics of military sales program, resulting in serious questions about U.S. credibility across broad range of foreign policy/defense issues. End summary.

2. Recent letter to me from Gandhian friend of U.S. suggesting Mrs. Gandhi's visit to U.S. good time for U.S. and Indian officials to assess what respective peoples think of each other, has prompted me to review public indicators of Indian views toward U.S. over past six-months. Our depressing conclusion is these months have seen injection into Indo-U.S. equation of Indian public bitterness which will not be easily erased. Unlike earlier storms in our relationship, at level of public consciousness, suspicion and hostility are broad, deep, and on present evidence, durable. We note following indicators:

(A) Ambassador's Mail. Volume extremely heavy since beginning East Pakistan crisis. Includes playwrights, journalists, professors, school teachers, lawyers, businessmen and common people—many of whom say they have not previously written Ambassador of any country. Themes have become all too familiar: (i) desire to create South Asia power balance causes U.S. to "equate" Indian and Pakistan; (ii) U.S. at worst assisting Yahya to crush democracy (eleven professors of Rajasthan University), at best "silent spectator to genocide" (high school teacher in Bihar); (iii) U.S. "arming" of Pakistan and warming of Sino-U.S. relations has driven isolated India further unto arms of USSR, which may radicalize Indian political process (e.g., leader in history Osmania University, businessman in Kerala, agriculturist in Punjab); (iv) irony of U.S. providing "arms" to Pakistan and assisting refugees who are victims; (v) U.S. gains nothing from its policy in present crisis; sample comment: "What is it America stands to gain by keeping alive flame of torture in subcontinent?"; (vi) some writers profess continued friendship for American people, but contrast administration unfavorably with "land of Washington, Lincoln and Kennedy" (frequent quote). Prominent Delhi advocate, declaring self member of Congress Party



who believes strong Indo-U.S. relations important to India, wrote in mid-August: "Every right-thinking person in India is entitled to know . . . whether American Government places Pakistan's interest above Indian interest . . . I am writing to get clarification so Indian minds are cleared of mist that has developed due to present steps by American Government."

(B) Letters to Editor. Though volume has decreased somewhat past month, hostile letters continue as near daily feature. Themes which have not changed appreciably since beginning are same as those in letters to me. Notably, long-time friends of U.S. have joined critical chorus: (i) G.L. Mehta, former Ambassador to U.S. and life-time President Indo-America society, in letters to *Times of India* and *Indian Express* in late July and early August professed self "outraged by U.S. policy of U.S. administration on arms supply, economic aid to Pakistan . . . if conscience of American nation is alive, it must realize what grievous wrong is being done through present policy its government"; (ii) J.J. Singh, resident of U.S. nearly four decades as head of India–America League has written several letters, including one to *Times of India* August 4 re alleged U.S. "insistence" GOI accept UN observers—"same old pernicious game of equating India and Pakistan . . . (also) Machiavellian scheme to make Mukti Bahini unpopular in eyes of world. Let Mr. Nixon and others of his ilk rest assured freedom fighters of Bangla Desh . . . will not be awed by scowls of big powers." Others have written: (i) (U.S.) "short-term national objectives being pursued in utter disregard of values cherished by civilized society." (*Hindustan Times* July 8); and (ii) American Government . . . could not but be expected to support venture of death and destruction by Pakistan." (*Times of India* September 2).

(C) Editorials. Since Embassy and USINFO have reported in detail all significant editorials, and since themes much same as in correspondence noted above, will not repeat substance here. However, would highlight that: (i) editorial and analytical comment on East Pakistan crisis remains heavy in most papers, with U.S. strong secondary villain. More broadly, almost every editorial appearing on fast-changing power relationships in Asia suggests U.S. has committed itself to side of Pakistan and China, India's putative enemies; and (ii) edits [editorials] critical of U.S. appear in vernacular and English papers widely divergent political/ideological orientations throughout country. Notable, for example, that *Indian Express*, largest chain in India, which considered by Indians as rightist and normally pro-American, has been leading pack in shrill anti-U.S. diatribes.

(D) Treatment of News. Suspicion of American motives has, since beginning of crisis, been reflected in ways news stories written and headlined. Normal Indian journalistic tendency to sandwich speculation with straight news has become more pronounced. This particularly

evident in reports on alleged U.S. views/efforts on such issues as U.N. observers in India and Pakistan, relief assistance in East Pakistan, and AID Pakistan Consortium meeting. Illustrative of insinuating headlines are these from *Statesman*, which probably has been least hostile to U.S.: (i) September 17 headline "UK Sends Relief Boats to India, USA to Pakistan," over Geneva datelined report of British and U.S. efforts to assist food distribution in waterlogged East and West Bengal; and (ii) September 10 headline, "Aid to Pakistan Without Curbs—Rogers' Appeal To Congress," over item reporting Secretary's Congressional testimony designed to obtain unfettered aid legislation which would assure greater funds for Bengali relief assistance in both India and Pakistan.

(E) Returns from Indian Institute of Public Opinion poll reported New Delhi 14579.<sup>2</sup> Poll indicates dramatic decline past year in U.S. prestige in India.

(F) Private comments of Indian officials, citizens, friendly diplomats. Unlike previous Indo-U.S. contretemps, mission officers have during present one heard no expressions of private understanding or support for relevant U.S. policies. Friendliest thing that has been said (e.g., Congress M.P. R.P. Sinha, and some of less shrill MEA officials) is that U.S. attempt to push GOP into constructive actions in East Pakistan by maintaining dialogue proved unavailing and should be abandoned. Many question how arms policy serves U.S. interest. Ranking officials have generally been tart. Indian Army Commander in Chief characterized U.S. actions as "stupid." Chief Justice of Supreme Court, my close personal friend and long-time admirer of U.S., said at dinner party at residence shortly after signing of Indo-Soviet treaty: "I have always been friend of U.S. and opposed to communism. Now I wonder whether I should review those positions." And so on, across broad social/economic spectrum, as U.S. officials and families traveling throughout India have found. Illustrative is poignant occurrence during recent visit of EmbOff's wife with Indian friend to latter's home on Punjab border with Pakistan. Elderly family retainer, who occupies declining years with daily newspapers, questioned how hostess could bring American to "our home if Americans helping Pakistan prepare for war." Commonwealth and other friendly diplomats return to Delhi from trips across country with sober tales of low esteem in which U.S. currently held.

3. Indians are emotional people who frequently over-react in ways Westerners consider immature. Recognizing this, it is all more important that U.S. policies toward South Asia in time of crisis be examined to ensure that likely emotional/psychological implications for this

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

populous and important country of our actions or inactions carefully understood and factored into policy equation. We suggest that as part of preparation for Mrs. Gandhi's U.S. visit, U.S. officials seized with South Asian problems take new look at policies toward this area with that end in view. As brilliant, articulate, U.S. trained director of MEA's legal division recently pleaded with EmbOff, U.S. policies toward region over next period should be carefully calculated to strengthen forces in India which stand for moderation, reason, and constructive international activity, lest field be preempted by indigenous obscurantist forces who will prey upon average Indian's feeling that India relatively isolated and drive country in unwholesome policy directions in domestic and external security fields.

**Keating**

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**152. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Rawalpindi, September 26, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

In calling Major-General N.A.M. Raza, a veteran soldier as well as an experienced diplomat, back to duty from retirement, I have I think selected a most suitable envoy for Washington. His appointment further emphasises the paramount importance I attach to our relations with your great country. Apart from his distinguished services as our Ambassador in Tehran, Rome and Paris, he served twice as Ambassador in Peking.

2. May I avail myself of this opportunity, Mr. President, to express my very sincere appreciation of the sympathetic understanding and assistance that I have been receiving from you and your Government in over-coming the immense difficulties placed in my path towards restoration of democracy, by the unfortunate crisis in East Pakistan.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking. This letter, and an accompanying 11-page aide-mémoire, were delivered to Kissinger by Ambassador-designate Raza on November 3, the eve of Prime Minister Gandhi's visit to Washington. (Memorandum from NSC Staff Secretary Jeanne Davis to Theodore Eliot, November 4; *ibid.*) The aide-mémoire marshaled Pakistan's case in its dispute with India through November 2. (*Ibid.*) The text of the letter was transmitted to Islamabad on November 6 in telegram 203180. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK)

3. As you know I have been doing everything within my power to put the country back on the rails. However, India with her intransigence, her open hostility and her unabashed support and aid to the miscreants is making my task infinitely more difficult. I earnestly request you to do all you can to dissuade India from this militantly aggressive attitude of hers towards my country. She must be made to realise the serious threat that her present policy is posing towards the peace of this region.

4. Since the announcement of my political programme of 28th June, I have taken various steps to hasten the moment for the redemption of my pledge to transfer power to a civilian Government. As you may have been informed, I have declared general amnesty in East Pakistan and have also appointed a civilian Governor there, who is being assisted by civilian ministers selected from various shades of political opinion. Dates for by-elections in East Pakistan have also been announced. All these steps have evoked a response from political circles and I am hopeful that by the end of the year the major problems would have been resolved. In this process of democratisation your continued personal interest and the support of the United States would be invaluable.

5. With that in view, I would earnestly hope that Ambassador Raza, in whom I repose my fullest trust, would receive your kind cooperation and would have access to you so as to keep you posted on future developments in my country.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

**Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan**

### 153. Memorandum for the President's File<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 29, 1971, 3–4:40 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

President Nixon's Meeting with USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko on September 29, 1971 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:40 p.m. in the Oval Office of the White House (List of participants is attached)<sup>2</sup>

The President opened the conversation by noting that it had been one year since he had last met with the Foreign Minister. Since that time some progress had been achieved in a number of fields, notably in the Berlin problem and in some aspects of arms control. The President thought it would be very useful to get Mr. Gromyko's evaluation of where we stood and what needed to be done now. He would also give the Minister his ideas in order to see how we could get things moving.

Foreign Minister Gromyko suggested that the discussion follow the lines of their talk last year, i.e., that one question after another be taken up with each side expressing their respective views and positions on that question before going on to the next. President Nixon agreed to this procedure.

Mr. Gromyko said that first of all he wanted to carry out the pleasant task of conveying to the President the personal regards of the Soviet leadership, Mr. Brezhnev, Mr. Kosygin and Mr. Podgorny.

[Omitted here is discussion of bilateral relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, SALT negotiations, the European Security Conference, and the Middle East.]

#### *India–Pakistan*

The President raised one other subject which was of serious concern to us now. He believed that Mrs. Indira Gandhi was presently visiting Moscow and she would be visiting here later. He wanted to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 7, Part 1. Secret; Nodis. Prepared by Kissinger. The full text of this memorandum is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971. The conversation was tape recorded, with a slightly different time indicated than that noted on the memorandum. Kissinger's record of the conversation adheres closely to the recording. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among President Nixon, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Secretary of State Rogers, Ambassador Dobrynin, and National Security Assistant Kissinger, September 29, 1971, 3:03–5 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 580–20)

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed. The participants were Nixon, Rogers, Kissinger, Gromyko, and Dobrynin.

strongly emphasize his concern over the possibility that the situation involving East Pakistan, the refugees and Indians, could explode into a conflict. He believed it was in our mutual interest to discourage the Indian Government in every possible way from taking action that could explode into war in that area. Having said that, he would point out that he was aware of the fact that Pakistan was in no position to fight a successful war with India, because it was outnumbered. However, the situation in that area was so fraught with historical hatreds that if the Indians pushed too hard, the other nation might willingly commit suicide. He believed that the Soviet Union had played an important role in keeping the peace in that area in the past and hoped the Soviet Government would do all it could to prevent an outbreak of war in this crisis.

Mr. Gromyko said he had understood what the President had said in regard to American interests in the area and moreover he would say that he was gratified to learn the U.S. did not want to see a clash between India and Pakistan. He could assure the President that the Soviet Government also did not want the conflict to break out into war. Moreover, perhaps the President knew that the Soviet Union had taken steps in the present situation to rule out the possibility of a confrontation. Of course, Pakistan was by far the smaller country, but he would point out that to provoke a conflict one did not necessarily have to have superior size and strength. To do so it would be enough if there was a lack of restraint and insufficient understanding of one's responsibilities. For these reasons, it was Soviet policy to do everything possible to prevent a confrontation and the Soviet Government had said so in its conversations with Mrs. Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister. Mrs. Gandhi had assured the Soviet Government that India would do nothing to precipitate a clash with Pakistan. It was true the Pakistani leaders were conveying the same thoughts to the Soviet Government, but here the Soviets did not have as much confidence as in the case of the Indian leadership. Once again, he was gratified to know that the U.S. was interested in averting a war between those two countries and that it stood on the position of counseling both sides to exercise restraint. If this was so, this was one policy that our two countries had in common. On the whole, he would sum it, that the country that should be restrained first of all was Pakistan, at least this was the conclusion the Soviet Government had come to on the basis of what they had observed. The President said we would need to keep in close touch with each other on this situation.

[Omitted here is discussion of economic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.]

**154. Editorial Note**

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger met at the White House on September 30, 1971, with British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home and Ambassador Cromer and reviewed a number of issues affecting relations between the United States and the United Kingdom. During the course of a discussion of the emerging crisis in South Asia, Douglas-Home pointed up the importance of making contact with the Bangladesh leaders in the interest of developing a basis for a political settlement. Kissinger responded: "We have been in touch with Bangladesh people in Calcutta. And we were trying to set up a meeting between the Bangladesh people and the West Pakistanis outside of India. And we had Yahya's agreement to that. And the Indians have now totally thwarted it. They made it hard for these people to deal with us, they're forcing them to check everything with them, they are padding demands which are totally incapable of fulfillment." Nixon also felt that the Indians were preventing a settlement of the crisis: "they're playing a game here that I think is wrong. I think they're deliberately trying to make it insoluble." Later in the conversation, Kissinger said: "The Bangladesh people are actually quite eager to talk." "At first, they were willing to settle for autonomy, and as we all know autonomy would produce independence, there is no other way it can go. Now the Indians have escalated their demand into total independence immediately." He said that Yahya never would agree to such a demand. "There has to be a face-saving formula and a transition period."

Looking toward his upcoming conversation with Prime Minister Gandhi in November, Nixon suggested that the United States and the United Kingdom exchange information on their talks with her. It was important to do so, he said, so that "she doesn't come in here and, frankly, pull our legs." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among President Nixon, British Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home, Ambassador Cromer, and National Security Assistant Kissinger, September 30, 1971, 4:10–5:31 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 582–9) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 146.

**155. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 30, 1971.

## SUBJECT

South Asian Relief

AID Administrator, Hannah, is proposing a FY 1972 budget amendment of \$250 million to the foreign assistance appropriation for our South Asian relief programs. Mr. Shultz is sending you separately and without a recommendation a memorandum on the pending alternatives. [Tab A]<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Hannah's proposal rests on estimates by Maury Williams following his recent trip to both wings of Pakistan. To allow flexibility, the money would not be designated specifically for use in either Pakistan or India but the plan now is that about \$100 million would be needed in East Pakistan and the rest for East Pakistani refugees in India.

The larger framework is an estimate that total costs in both countries will reach \$1.1 billion this year—\$300 million of that for avoiding famine in East Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> Grant food shipments would amount to about half—\$590 million. Of the remaining need for cash assistance—\$390 million for refugees and \$150 million for East Pakistan—Williams proposes that the US meet about two-thirds of the requirement in Pakistan and about 40% in India.

Mr. Shultz presents three options without recommendation:

—Go to the Congress in two tranches, \$125 million now and possibly another \$125 million early next session. Everyone agrees this buys the worst of all worlds: we would probably end up doing \$250 million but would lose the political impact of doing it.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 641, Country Files, Middle East, South Asia, Vol. II, Jan–Oct 1971. Confidential. Sent for action. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> All brackets in the source text. The memorandum was dated September 30; attached but not printed.

<sup>3</sup> Kissinger and George Shultz discussed the memorandum Shultz was about to forward to the President in a telephone conversation on September 29. Although he was sending his memorandum without a recommendation, Shultz felt that the proposed \$250 million appropriation was "a hell of a lot of money" and a complicated way to get the problem of hunger in East Pakistan "on kind of a limitless basis." Kissinger responded: "Not on a limitless basis but have to prevent Indians from attacking. If there is a flow of refugees, we will have another Southeast Asia war." (Notes of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 369, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)



—Go for \$200 million now rather than the \$250 million recommended. Williams could live with this, but what this would do is remove all contingency cushion for an increase in the number of refugees or a breakdown in the distribution system in East Pakistan.

—Go for the whole \$250 million as recommended by Williams.

Mr. Shultz's concern, understandably, is the budget impact of a program of this size. In those terms, the real choice is between going ahead with \$250 million and doing something very little. It might be possible to shave \$50 million from the \$250 million if that would help, but the overall problem is so large that one could argue that the \$50 million saved would not be that significant and that if we are going to pursue an all-out effort to avert famine and war, it should be done right. On balance, I recommend \$250 million, but point out that you have a real alternative of \$200 million.

If you approve this program, I strongly recommend the attached statement for release when the appropriations request is transmitted to Congress. Senator Kennedy has begun hearings on the refugee issue. Maury Williams will testify Monday (October 4). If you wished to make such a statement, optimum timing would seem to be Friday.<sup>4</sup> Williams would then be in a strong position to defend a record that is already sound and a plan that had been announced and submitted to the Congress. Since only your press conference comment is on the record on this issue, I feel this statement would be a good idea. It would be released on a natural occasion and directed exclusively at a humanitarian problem. [Tab B]<sup>5</sup>

*Recommendations:*

1. That you approve a program of \$250 million to be submitted to the Congress tomorrow. [Tab A]

Approve \$250 million<sup>6</sup>

Approve \$200 million

2. That you approve the attached statement for release tomorrow. [Text cleared with Mr. Price. Tab B]

Approve<sup>6</sup>

Other

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<sup>4</sup> October 1.

<sup>5</sup> The attached draft statement was released to the press on October 1 in Key Biscayne, Florida, where the President was visiting. The statement pointed to the danger of famine and war in South Asia. The President called upon the Congress to add \$150 million to the \$100 million approved by the House of Representatives in August to provide a total of \$250 million in additional funds under the Foreign Assistance Act for humanitarian relief and refugee rehabilitation. (*Public Papers: Nixon 1971*, pp. 1017–1018)

<sup>6</sup> Nixon initialed this option.

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**156. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

New York, October 2, 1971, 1422Z.

Secto 02/3063. Subject: Discussion Between Secretary and FonMin Swaran Singh (India)—Bangla Desh—GOP Negotiations.

1. Summary: During conversation between Secretary and Indian FonMin Swaran Singh, Assistant Secretary Sisco reviewed recent discussion with Ambassador Jha in which he urged India to use influence with Bangla Desh reps to start dialogue with GOP.<sup>2</sup> Swaran Singh replied that GOI does not have influence with Bangla Desh which has independent source of finance and is critical of GOI for its failure to recognize Bangla Desh. Said this did not mean India did not want dialogue.

2. Secretary urged GOI initiate dialogue without insisting upon Mujib's participation to see what could be accomplished. Swaran Singh replied that US has contacts with Bangla Desh people. It has greater influence, it should try bring about dialogue. Secretary concluded US would do what it could with GOP to get talks with Bangla Desh reps started. Said we hoped India could help. End summary.

3. During course of bilateral between Secretary and Indian FonMin Swaran Singh October 1, Assistant Secretary Sisco reviewed his recent discussion with Ambassador Jha in regard to dialogue between Bangla Desh reps and GOP. Taking off from Swaran Singh's emphasis on need for political settlement,<sup>3</sup> Sisco emphasized importance of getting dialogue started and urged Indians not to insist that Mujib be participant. Said in view Indian concern over trend toward extremism

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Also sent to Islamabad, New Delhi, and Calcutta. Secretary Rogers was in New York for the autumn session of the UN General Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> A summary of Sisco's discussion with Jha on September 27 was transmitted to New Delhi on September 29 in telegram 178939. (Ibid., POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>3</sup> Earlier in the conversation Swaran Singh said that an average of 33,000 refugees were crossing from East Pakistan into India every day, exacerbating an already grave situation. He stated that humanitarian efforts to deal with the problem were only a palliative and emphasized that a political settlement was essential. India had no particular solution to propose but felt that the United States should use its leverage with Pakistan to bring about a solution. Rogers agreed on the need for a political settlement but he did not accept Swaran Singh's suggestion that the United States had the necessary leverage to promote a settlement. The United States would do what it could to help with the problem and would provide humanitarian relief, but Rogers said that it was not a U.S. problem and it was wrong for India to look to the United States for a solution. (Telegram 3062 from USUN, October 2; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, October 1-24, 1971)

among guerrillas was it not in India's interest to influence Bangla Desh reps below level Mujib to start talking. Asked isn't this development which would serve interests India, Pakistan, and US?

4. Swaran Singh replied GOI did not have sufficient influence with Bangla Desh. Bangla Desh has independent finances brought out of East Pakistan and collected abroad. Furthermore, it is displeased over India's failure to recognize Bangla Desh. Also Bangla Desh reps would suspect GOI of trying to divide them if Indians suggested leaving aside upper layer of leaders and starting dialogue. It was not that GOI opposed dialogue, but Mujib was important to it.

5. Secretary said dialogue below Mujib would not mean he had been abandoned. Discussion should be started to see what could be accomplished. Swaran Singh replied that US has contacts with Bangla Desh. It could try to start talks since it had greater influence. Secretary repeated that India had greater leverage.

6. Indian Perm. Rep. Sen restated US suggestion saying we proposed lower echelon discussions between Bangla Desh and GOP. Sisco replied there no lack of senior Bangla Desh people, including "foreign minister". He was not proposing discussions between lower echelon people on either side. Said he did not accept FonMin's view that GOI lacked influence with BD. Sisco replied to doubts expressed by Sen regarding GOP willingness to talk and said we have not found any reluctance to open dialogue on part of GOP. Secretary concluded this part of conversation saying we would do what we could with GOP to get talks started with Bangla Desh. He hoped India would help.

**Rogers**

## 157. Analytical Summary Prepared by the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 7, 1971.

### NEXT STEPS IN SOUTH ASIA

The State Department paper at the following tab<sup>2</sup> deals with these subjects: (a) Suggestions for military de-escalation by the regular forces on both sides and diminuation of guerrilla activities; (b) Promoting the beginning of a dialogue between the government of Pakistan and the Bangla Desh leadership; (c) Reducing the flow of refugees and promoting refugee return. Attached to the State Department paper are draft letters to Mrs. Gandhi and to President Yahya incorporating approaches on each of these issues.<sup>3</sup> Each is dealt with separately below with issues identified for discussion.

#### A. Military De-escalation

The State paper proposes urging the Indians to lower the alert status of their forces and to pull back their troops and armor some distance from the border. This would be followed by Presidential letters to both Mrs. Gandhi and President Yahya reiterating the proposal that they pull back their units ten miles from the border. It suggests that border patrolling be carried out by border security and para-military personnel rather than by regular army units. The State proposal then goes on to suggest stressing to India the importance of ending support for guerrilla activities in East Pakistan and to President Yahya an admonition against sabotage against the Indian rail network in Asam and West Bengal.

*There are two issues here: (a) Whether we should propose a pullback of regular units from the border and (b) whether we should again repeat our admonition against a guerrilla war.* It would seem to me that the case for trying to avoid accidental clashes of regular forces is better than the one for simply reiterating our argument against guerrilla war. That is an issue of much greater magnitude and might be dealt with better in

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, India-Pakistan, 10/7/71. Secret; Exdis. No drafting information appears on the summary. Transmitted to Kissinger on October 7 under cover of a memorandum from Samuel Hoskinson and Richard Kennedy that indicated they had prepared it. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Attached was a 10-page undated paper entitled "Next Steps in South Asia" which was transmitted to Kissinger on October 6 under cover of a memorandum from Eliot indicating that the paper had been prepared for the October 7 WSAG meeting.

<sup>3</sup> Copies of the draft letters are attached to a copy of the paper in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK.

a broader context. It would be impossible to police such a mutual pullback, but it is possible that the mere announcement of willingness to execute such a pullback and some movement on the ground might help to reduce tensions somewhat.

### *B. Progress on Negotiations*

The State Department paper judges that the political steps taken so far by President Yahya, which exclude the Awami League, do not provide the basis of a settlement acceptable to the Bangla Desh leadership in Calcutta. To facilitate a political evolution, the paper suggests that “our next step should be designed to promote the beginning of a dialogue between the government of Pakistan and the Bangla Desh leadership.” The paper notes that we have two possible channels—the Government of India and the Bangla Desh representatives in Calcutta and elsewhere. State suggests that we say we believe President Yahya would be receptive to a dialogue. The problem with this is that as far as we know the Bangla Desh leadership only wants to negotiate on the basis of independence and the release of Mujib.

The State paper recognizes that the Indians are only likely to acquiesce in a proposal for pressing the Bangla Desh leadership toward a dialogue if they believe we are prepared to use our influence with Yahya. *So the issue is really whether we want to get into the middle of a dialogue like this where, like in the Arab-Israeli conflict, we will be expected to produce a solution.*

### *C. Refugees*

The State Department paper proposes that we “bring home effectively to the government of India” the need to halt support for cross-border activities which create conditions of insecurity and inhibit the return of refugees and to the Government of Pakistan the need to stop actions against the Hindu minority. State also suggests we need to get the Paks to be more realistic about the refugee figures and encourage the UNHCR to be more active on the Indian side. Finally, it is said that we need to consider ways to promote refugee return, when and if conditions in East Pakistan return to normal.

These are highly sensitive subjects for us to discuss with both India and Pakistan, the very mention of which, if done in the wrong way, can create more problems than it resolves. The Indians, for example, flatly refuse to assume any responsibility for the Bengali insurgents and insist that the root of the problem is in East Pakistan. The Paks claim that they are not harrassing the Hindus in East Pakistan. In both cases, the gap between their words and actions is great but it is very difficult to bridge. Meanwhile, the security situation in East Pakistan is continuing to deteriorate and the refugee flow continues.

## 158. Analytical Summary Prepared by the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 7, 1971.

### POSSIBLE US RESPONSES TO CHINESE MILITARY ACTIONS IN SOUTH ASIA

State's paper<sup>2</sup> assumes that, if hostilities break out between India and Pakistan, China will give some support to Pakistan. They might:

- (1) Give additional military assistance—this action is all but certain.
- (2) Raise the level of tensions on the Sino-Indian border short of provoking incidents—this is highly probable.
- (3) Provoke border incidents in Ladakh or the Northeast Frontier Agency (NEFA)—this also is highly likely.
- (4) Limited invasion of India in Kashmir or NEFA. This is considered unlikely.
- (5) Step up clandestine support of insurgents—this is likely.
- (6) Invasion on several fronts—this is also considered unlikely given traditional Chinese military caution and the improved Indo-Soviet relationship.

#### *Our Response—Objectives*

—Limit the Indo-Pakistan conflict in scope and time in an effort to avoid confrontation between US and Chinese policies.

—Limit Chinese actions to the first two options and work to avoid Chinese involvement directly in hostilities.

—Quick negotiated settlement through the UN or other international mechanism.

—Avoid overreaction to limited Chinese actions which could induce India to move toward ceasefire negotiations.

[*Comment:* Clearly it would be in everyone's interest to see that hostilities are halted as quickly as possible—the sooner the fighting stops, the less likely would be serious Chinese intervention. How we use what leverage we may have with Pakistan or India or with the So-

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, India-Pakistan, 10/7/71. Secret; Exdis. No drafting information appears on the summary. Transmitted to Kissinger on October 7 under cover of a memorandum from Hoskinson and Kennedy that indicated they had prepared it. (Ibid.) The summary is undated; the date used is from the covering memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to an undated 9-page paper entitled "Possible US Responses to Chinese Military Actions in South Asia," that was forwarded to Kissinger on October 6 under cover of a memorandum from Eliot indicating that it had been prepared for the October 7 WSAG meeting. (Ibid.)

viets or Chinese will depend on how the conflict begins—which side initiated hostilities or whether each bore a measure of responsibility.]<sup>3</sup>

*Possible U.S. Actions*

1. *Additional Chinese Military Equipment to Pakistan. If India attacked Pakistan we would:*

- condemn India’s attack,
- cut off economic aid and military sales to India,
- call for Security Council action.

We would not take exception to Chinese military aid, *but* we would not reopen our own military supply.

[*Comment:* This begs the question—if Pakistan is attacked, Pakistan may ask for our help. And if it does, some response beyond our good offices to try to halt the fighting will probably be necessary. Whatever we would do would not be decisive but certainly would be symbolic both to Pakistan and India. A reopening of the military pipeline would suggest to some “great power involvement” but the fact would be that China and the USSR would already be involved to some extent and our own interests vis-à-vis the subcontinent and China are such that we too would be involved.]

*If Pakistan attacked India.* The principal question would be whether we would cut off aid to India. In this case we could use the possible cut off as a lever to get India to press for negotiation while using our own pressure on Pakistan to stop the fighting.

2. *Increase in Border Tension.* We would urge restraint on China and inform them of the efforts we were making with the Indians and others to end the conflict.

[*Comment:* We also could urge the Chinese to use their influence with Pakistan to offer ceasefire/negotiation.]

3. *Provocation of Border Incidents.* These incidents would propose no serious threat *but* might cause an unwanted escalation. We could:

- Warn the Chinese that continuation could affect Sino-American relations.<sup>4</sup>
- Make a public statement deploring Chinese actions, calling on them to desist.

[*Comment:* A public statement would seem to be only a last resort to be avoided if possible. The incidents themselves would likely be ambiguous. A public statement by the U.S. could be counterproductive in

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<sup>3</sup> All brackets in the source text.

<sup>4</sup> Kissinger wrote in the margin at this point: “No”.

hardening Chinese attitudes and making them even less receptive to our good officers.]

If India had attacked Pakistan we would want to make clear that we would not come to India's aid in event of Chinese provoked border incidents.

4. *Limited Invasion.* The paper states that:

—If India had initiated hostilities we should not agree to consult under the Air Defense Agreement<sup>5</sup> or provide military equipment.

—If the fault for beginning hostilities were unclear, we should consider consulting with India and responding positively to Indian requests for assistance, if the invasion threatened critical supply lines or occupation of major portions of India.

—If Pakistan had attacked India we should consult, if asked, under the Air Defense Agreement and be prepared to assist with equipment.

—In any event a Chinese invasion of India probably would call for postponement of the President's trip.

[*Comment:* The role of the Soviets in the case of a Chinese attack on India is not discussed. Obviously Soviets are not only a deterrent to such an attack but also would be likely to take some action to help India. It would seem in our interest to avoid getting involved in a military supply relationship with India in these circumstances.]

5. *Increased Insurgent Activity.* We might consult with Burma and Nepal on ways in which the flow of material, funds and propaganda might be curtailed and inform India that we have done so. We might also warn China of the danger of stepped-up insurgency.

[*Comment:* Before taking any steps we would certainly want to be sure of our ground. The Chinese unquestionably would deny any involvement and efforts by us with Nepal and Burma could be counter-productive in our relationships with China.]

6. *Direct Invasion.* The paper suggests that we would offer political support to Nepal and Bhutan if Chinese move through them. We would call upon China to withdraw, postpone or cancel the President's visit and inform the Chinese that an attack is considered an unfriendly act. The paper also suggests that if India clearly was the aggrieved party vis-à-vis Pakistan, and the Chinese attacked, we would indicate support for India and respond to Indian requests for military equipment.

[*Comment:* Again the Soviet role is ignored. However unlikely this contingency, if it occurred, the Soviets certainly would be expected to

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<sup>5</sup> In the margin Kissinger asked: "What is the Air Defense Agreement?" The Air Defense Agreement between the United States and India was signed in New Delhi on July 9, 1963, by Prime Minister Nehru and Ambassador Galbraith. The text of the agreement was transmitted to the Department on July 10 in telegram 143 from New Delhi. (*Foreign Relations, 1961-1963, vol. XIX, Document 307*)



take some steps quickly. Any meaningful scenario on our side would have to take into account the possible Soviet moves.]

[This paper, hurriedly done by State without interagency participation, is simply inadequate. It raises more questions than it answers. It should be redone on a priority basis by a WSAG Working Group, including NSC, DOD, JCS and CIA.]

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### 159. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 7, 1971, 3:10–3:50 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

India and Pakistan

#### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

U. Alexis Johnson

Christopher Van Hollen

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

NSC Staff

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Harold Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

R/Adm. Robert Welander

James Hackett

#### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

—The State Department is to send a telegram to our Ambassadors in New Delhi, Islamabad, Moscow and Tehran, instructing them to initiate immediate approaches to the local governments at the highest level. In New Delhi and Islamabad, they will urge both Indians and Pakistanis, in the strongest terms, to practice restraint in the current

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret; Exdis; Code-word. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. No drafting information appears on the minutes. A briefer record of the meeting, prepared by James Noyes (DOD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971.

situation. The Soviet Union will be asked to appeal to the Indians for restraint, while the Shah of Iran will be requested to make a similar appeal to Yahya Khan.

—It should be made clear to both the Indian and Pakistani governments that aid will be suspended if war breaks out.

—An inter-agency working group is to be established under the direction of Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson to monitor the India–Pakistan situation and to prepare contingency papers as required.

—No approach is to be made or suggested through the United Nations unless the President grants his approval.

Dr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms) is going to tell us what's going on.

Mr. Helms: I have a current report<sup>2</sup> I would like to read. India and Pakistan continue to make military preparations. Their moves still seem primarily defensive, however. In the west, each army has about 200,000 men near the border. These units are in a high state of readiness. In Pakistan, many have moved to forward positions. India has two infantry divisions and an armored division earmarked for the western front, although all three are still stationed hundreds of miles from the frontier. The armored division has been alerted for movement, but it still appears to be in central India. If India were about to attack, these units almost certainly would move to the front, but it would take them about a week to get there.

The Pakistanis also have two infantry divisions and an armored division in rear areas. They might hold the armored division in place, about 100 miles from the border, but would bring up the other two if they expected war in a matter of days. In the east, the Indians have over 100,000 troops, while the Pakistanis have 70,000 in East Pakistan. The Indians may want to bring up one more division before launching an attack. The Pakistanis claim they are doing this but we have no confirmation. The Pakistanis have their hands full with the guerrillas and are in no shape to start major operations.

War seems most likely to come, as it did in 1965, from a series of miscalculations, but we cannot rule out a deliberate decision by one side or the other. Mrs. Gandhi could still decide to invade East Pakistan to end the refugee influx. The total has passed nine million, with 30,000 more arriving every day.

Dr. Kissinger: Do you believe that? Do you think nine million is an accurate figure?

Mr. Helms: Well, it may not be accurate, but even if it's only seven million, it is still a lot of refugees, with still more coming and practically none returning. In any case, by mid-November Mrs. Gandhi will come

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

under increased pressure to take military measures. Parliament reconvenes then and many members will call for action against Pakistan.

Senior Pakistani officials are convinced that Yahya will launch a pre-emptive attack in the next few weeks. Yahya himself has given the British the impression that he is considering such action, but he has assured our DCM he is not. He may be trying to bring Western pressure on India, or he may think an attack would help by bringing international pressure on both sides.

In East Pakistan, the guerrillas have become more active as the rains taper off. The secessionists and the Indians both want a speedy solution, even at the risk of war, to prevent radical leftist elements from taking over the independence movement. We have reports that up to 100,000 Indian-trained guerrillas will be infiltrated into East Pakistan over the next two months. This force would try to seize an area in northeast East Pakistan where a provisional government could be established. India would then recognize the Bangla Desh, which would almost certainly send the Pakistanis to war.

Mr. Johnson: We have received a separate report which indicates that some 40,000 guerrillas will be infiltrated into East Pakistan by October 15.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Helms: We do have trouble with these figures, but when the weather gets dry they will be infiltrated in numbers, and whether it is 40,000 or 100,000 or something in between, there is no question that there will be a lot of them. The Indians believe that snow and bad weather in the north will keep Pakistan from over-running Kashmir and would hinder Chinese aid to the Pakistanis, and that the guerrillas eventually will be successful in East Pakistan. The civil administration in East Pakistan cannot cope with the enormous social, economic and political problems, and in a few areas the guerrillas have set up their own administrative structure. The Pakistani government has made little headway in winning over the people of East Pakistan, and popular support for the insurgents seems to be increasing.

The secret treason trial of Mujibur Rahman has antagonized the East. A reliable source says he has been sentenced to life imprisonment. Yahya can uphold the sentence, commute it or let the matter lie. His decision will be an indication of how conciliatory he intends to be toward East Pakistan. Production in the East is well below last March. Most workers

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<sup>3</sup> On October 3 Qazi Zahril Qaiyum told one of the political officers at the Consulate General in Calcutta that the Mukti Bahini planned to introduce 40 to 60 thousand men into East Pakistan by the end of October. Forty thousand would be infiltrated by October 15 and the other 20 thousand would follow by the end of the month. (Telegram 2605 from Calcutta, October 5; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

have not returned to their jobs and guerrilla sabotage is a problem. Foreign shipping companies have greatly reduced service, and there is some danger of severe food shortages in parts of the East by November.

Dr. Kissinger: We are indeed fortunate that the Indians are such reasonable and pacific people. Tom (Adm. Moorer), how do you assess the military situation?

Adm. Moorer: The most important factor is that the Indians have a four to one ratio in ground forces. With regard to air forces, the outcome depends in large part on who pre-empt.

Dr. Kissinger: I remember a while back the story of the Indian pilot who crashed near Dacca. The Indians are such poor pilots they can't even get off the ground.

Adm. Moorer: You're right, the Indians can't compete with the Pakistani pilots. The air units of both sides will deteriorate rapidly. The restraints on our aid program have already led the Pakistanis to cannibalize some F-86's in order to keep the rest in the air. After six months of restraints, they would have to do the same with the F-104's. In combat, attrition and a lack of spare parts would wear them down quickly.

Dr. Kissinger: How long would it take? Two or three weeks?

Adm. Moorer: I was about to say four to six weeks, but it could be less. The naval forces don't amount to much. The Indians would undoubtedly try to blockade East Pakistan and probably could do so. The Pakistani Army would give a good account of itself but would fail on the logistics problem. The Indian Army eventually would gain a superior position because of its numerical advantage. They have large numbers on the ground, but then they may consider it necessary to keep five or six divisions on the Chinese border.

Dr. Kissinger: Am I right in understanding that we have no evidence of a Chinese buildup?

Adm. Moorer: You are right. There is no such evidence. The main factor here is that neither side can fight a war of attrition. They should begin running out of supplies in four to six weeks, and India will prevail because of superior numbers.

Mr. Johnson: This is especially true in East Pakistan, where they will have a numerical advantage of regular forces plus the support of the Mukti Bahini.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, Alex [Johnson],<sup>4</sup> where do we stand politically?

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<sup>4</sup> Brackets in the source text.

Mr. Johnson: It's a mess, although there is one new element that is encouraging. The Shah (of Iran) had a meeting with Yahya [Khan] and pressed him strongly to reach a political settlement.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Van Hollen: The Shah urged Yahya to cut his losses, told him frankly that he didn't have a chance in a military showdown and urged him to seek a political settlement.

Mr. Johnson: We have been in touch with the Bangla Desh people and have tried to encourage the development of a dialogue between Bangla Desh and West Pakistan, but they are insisting on complete and unconditional independence immediately.

Dr. Kissinger: You mean that's their starting point.

Mr. Johnson: Yes, their initial position. Mujibur [Rahman]<sup>6</sup> is the key. If Yahya would release Mujibur and make a deal with him . . .

Dr. Kissinger: I think that's inconceivable! Unless Yahya's personality has changed 100% since I saw him in July.

Mr. Johnson: I agree that it's unlikely, but we have had some indications.

Mr. Van Hollen: Ambassador Farland recently proposed to Yahya that he make a deal with Mujibur and what is interesting is that Yahya did not take the usual negative attitude.<sup>7</sup> This may indicate that they [the Pakistanis] are planning to deal with Mujibur, but this is highly speculative, and I think we must assume the contrary until we get more evidence.

Mr. Johnson: With thousands of Bahini being introduced into East Pakistan at the onset of the dry season, Yahya may feel more beleaguered and may become more interested in seeking a settlement. On the other hand, with the end of the monsoon season, Yahya's army will have greater mobility.

Dr. Kissinger: When he was here last week, Gromyko claimed that the Russians are restraining the Indians.<sup>8</sup> Are they doing this? I haven't seen anything on this.

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<sup>5</sup> This meeting was reported in telegram 5655 from Tehran, October 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) Brackets in the source text.

<sup>6</sup> Brackets in the source text.

<sup>7</sup> In telegram 9599 from Islamabad, September 21, Ambassador Farland reported that President Yahya had told him that the secret trial of Sheikh Mujibur had ended and he was awaiting the tribunal's report. Farland asked if Yahya had considered using Mujibur as a "trump card" to restore peace in East Pakistan. Yahya responded that he had given thought to the matter but was unable to formulate a solution that would be acceptable in West Pakistan. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971) Brackets in this paragraph are in the source text.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 153.

Mr. Helms: All our evidence indicates this is true.

Mr. Johnson: I agree with that.

Dr. Kissinger: In what way? I have seen no such information. Are you holding out on me? I don't seem to be getting my copies of cables.

Mr. Helms: Madam Gandhi gave the Soviets a whole list of things she wanted. She asked them to arrange for Mujibur to be the go-between.

Dr. Kissinger: The Indians have great ability for determining the impossible and then demanding it.

Mr. Johnson: The Soviets were quite firm in telling the Indian representatives who went to Moscow<sup>9</sup> that they [the Soviets] would not support Bangla Desh.

Mr. Van Hollen: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

Dr. Kissinger: So you are the one who has been holding back my cables, and I thought all along it was Joe Sisco.

Mr. Helms: [*1½ lines of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Johnson: The Soviets don't want hostilities if they can be avoided.

Dr. Kissinger: When I was in India recently I formed the opinion that if the Indians were prepared to accept slow evolution in Pakistan, we could work effectively with them, and they would eventually get most of what they want. But they keep lumping all these things together; the refugee problem, independence for Bangla Desh, Pakistani forces on their borders. In their convoluted minds they really believe they can give Pakistan a powerful blow from which it won't recover and solve everything at once. If they would cooperate with us we could work with them on 90% of their problems, like releasing Mujibur or attaining some degree of autonomy for Bangla Desh, and these steps would lead eventually to their getting it all.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Indians don't have complete control over the Mukti Bahini. They couldn't stop them all if they wanted to.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Saunders) Weren't you with me when I talked with the [Indian] Army Chief of Staff?<sup>10</sup> He was so cocky, he thought he could defeat everyone in sight, all at the same time. We can't ask them to shut off the guerrillas. It will get us nowhere.

Mr. Van Hollen: We could ask them to try to curb the guerrillas.

Dr. Kissinger: No, that's a non-starter. We can't ask them to cut off aid to the guerrillas. It's an internal affair.

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<sup>9</sup> Reference is to Prime Minister Gandhi's visit to Moscow, September 27–29. Brackets in this paragraph are in the source text.

<sup>10</sup> General Sam H.F.J. Manekshaw. Brackets in the source text.

Mr. Helms: When you fatten up guerrillas they become a different force. They aren't guerrillas any longer.

Dr. Kissinger: Yahya is a slow learner. He is very deliberate, but if you force him to make a decision, his Moslem instinct may assert itself, and perhaps he will start taking rapid action.

Mr. Johnson: You may be right about that.

Dr. Kissinger: When I was in India in 1962, they told me how they were going to squeeze the Pakistanis along the front. They were so clever they got themselves into a war.

Adm. Moorer: If the Indians really want to punish the Pakistanis, they may be ready to go all the way to a break to do it.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's get this completely clear. Do the Indians really understand that we will cut off aid if they go to war?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes, the Secretary (of State) told them that.

Dr. Kissinger: This is of the utmost importance. The Indians must understand that we mean it. The President has said so. In fact, he tells me every day. Are you sure the Indians got the message?

Mr. Van Hollen: I believe so. I will double check, but the Secretary has been seeing them in New York.

Dr. Kissinger: Please make sure. What about Yahya? Does he understand that we will suspend aid if he starts hostilities?

Mr. Van Hollen: [Ambassador]<sup>11</sup> Farland told him that in a conversation just recently, but we can ask Farland to tell him again.

Dr. Kissinger: They [the Pakistanis] should have no illusion on this point.

Mr. Helms: We should make another effort to be sure this is clear. If war breaks out, we will all look back and regret not having made that one extra effort.

Mr. Johnson: It is possible that the Pakistanis may strike out against India because of some minor incursion.

Mr. Packard: I agree, we want to hold them back as much as possible.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Van Hollen) When did the Secretary last see the Indians?

Mr. Van Hollen: The Secretary saw them last week, in New York. He saw Singh [Foreign Minister Swaran Singh].

Dr. Kissinger: How did it go?

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<sup>11</sup> These and remaining brackets are in the source text.

Mr. Van Hollen: It was the usual circular argument, the Indians complaining about attacks on Bengalis and about the Pakistanis generating refugees.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't believe that the Pakistanis are generating refugees. Do you believe it?

Mr. Van Hollen: Oh, yes, it's still going on. Pakistani army or militia units will round up a group of people in reprisal for a guerrilla attack or act of sabotage and threaten to kill them, so they go across the border.

Mr. Packard: But that's at the local level. Those are small local units acting on their own authority. The government is not sanctioning that sort of thing and the military commanders in West Pakistan are opposed to it.

Mr. Van Hollen: That's right. The government in Islamabad is opposed to the generation of more refugees, but they haven't been able to stop local units from doing it.

Dr. Kissinger: We have some contingency papers<sup>12</sup> here, but they are not as good as we can do. The China paper suggests a public admonition to China to desist from aiding Pakistan. I can assure you that that is the least likely thing the President will want to do. He has too much going on his China policy to jeopardize it in this way. And besides, I'm not sure it's a good idea.

Mr. Johnson: We can more usefully engage the Soviets in this matter. Do you think it's worthwhile talking with them about possible restraints on the Indians?

Dr. Kissinger: Alex (Johnson), I'm glad you raised that point, because I want to ask you to set up an inter-agency working group to look at this question. We should have someone approach the Russians, perhaps Gromyko, or whoever you think would be best, you know better about these things, and tell them that this situation (in South Asia) is building to a crisis.

Mr. Van Hollen: We can tell them some of the information we have, let them know we are trying to restrain Yahya and ask them to help do the same with the Indians.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly, we have very parallel interests here. (to Mr. Johnson) Can you get some people together quickly and develop some ideas on how this can be accomplished, say within the next 48 hours?

Mr. Johnson: It just so happens that I have a draft telegram<sup>13</sup> on this subject all ready. I was going to raise it with you.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's see the telegram.

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<sup>12</sup> Reference is to the papers summarized in Documents 157 and 158.

<sup>13</sup> See Document 160.



Mr. Johnson: I have it right here.

Dr. Kissinger: Johnson lets me go through all this discussion and then pulls out a bloody telegram.

Mr. Johnson: This was prepared just last night.

Dr. Kissinger: Who will it go to?

Mr. Johnson: Everyone involved: New Delhi, Islamabad, Moscow and including Tehran.

Dr. Kissinger: When Alec Home was here the other day he said that he had been of the opinion that the Pakistanis were at fault, but now he thinks the Indians are equally guilty. He said he thought that Swaran Singh was the worst of the lot.

Mr. Johnson: Another thought that has occurred to us is the possibility of exploring what might be done on a multilateral basis, perhaps at New York, by getting the Soviets, French and British all involved, with U Thant or someone like that taking the initiative. Any proposal made through such a group would have to be relatively easily balanced. It would have to deal not only with the forces on the borders but also the problem of the refugees.

Mr. Packard: This is a good telegram!

Dr. Kissinger: It's a damn good telegram!

Mr. Johnson: The Secretary will be seeing the head of the Pakistani UN delegation soon.

Dr. Kissinger: What's his name?

Mr. Van Hollen: Mahmoud Ali, he's a kept Bengali.

Dr. Kissinger: In outline, the telegram is excellent. When do you think it should go out?

Mr. Van Hollen: As soon as possible.

Dr. Kissinger: Tonight?

Mr. Van Hollen: The sooner we can get it out the better.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Johnson) In view of that cable that came in from Pakistan earlier today, it may be better to send the Pakistani part as a separate telegram in reply to the incoming.<sup>14</sup> This looks like an abrupt answer.

Mr. Johnson: We can send a separate reply to Pakistan and take into account receipt of the other cable. Perhaps we can also introduce in our reply the idea of proposing Security Council action.

Dr. Kissinger: I would rather leave that idea out at this time.

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<sup>14</sup> The incoming telegram is an apparent reference to a telegram received by the Pakistani Embassy, the substance of which was delivered to Kissinger on October 6. The communication from the Embassy was text of a letter from President Yahya to President Nixon and an accompanying aide-mémoire; see Document 161.

Mr. Johnson: We have had indications that the Pakistanis may be willing to work something out through the UN.

Dr. Kissinger: I didn't think they were all that eager.

Mr. Johnson: I had a little concern that these indications may have been a case of the Pakistanis laying the groundwork for a pre-emptive strike. It was just a hunch on my part.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think they would do it before I've been to China. I just don't think they would do it.

Mr. Johnson: There is no point in getting started on UN action unless there is prior agreement between the Soviets and ourselves. That must be our first step.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think the Pakistanis will launch a pre-emptive strike, but we should not mention any approach through the UN until the President has considered the question.

Mr. Johnson: We want to avoid unilateral action by the Pakistanis in the Security Council. That only means confrontation and would accomplish nothing.

Mr. Van Hollen: Perhaps the US, British, Soviet and French delegations could make a combined presentation in the UN.

Dr. Kissinger: That could be a good approach, as long as it doesn't become a squeeze play on the Pakistanis.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have to squeeze both sides to get any kind of agreement.

Dr. Kissinger: Let me just emphasize that before we get started on any action through the UN, we must go to the President. So this telegram will go out tonight. (to Mr. Saunders) Will you see that it goes out?

Mr. Van Hollen: We'll get the telegram out, and I'll notify Sisco.

Dr. Kissinger: You want to try to get Sisco to quiet things down? So far, I've only seen him stir things up. So, first, we send this telegram and second, we get word to Yahya.

Mr. Van Hollen: We will send instructions to our Chargé in Islamabad to get in touch with Yahya right away.

Dr. Kissinger: And you will do absolutely nothing in New York unless we first go to the President?

Mr. Van Hollen: Right.

Mr. Saunders: Shall we also ask [Ambassador] MacArthur to discuss it with the Shah and appeal to him to raise the issue again with Yahya? A copy of the cable is going to Tehran.

Everyone agreed.

**160. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 8, 1971, 0041Z.

Tosec 100/185010. Subj: Risks of War in Indo-Pak Confrontation.

1. We are deeply concerned over increasing risks of war in current India/Pakistan confrontation over East Pakistan. With upcoming end of monsoon season, reports of movement Indian and Pakistani armor and possibly massive cross-border operations by Mukti Bahini, General Aurora's remarks on possible Indian "positive" action (Calcutta 2617),<sup>2</sup> and persistent reports of possible Pak military attacks across West Pakistan border add up to critical situation where conflict could quickly ensue despite protestations both Islamabad and New Delhi that they do not want war and would [not] be first to initiate hostilities. We believe situation serious enough to require immediate and highest level representations both capitals and concurrent approach to Soviets to exercise their own influence toward some reductions of risks in present military confrontation in South Asia.

2. For New Delhi: Ambassador should seek immediate appointment with Prime Minister Singh to make following points against general expression of concern described above.

A. We have heard reports for some time of possible large-scale cross-border effort by Mukti Bahini to coincide with end monsoon season. We now have specific report (Calcutta 2605<sup>3</sup>—protect source) to effect that Mukti Bahini plans to inject as many as 40,000 armed men across border by October 15, with additional 20,000 to follow by end October. This action reportedly would be accomplished with support of diversionary actions by Indian Army to keep Pak Armed Forces off balance while infiltration took place. We are not convinced that intensified guerrilla activity will achieve results compatible with India's interests.

B. You should make clear to GOI our concern about any MB effort of this dimension which could not be accomplished without support of GOI. It is our concern that Pak Armed Forces would not

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted on October 7 by Laingen and Schneider; cleared in draft by Davies (EUR), Noyes (DOD/ISA), Acting Secretary Johnson, and Saunders; cleared in substance by Jack C. Miklos, Director of the Office of Iran Affairs; and approved by Van Hollen. Also sent to Moscow, New Delhi, Tehran, and USUN for Sisco and repeated to London, Calcutta, and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> Dated October 7. (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 3, Document 159.

acquiesce in this cross-border operation and would make military response directed against India.

C. In short, this situation has large potential for major confrontation and conflict which we must continue to assume India does not see serving its larger interests.

D. We would, therefore, strongly urge that GOI act immediately to reduce these risks by efforts with MB to restrict cross-border operations. While we recognize that major responsibility for maintenance of India-Pak peace rests with GOP, GOI also bears major responsibility keep present situation from deteriorating into war or prolonged insurgency. Should such cross-border operations lead to conflict with Pakistan, this would have serious effect on US-India relations.

E. If dangers of immediate conflict are to be meaningfully reduced, we believe there must be reduction in level of military confrontation by accomplishing both (1) curb by all parties involved in cross-border operations, and (2) pullback by military forces of both India and Pakistan some distance from their respective borders. We make this suggestion in all seriousness to GOI and we are doing same with GOP in Islamabad at highest level.

F. You should point out that we fully recognize major responsibilities resting on Islamabad in current crisis and that we are concurrently informing GOP in strongest terms that it should also avoid actions that could lead to war and, in particular, any form of military action against India. We are also urging GOP to move more rapidly in the political settlement which all recognize is essential if crisis is to be dealt with at its roots. In our view this will require dialogue between GOP and BD leadership which we continue to believe GOI can facilitate.

3. *For Islamabad:* Chargé should seek immediate appointment with Yahya in Karachi, prior latter's departure for Tehran, and make following points in support of effort described above:

A. We have carefully noted assurances given by Yahya to you following Frelinghuysen conversation with Yahya that Pakistan would not be first to initiate hostilities and that it recognized destructive costs to both countries of any conflict developing out of present crisis.<sup>4</sup>

B. Nonetheless, we remain deeply concerned that present situation has elements in it that could cause conflict to break out despite best intentions both sides. We continue to hear reports of strong Pakistan military buildup along West Pak border where opposing forces

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<sup>4</sup> This exchange between President Yahya and Congressman Peter Frelinghuysen (R-New Jersey) took place on September 30. (Situation report on India/Pakistan from Eliot to Kissinger, October 7; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

already virtually face-to-face. For instance, we have very recent report of actual small skirmishes taking place in late Sept along West Pak border. While we recognize GOP responsibility to prepare its own defense, GOP must appreciate better than anyone else cost to Pakistan, both in resources and its standing in world public opinion should GOP be seen to have initiated hostilities. We have also heard report that in response Indian supported cross-border guerrilla attack in East Pakistan, GOP might take military action against India. FYI: We note in this connection conversation between French Amb Islamabad and Pak FonSec reported State 183252<sup>5</sup> that GOP would regard as *casus belli* any action by Indians that would permit MB to make successful attack in separate areas East Pak border with objective holding East Pak territory. We are especially concerned over possibility noted Islamabad 913<sup>6</sup> that Pakistanis planning attack across West Pak borders between Oct 15–Nov 1. End FYI.

C. While we recognize that major responsibility for degree of military confrontation along East Pak borders rests with Indians, we believe GOP must share responsibility for reducing risks of conflict in that area. Any military action initiated by Pakistan directed against India would have an adverse effect upon our relationship and would affect our ability to continue to be of assistance to Pakistan.

D. You should tell Yahya that we fully recognize major responsibilities resting on New Delhi in current crisis and that we are taking strongest position with GOI that it should restrict cross-border operations by MB.

E. Given dangers for conflict that are present along both East and West Pak borders in simple fact of present face-to-face confrontation by military units along borders, we are also proposing to both GOI and GOP that they consider mutual withdrawal of troops and armor some distance from their respective borders. We believe this kind of mutual effort should be feasible in military terms for both sides without detriment to their military preparedness and would be positive and constructive step toward beginning de-escalation present crisis.

F. Finally, however, you should make clear to Yahya that we continue to believe that the only long-term resolution of current danger can be found through progress toward political solution and accommodation in East Pakistan. We know Yahya recognizes this imperative and has begun taking actions toward this end. Yahya knows we have been fully understanding of his problems in this area and we do not propose in any way to make these problems worse by gratuitous or

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<sup>5</sup> Dated October 6. (Ibid., POL 32-1 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>6</sup> The telegram citation is inaccurate and has not been further identified.

unhelpful suggestions in area which is internal Pak matter. He will understand, however, that current risks of military hostilities in South Asia plus major international problem posed by refugees make this crisis an international issue in which all friends both countries have deep concern. It is for this reason that we express again strongest hope USG that GOP can find ways move even more rapidly toward political settlement facilitated by direct discussions with elected East Pakistan leaders. We recognize difficulty doing this in insurgency atmosphere but latter in our view makes progress in political area only more imperative and urgent.<sup>7</sup>

4. *For Moscow:* We continue to assume, particularly in light reports from both Moscow and New Delhi assessing Mrs. Gandhi's visit Moscow, that we and Soviet Union have strongly shared interest in reducing risks of conflict in present South Asian crisis. Ambassador requested, therefore, to seek earliest opportunity convey our current concerns to Gromyko if possible or to highest available M.F.A. official. Ambassador should inform USSR of approaches we are making including proposal for mutual withdrawal regular forces along Indo-Pak borders, and urge USSR act in ways open to them help accomplish both immediate requirement of reduction in military confrontation and longer term objective of political solution East Pakistan. Ambassador should also seek Soviet assessment of situation, particularly in light of recent Soviet contacts with Indians.

5. *For Tehran:* Ambassador should see Shah soonest to inform him of our concerns re dangers inherent in current situation and our approaches to Pakistanis, Indians, and Soviets as stated above. Ambassador should also solicit Shah's continued support in our common effort to damp down situation and obtain political settlement. If Shah unavailable Ambassador should pass message through Alam. In your conversation with Shah or Alam you should avoid any detailed specific reference to prospect of more than 40,000 Mukti Bahini crossing border this month (Para 2A above).

6. *For Islamabad:* Additional instructions being forwarded septel.<sup>8</sup>

**Johnson**

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<sup>7</sup> Chargé Sober responded on October 9 that he had a meeting scheduled with Yahya on October 11 and he would make the points put forward in the Department's instruction at that time. He anticipated that the proposal for a mutual force withdrawal would present difficulties for Yahya, at least with regard to East Pakistan. (Telegram 10262 from Islamabad; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)

<sup>8</sup> See Document 161.

**161. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 8, 1971, 0044Z.

Tosec 101/185011. Eyes Only Chargé. Ref: 185010.<sup>2</sup> Subject: Letter from President Yahya.

Following is text of letter from President Yahya to President Nixon, and accompanying aide mémoire, delivered to Dr. Kissinger October 6 by Pakistan MFA Additional Secretary Alvie:

*Begin text of letter.*

Mr. President,

Persistent intervention in my country's internal affairs by India, its refusal to resolve the humanitarian problem of the displaced persons with the help and assistance of the United Nations as originally proposed by Dr. Kissinger during his talks with me last July, later formally proposed by U Thant, and promptly accepted by us, and the increasing violations of Pakistan's borders by the Indian Armed Forces, have created a warlike situation between Pakistan and India.

Moreover, all available evidence indicates that Indian Armed Forces have been put in a state of readiness and moved to forward positions for offensive action at short notice against our frontiers in both the wings.<sup>3</sup>

In these circumstances, and because India has rejected the United Nations observers and good offices, the present situation in the India-Pakistan sub-continent constitutes a threat to international peace and security and an armed conflict between the two countries is likely to erupt if it is not brought under control immediately. It, therefore, appears appropriate that the United Nations Security Council should consider this matter in order to avert in time the impending blood-shed and destruction.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Priority; Nodis. Drafted by Van Hollen on October 7, cleared by Saunders and Acting Secretary Johnson, and approved for transmission by Van Hollen. Also sent to USUN for Sisco.

<sup>2</sup> Document 160.

<sup>3</sup> An intelligence appreciation prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, based upon military intelligence, and sent by Eliot to Kissinger under a covering memorandum on October 6, concluded: "(a) military preparations are approaching a stage at which a major clash could occur through miscalculations or misinterpretations, (b) tensions have reached a point at which a major clash, however sparked, might prove uncontainable, and (c) present Indian and Pakistani intentions to avoid war could be suddenly overridden by new developments." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA-PAK)

In our discussions with the Russians in Moscow last month, they conveyed assurances that India would not start a conflict and added that they were exercising restraining influence on India. Unfortunately, the facts are quite different. The bulk of Indian Forces have moved in operational positions against our borders after the signing of Indo-Soviet Treaty and there has also been a marked increase in shelling and raids on our territory since then. Apparently, the Indians are either not amenable to Soviet advice or are deliberately misleading them.

Confident of the friendship between our two countries and your personal concern for peace in the region, I would request that the United States Government extend the necessary help and assistance to my country in this grave hour with a view to facilitating an urgent consideration of the situation by the Security Council and for a constructive decision and positive action by it.

In case, Mr. President, you deem that some other course of international action at this stage would be more helpful, I shall be grateful to be apprised of it. It only remains for me to assure you that we repose the utmost confidence in your judgement.

With warm personal regards. *End text.*

*Begin text of aide mémoire.*

Pakistan is considering to call a meeting of the Security Council to consider serious threat to peace in the sub-continent arising from India's open and mounting interference in Pakistan's internal affairs and ever-increasing Indian military activities on Pakistan's borders. In view of special relations existing with the United States and particularly with President Nixon President Yahya Khan wishes to apprise President Nixon of his intention so as to seek American support and influence in the Security Council.

India continues to refuse to resolve the humanitarian problem of the displaced persons with the help and assistance of the United Nations as originally proposed by Dr. Kissinger himself and later formally proposed by U Thant and accepted by Pakistan. A war-like situation has thus developed between Pakistan and India. Despite assurances of restraining influence on India, the Indo-Soviet Treaty seems to have further emboldened India in her aggressive and bellicose designs against Pakistan. In fact Indian forces have moved into operational position after the signing of the Indo-Soviet treaty. President Yahya Khan wishes to request President Nixon for full American support and assistance to Pakistan in the urgent consideration of the situation by the Security Council and for a constructive decision and positive action by it. President Yahya Khan would be grateful to know any other course of international action which President Nixon may consider helpful. President Yahya Khan has the utmost confidence in President Nixon's



judgement. Since the matter is of utmost urgency, President Yahya Khan will appreciate a reply to his enclosed message. *End text.*

2. In carrying out instructions reftel you should also inform Yahya that his letter has been delivered to President Nixon and that reply will be forthcoming shortly.<sup>4</sup> FYI. In preliminary comment Kissinger suggested there might be problems in unilateral Pakistan call for Security Council meeting but noted (per last para aide mémoire) that other courses of action might be helpful. See also Secretary's conversation with Mahmood Ali reported septel.<sup>5</sup> End FYI.

**Johnson**

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<sup>4</sup> When Sober met with President Yahya in Karachi on October 11, he told Yahya that his letter suggesting the possibility of calling the UN Security Council into session had been delivered to President Nixon and was being carefully studied. Sober said there was a concern in Washington that a discussion in the Security Council might generate a good deal of emotion, fail to achieve anything constructive, and thus serve to further polarize the situation. There was the additional concern that India would broaden the discussion to include the entire range of problems affecting relations between India and Pakistan. Yahya expressed appreciation for the advance indication of the U.S. response to his suggestion and indicated that he would be governed accordingly. (Telegram 2030 from Karachi, October 11; *ibid.*, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 3369 from USUN, October 9, reported on Secretary Rogers' conversation on October 7 with Mahmud Ali, head of Pakistan's delegation to the UN General Assembly. Ali gave Rogers a copy of the letter delivered to President Nixon the day before. Rogers promised to study the letter but warned against the risk of an unproductive Security Council debate. Ali outlined what his country viewed as the Indian threat to Pakistan, and Rogers indicated the efforts the United States had made with India and the USSR to caution restraint. (*Ibid.*, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK/UN)

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## 162. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 8, 1971, 4:11–4:58 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

Indian Ambassador L.K. Jha  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting was held at the Ambassador's request to discuss arrangements for Prime Minister Gandhi's forthcoming visit.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office in the White House.

The Ambassador began the conversation by discussing the visit. He said he noticed that there had been some coolness on the part of the Protocol people, and he wanted to make sure the Prime Minister would receive a cordial visit. Dr. Kissinger replied that he could assure him that there would be a cordial reception. He then telephoned Ambassador Mosbacher<sup>2</sup> in his presence to make sure that Ambassador Jha heard Dr. Kissinger give instructions about the need for Grade-A treatment.

Ambassador Jha then returned to the subject of a conversation he had had with Dr. Kissinger some weeks previously, when Dr. Kissinger had mentioned the need to have a year's interval for a political settlement. Jha said that that year simply did not exist, and that India would be forced into some military action by the end of this year. The ten million refugees in Bengal would break the political cohesion of India; they were all Bengalis and did not leave Bengal, and in Bengal they would tip the balance of power totally in a Maoist direction. Finally, the financial cost would be more bankrupting than a war. Dr. Kissinger replied, "Have no misunderstanding: If you start a war we will cut off all economic aid and you must include that in your cost calculation." Dr. Kissinger added that if the constant harrassment of the President in the Indian press and the constant playing with American political opponents did not cease, the Ambassador could not expect a very forthcoming attitude on our part.<sup>3</sup>

The Ambassador as usual ascribed this to the machinations of the pro-Soviet group. He said he could tell Dr. Kissinger, however, that the pro-Soviet group was in some difficulty now, because apparently the Soviet Union had given the strongest warnings against unilateral Indian actions and seemed to be participating in delaying maneuvers.

Ambassador Jha then asked whether Dr. Kissinger was in a position to appeal to the Pakistanis for the release of Mujib and his reintroduction into Bengali political life. That they thought was necessary to keep moderate control over the Bangla Desh movement. Their experience with the Bangla Desh movement had been that the so-called foreign minister in Calcutta was already being attacked by Maoists, and part of their reluctance to let him engage in negotiations with Yahya

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<sup>2</sup> Emil Mosbacher, Jr., Chief of Protocol.

<sup>3</sup> In a telephone conversation with Kissinger on October 6, President Nixon said that he noticed that the Pakistanis were charging that India was starting a war. Kissinger replied: "I think the Indians are trying to sharpen the conflict." Nixon asked: "Are we playing all our cards?" Kissinger said that he was scheduled to see Ambassador Jha on October 8, and he promised to "lay the wood to him." (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 369, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

was so that he wasn't discredited further, and leave the field open to the extremists.

Dr. Kissinger responded that it was important for us to come to some understanding of what was possible, and warned again against unilateral action.

The Ambassador and Dr. Kissinger agreed to meet again prior to Mrs. Gandhi's visit.

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### **163. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Moscow, October 8, 1971, 1825Z.

7529. Subj: Discussion With Gromyko on Indo-Pak Confrontation. Ref: State 185010.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary. I called on Gromyko and expressed concern over Indo-Pak situation. He listened gravely and attentively, agreed that situation is both tense and complex but otherwise declined to give Soviet assessment of border situation. He noted with approval that US is seeking to restrain both sides. He said Soviet side also has approached both sides and indicated Soviets have faith in Indian assurances but lack of faith in Pakistani assurances. He warned there are people in Pakistan who might be tempted to resort to force. He appreciated need for US and Soviet Union to work in same direction of averting conflict, said Soviet Union wishes to do utmost to this end, and stated he will see what steps can be taken "under present conditions." End summary.

2. I called on FonMin Gromyko Oct 8 and expressed our concern over increasing risks of war along lines reftel. Noting reported Indian and Pakistani military movements, reports of possible cross-border operations by Mukti Bahini, as well as possible Pakistani military attacks across West Pakistan border, I said we consider situation sufficiently serious that we are making immediate representations at highest level in both capitals, urging curb on cross-border operations by all parties

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. This telegram was summarized on October 8 by the National Security Council staff in a memorandum for Kissinger to use in briefing the President on October 9. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, October 1-24, 1971)

<sup>2</sup> Document 160.

and pullback from borders of military forces of both India and Pakistan. I noted that we assume both the US and Soviet Union have strongly shared interest in reducing risks of conflict and expressed hope that Soviet Government would act in any way open to it to bring about both immediate reduction of military confrontation and longer-term objective of political solution.

3. Gromyko expressed satisfaction that US takes measures in direction of restraining both sides. His government has also made approaches, of differing natures, to both sides. He said Soviets rely on assurances given personally by PriMin Gandhi that India will do nothing to cause clash with Pakistan. They are less certain about Pakistani assurances. US should know that in Pakistan there are people who probably are tempted to resort to force to solve problem. Soviet Govt will see what steps can be taken at present moment and under present conditions. As he said in Washington and particularly in New York, Soviet Union not only not interested in conflict in that area but will do utmost to avoid clash. It would be good if US Govt acted in same spirit. It is necessary that conflict be avoided. It is in the interest of our two countries and of peace in the area.

4. I reiterated that because of gravity of crisis it was important to take action with both sides, without apportioning blame, because both are on edge of hostilities. I noted reports of plans by Mukti Bahini to move large numbers of men across border, with support of Indian army, and reports of military buildup along West Pakistan border. I asked what is Soviet assessment of situation.

5. Gromyko said that he does not have factual information about activities of "irregulars" (his word for Mukti Bahini) on border. He said he does not doubt situation is tense as well as complex: this was clear at time of his recent visit to India. It is necessary for all parties concerned to show restraint, and for US and Soviet Union to make all possible efforts in the same direction of averting conflict between India and Pakistan.

6. I suggested that we keep in touch on this matter. Gromyko replied that he would of course leave open possibility of responding in more detail later and agreed that it would be useful to maintain contact on this subject. He expressed appreciation that I had presented this information to him.

7. Dept repeat as desired.

**Beam**

## 164. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General in Calcutta<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 9, 1971, 2149Z.

186323. Subject: Bangla Desh Contacts. Ref: Calcutta 2575,<sup>2</sup> Islamabad 9960<sup>3</sup> and 10002.<sup>4</sup>

1. Commend Calcutta's able and discreet handling of first contact with Bangla Desh "Foreign Minister" Mushtaq Ahmed. We also appreciate detailed report ConGen has provided of Mushtaq's views. While much of substance of what Mushtaq had to say, particularly with reference to expectations of what U.S. could or should do in present crisis, was fatuous or naive, we nevertheless believe it worthwhile to give him response, with intent of developing some momentum in moving BD reps toward talks.

2. You should, therefore, seek appointment with Mushtaq to report back views of USG. You should tell him that USG has no desire place itself between GOP and BD reps or to enter into merits of positions of either side. USG therefore has no substantive comment to make on points raised by Mushtaq. We would urge, rather, that the BD reps seek earliest opportunity to present views directly to GOP reps, in effort explore possibility of negotiated settlement. We would hope that

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Constable on October 5; cleared by Laingen, Schneider, Van Hollen, Johnson (J), and Saunders in the White House; and approved by Davies. Also sent to Islamabad and repeated to New Delhi, and USUN for Sisco.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 2575 from Calcutta, September 29, reported on a meeting on September 28 between a political officer from the Consulate General and Bangladesh "Foreign Minister" Mushtaq Ahmed. Mushtaq blamed the United States for the crisis in East Pakistan because of its continued support for Yahya Khan's government, but said that his government still hoped to win the friendship of the United States. Mushtaq asked Washington to intervene to arrange for the peaceful independence of Bangladesh, and he warned that time was running out to do so before a leftist takeover of the Bangladesh movement. Mushtaq outlined a list of objectives to be met in negotiating independence for Bangladesh, which included full independence and the release of Sheikh Mujib, but said that he had no desire to speak directly to Pakistani officials. He requested U.S. officials to speak on behalf of his government. (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> During a meeting on September 30, Chargé Sober told President Yahya that he did not have anything new or positive to report on U.S. contacts with Bangladesh representatives in Calcutta. Yahya reiterated his continuing interest and asked to be kept informed. (Telegram 9960 from Islamabad, October 1; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971)

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 10002 from Islamabad, October 1, commented on telegram 2575 from Calcutta. The Embassy continued to support a role for the United States in promoting contact between Bangladesh representatives and the Government of Pakistan. But the Embassy argued that "it would be mistake for USG to undertake to act as broker for either party." The Embassy was not inclined to pass on to Yahya the objectives put forward by Mushtaq. (Ibid.)

both sides could come to such meeting prepared to discuss whole range of issues that divide two sides, but without any preconditions. We have already discussed possibility of such meeting with President Yahya and he had indicated his interest. USG willing assist in passing messages back and forth that might lead to meeting, but we are not interested in playing transmission belt for "demands" or "positions" of one side or other.

3. To Mushtaq's probable reiteration of BD "desires," you should suggest to him that BD reps present these directly to GOP in talks and not to us. Only by engaging in talks can two sides hope to find ways toward early end of violence, killings, and other hardships that now afflict people of East Pakistan. Alternative what we see is escalation violence, and possibly war, with further tragic consequences for entire Subcontinent. In our view, those who refuse to participate in unconditional talks may have to assume responsibility for continued loss of life and for loss of "opportunity" to achieve constructive outcome.

4. We wish to keep our options open for contacts with other elements of BD leadership, although this will continue to be controlled from Washington. Hence while we assume that Mushtaq may remain principal channel for future communications, we do not wish to give him impression that he will necessarily be only channel. For example we obviously might be in touch with BD delegation in New York which presumably sent to this country for purpose of contacting foreign officials, including U.S. Therefore you may inform Mushtaq at your discretion that we intend to maintain some contact with other BD reps if occasion arises. We are confident this will not cause serious problems for BD, since we are not "negotiating" with any of reps and assume they will keep each other informed of contacts with USG reps.<sup>5</sup>

5. *For Islamabad:* Believe you need not go any further than you already have (Islamabad 9960) in informing Yahya of state of play on BD contacts. Your next step with Yahya, if you believe it might be productive, should be to suggest that GOP simultaneously look for ways establish its own direct contact with BD reps in N.Y., London or else-

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<sup>5</sup> In the absence from Calcutta of Mushtaq Ahmed, the political officer met on October 12 with Bangladesh "High Commissioner" Hossain Ali and gave him the substance of the instructions contained in telegram 186323. Ali said he would report the U.S. response to "Acting President" Nazrul Islam and, if Islam deemed it necessary, would make a trip to report to Mushtaq. (Telegram 2648 from Calcutta, October 14; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK) Four days later, the political officer met with Qaiyum who told him that Islam was in control of the Bangladesh Government but Islam insisted that only Sheikh Mujib could negotiate on behalf of Bangladesh. Qaiyum said that the Bangladesh representatives needed permission from India to negotiate with Pakistan and any claim to the contrary by India was a "lie." (Telegram 2662 from Calcutta, October 18; *ibid.*)

where. Such contact could provide opportunity for GOP signal to BD type of settlement it may be willing to negotiate. Such signals at this stage could help pave way for substantive negotiations. You might also probe with Yahya whether Soviets have played any role to date in seeking to advance GOP–BD negotiations.<sup>6</sup>

6. Foregoing drafted prior receipt Calcutta 2605.<sup>7</sup> However, believe latest meeting with Qaiyum does not indicate alteration these instructions.

**Rogers**

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<sup>6</sup> From the tenor of comments by Yahya Khan on October 11, Sober concluded that the Soviet Union had not attempted to promote negotiations between Pakistani and Bangladesh representatives. (Telegram 10294 from Islamabad, October 12; *ibid.*)

<sup>7</sup> On October 3 Qaiyum met with the political officer to pass a message from Islam asking for a rapid response from the United States to Mushtaq Ahmed's September 28 démarche. In the same meeting, Qaiyum said that the Mukti Bahini planned to infiltrate 40–60 thousand men into East Pakistan before the end of October. (Telegram 2605 from Calcutta, October 5; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 1971)

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### 165. Telegram From the Consulate General in Karachi to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Karachi, October 11, 1971, 1200Z.

2028. From Chargé. Subject: Discussion With President Yahya: Risks of War. Ref: State 185010.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary. Yahya reaffirmed his assurance that Pakistan would not be first to initiate hostilities. He accepted our proposal for mutual withdrawal of troops and armor by both GOI and GOP to some distance from their respective borders, noting that he would have to work out potential problem with regard East Pakistan. Yahya suggested that Indian and Pak army chiefs of staff meet to work out arrangements for

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, Moscow, USUN, London, Calcutta, and Dacca. This telegram was summarized on October 11 by the National Security Council staff in a memorandum for Kissinger to use in briefing the President on October 12. (*Ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, October 1–24 1971)

<sup>2</sup> Document 160.

withdrawal. He agreed that political solution in East Pakistan is essential and reviewed his timetable for issuing constitution and convening National Assembly before year's end, with provincial assemblies to meet shortly thereafter. New national govt should have East Pak majority. End summary.

2. I called on President Yahya at President's house in Karachi morning October 11 and remained with him for one hour. Yahya was nursing sore tooth and received me in private sitting room, in his quarters rather than in office. No one else was present. After initial amenities, including extension of best wishes on behalf Ambassador Farland and myself on engagement of his only son, which was celebrated in Karachi past weekend, I told Yahya I had been instructed call on him because of deep USG concern over increasing risks of war in subcontinent. Recalling our last conversation on this subject September 30 during Freylinghuysen visit, I went over carefully and in detail each of the points (less FYI portion) contained para 3 reftel. At conclusion my presentation, during which Yahya interjected various comments (below), I left him after summarizing all points. (Yahya asked at end of conversation that I give copy of paper and résumé of Yahya's remarks to Fon Sec Sultan Khan, and I propose do so Oct 12 in Islamabad.)

3. Yahya nodded at mention of his personal assurances to me on September 30 that Pakistan would not be first to initiate hostilities. He said this was only sensible position and he reaffirmed it.

4. Yahya said he was not aware of any skirmishes in late September along West Pak border (para 38 reftel). He had not heard of any firing at all along West Pakistan border. Occasionally, he said, there is isolated firing along Kashmir ceasefire line, but if there had been any in recent weeks, it was not important enough to have come to his attention. Yahya also denied reports we have heard that GOP might take military action against India in response to Indian-supported cross-border guerrilla attacks in East Pakistan.

5. At that point Yahya said that despite his desire for peace, there was real danger of war and he had duty to inform people of Pakistan thereof. He said he had devoted portion of his address to nation which will be broadcast/tecast evening Oct 12, and which he had already recorded, to this subject. He said he wanted nation to understand that although he was doing his best to avert war, risk nevertheless existed. He hoped this portion of his speech would actually serve to calm the people while also alerting them to worst contingency.

6. Yahya nodded agreement when I said that GOP must share responsibility for reducing risks of conflict (para 3c reftel). He listened carefully when I mentioned adverse effect upon our relationship which would follow any initiation of military action by Pakistan and said such action was against his policy.



7. Yahya asked me to reiterate point that we are taking strongest position with GOI that it should restrict cross-border operations by MB (para 3d reftel) and said “that was excellent.”

8. Yahya listened attentively to our specific proposal for mutual withdrawal of troops and armor by both GOI and GOP to some distance from their respective borders. We came back to that point for fuller discussion after covering political issues (below). His first comment was that this was a good idea. It would present no problem at all along West Pakistan border. Pak forces there, he said, could return to their peacetime locations. Units which had come from Peshawar and Kharian, for example, could return thereto; units which had moved up from closer points, such as Sialkot and Lanore cantonments, could return to their cantonments. Situation was not quite that simple in East Pakistan, Yahya went on. The normal peacetime regular army force in East Pakistan had, of course been increased since March by reinforcements from west wing. There were only a few peacetime army cantonments of any importance in East Pakistan and of these only Jessore and Comilla (and of lesser importance, Rajshahi) were near the border. In recent months, following the defections and departure of elements of East Pakistan rifles and police, the Pak army has been attending to job of anti-guerrilla operations along the border. It might present problem to withdraw army from border while guerrilla activities continuing. I asked Yahya to consider that point carefully, to see for example whether border surveillance might be taken on by elements of the paramilitary East Pakistan Civil Armed Force (EPCAF), which is successor to EPR, and by police, allowing regular Pak army units to retire from border. Yahya responded that might possibly be done in light of fact that both EPCAF and police had recently increased in strength; he would surely consider this and other possibilities.

9. As discussion proceeded on withdrawal proposal, Yahya's thoughts seemed to become firmer. He said our proposal was “noble” and “I accept it in toto” subject to some clarification on detail such as with regard East Pakistan. He asked what type of machinery we thought might insure execution of mutual withdrawal. I said we had not made any specific proposal on modalities, and asked whether he had any suggestions. Yahya said he thought mechanics of withdrawal might be worked out in a meeting of Indian and Pakistan army chiefs of staff. That mechanism had been used from time to time in previous years. I said I thought his suggestion was most constructive and that I would report most promptly both his acceptance of the withdrawal proposal and his suggestion for a meeting of the chiefs of staff.

10. Yahya nodded agreement at various points when I presented our position on the essential importance of a political solution in East Pakistan (para 3f reftel). He agreed that military action, which he said

he had no choice but to undertake in face of the violence and intentions of the Awami Leaguers last March, could not be a solution in itself. He was appreciative of USG understanding of his problems and the way in which we had not added to his very heavy burdens. Far from questioning our right to feel deep concern over current crisis, he welcomed our views and our suggestions with regard to his political problems. Regarding our hope that GOP could move even more rapidly toward political settlement facilitated by direct discussions with elected East Pak leaders, Yahya pointed to the clean bill of health given to many Awami Leaguers elected last December and to his firm plans for early by-elections to fill vacated seats. He was moving as fast as he could. His address to the nation on Oct 12 would reveal his intentions to publish a constitution on December 20 and to convene National Assembly on December 27. Latter step would be followed shortly by formation of a national government in which East Pakistan, given its population majority, would presumably hold a majority of ministerial portfolios. Beyond that, Yahya went on, he would shortly thereafter appoint new governors for each of the five provinces, as to be provided for under the constitution, and the provincial assemblies would come into being. He was indeed serious about restoring government to the elected representatives of people.

11. I said I much appreciated preview of his plans for political action in next several months. Coming back to point in our presentation concerning direct discussions with "elected East Pakistan leaders," I said we had in mind a dialogue between GOP and BD leadership (per para 2f reftel). In this regard, I offered it as my purely personal observation at this time that such discussions would be difficult to arrange unless one took into account the apparent continuous attraction of Mujib for the mass of East Pak population. Yahya said he would not deny that Mujib was still an important symbol. He thought, however, that Mujib's strength even at time of last year's elections might have been overestimated. Actually, a fairly large proportion of the East Pak electorate had not voted last December, and a significant proportion of those who voted for Mujib were of "minority population" (i.e. Hindus). Many of those who did not vote had been intimidated. Other points regarding Mujib are being reported by septel.<sup>3</sup>

12. Other subjects covered in Oct 11 meeting with Yahya are being reported septels.

**Raynolds**

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<sup>3</sup> Document 166.

**166. Telegram From the Consulate General in Karachi to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Karachi, October 11, 1971, 1344Z.

2029. From Chargé. Subject: Pres. Yahya on Mujib and on Talks With BD Leadership. Ref: Karachi 2028.<sup>2</sup>

1. After introducing subject of Mujib in connection with proposed GOP direct discussions with BD leadership (reftel), I recalled to Pres Yahya during conversation Oct 11 his recent talks with Amb Farland regarding Mujib. I referred specifically to possibility of Mujib's serving as "trump card" and asked whether he might tell me anything further in that regard. Yahya noted that Mujib's trial was still going on. If he were convicted, court would sentence him to punishment which would conceivably be death. Matter would then come before Yahya who had presidential power to modify court's judgement. As he had already told us, he did not intend to permit any death sentence to be carried out. With early formation of civilian government, that government (which would presumably have East Pak majority) would then have task of dealing with Mujib's future.

2. I said there were obvious problems but asked whether there was possibility of Yahya's revealing anything of his thinking along above lines to larger audience before too long. Mujib's role seemed to be a crucial issue, for example, with regard initiation any direct talks between GOP and BD leadership. I recalled that Yahya had told us he is prepared have GOP participate in such talks. We have recent indications that various pressures on BD leadership in Calcutta have inhibited any progress toward initiating talks, and one of their primary concerns seems to be that Mujib should have role.

3. Yahya responded that there were limits on his freedom of action. He pointed to predominant West Pak public opinion damning Mujib, and opined that not a single West Pak political leader would welcome an act to free Mujib and negotiate with him. Even the East Pak political chiefs with whom he has been talking in recent months, including respected elder leader Nurul Amin, had raised specter of return to pre-March situation which they said would result in terrible violence among East Pakistanis. As for himself, Yahya went on, if he now indicated that Mujib should be pardoned, people will ask why there had had to be so much sorrow and trouble and would raise question

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Priority; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Document 165.

why Yahya should remain in office. Personally he did not hanker for power, but he had duty to deal with critical problems which his country faced. Yahya added he is not a ruthless person but a normal human being. He has no personal rancor against Mujib but he cannot disregard facts of recent history.

4. This portion of our conversation was conducted with no indication of any annoyance on Yahya's part that he was being pressed on what is perhaps most highly sensitive issue facing him in eyes of world opinion. On contrary he responded calmly in stating pressures weighing on him and his rationale for current stance. He appeared to wish leave impression he was man with rather little choice but to do what he is doing.

**Raynolds**

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#### **167. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi, October 12, 1971, 1859Z.

15988. Subject: Risks of War in Indo-Pak Confrontation. Ref: State 185010.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary: Prime Minister Gandhi being immediately unavailable, I met October 12 with Foreign Minister Swaran Singh and Foreign Secretary Kaul to make presentation per reftel. Foreign Minister (a) claimed East Pakistan insurgency profoundly rooted in Bengali alienation and has own dynamic, not dependent upon India; (b) argued insurgency exists deep within East Pakistan and significance of cross-border activities easily exaggerated and any event GOI cannot shoot down East Bengalis entering or departing India; (c) noted how long insurgency will be prolonged and whether it leads to Pak attack upon India depends upon GOP; (d) stressed insurgency is caused basically by Pak military repression to which Mukti Bahini (MB) is reac-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, London, Moscow, Tehran, Bonn, Brussels, Paris, Vienna, USUN, Calcutta, Dacca, Bombay, and Madras. This telegram was summarized on October 13 by the National Security Council staff in a memorandum for Kissinger to use in briefing the President on October 14. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, October 1-24, 1971)

<sup>2</sup> Document 160.

tion. Foreign Minister (a) expressed strong resentment at any suggestion East Pakistan insurgency being maintained by India; (b) took exception to any implication that MB successes could justify Pak attack upon India and in such event that Indo-American relations need be adversely affected; (c) noted impression US continues to fail to appreciate psychological factors in present crisis despite GOI efforts to explain in New York, Washington and New Delhi; (d) charged US support to GOP strengthens Yahya regime determination to maintain military repression policy; and (e) concluded US has heavy responsibility to exercise its "great influence" with GOP. Foreign Minister confirmed our impressions (a) GOI probably does not currently anticipate MB cross-border operations on scale suggested reftel; and (b) GOI most probably does not presently plan to use Indian army for diversionary strategy noted reftel which Swaran Singh termed "pin pricks." Foreign Minister asserted in event GOP agreed to withdraw military forces from Indo-Pak borders, GOI could reconsider situation in light circumstances at that time. End summary.

2. I opened with expression my gratification at being received by busy Foreign Minister on short notice and my disappointment that Prime Minister Gandhi had been too busy to see me. Swaran Singh said if I must see Mrs. Gandhi she would be back in two or three days, but I noted my prior scheduled departure for the US. I noted that for first time in my experience I had been explicitly instructed by Washington to express to Prime Minister, as her appointments secretary was informed, USG concern over increasing risks of war in South Asia as consequence of East Bengal events. With end of monsoon, there are movements of Indian and Pak armor in East and West and reports of possible mass cross-border operations by MB. I noted GOI and GOP protestations they do not want war and would not be first to initiate hostilities. My personal conviction is this true as regards India, and I have so advised Washington. Nonetheless, reports point to critical situation where conflict could break out.

3. I told Foreign Minister in addition we have specific report MB plans inject 40,000 armed men across border by October 15 with 20,000 more by end October. According to this report this would be accomplished with support of Indian army diversionary actions to keep Pak forces off balance while the infiltration took place. MB effort of this dimension could not be accomplished without GOI support. US concerned Pak forces would respond militarily against India to any such operation. Thus, situation as reported has large potential for major confrontation which we must continue assume India does not want and does not see serving its larger interests.

4. I pointed out India as sovereign nation must of course make decision in own best interest but US strongly urges GOI act immediately

to reduce these risks by efforts with the MB to restrict cross-border operations. We recognize major responsibility for Indo-Pak peace rests with GOP. No one could claim India started this mess. However, we feel GOI also has major responsibility to try to keep situation from deteriorating into war evolving from cross-border operations with serious effect on Indo-US relations.

5. Foreign Minister interrupted to ask whether he understood correctly if armed conflict takes place as a result of Pak incursions against India in retaliation successful guerrilla activity in East Pakistan, Indo-US relations would be adversely affected and whether it also would be injurious to US-Pak relations. I replied, large cross-border activities supported by Indian army which resulted in military conflict with Pakistan would be injurious to Indo-US relations. This I said differed somewhat from formulation in Foreign Minister's question. My instructions assumed if India were aggressor against Pakistan under the formulation I had stated there would be serious effects upon Indian-American relations just as if Pakistan were to attack India, I was convinced US-Pak relations similarly would be seriously affected.

6. I continued if dangers of immediate conflict are to be reduced meaningfully, we believe there must be reduction in level of military confrontation by (a) curbing all parties involved in cross-border operations on eastern and western Indo-Pak borders and (b) pulling back Indian and Pakistani military forces some distance from respective borders. I added hope Foreign Minister would not charge me with equating India and Pakistan if I advised him US had made same suggestion to GOP at highest level. US fully recognizes major responsibilities in current crisis rest with GOP. We informing Islamabad in strongest terms it should avoid actions that could lead to war and particularly any form of military action against India. We also urging GOP move rapidly in political settlement which all recognize essential if crisis to be dealt with at roots. In our view, this will require dialogue between GOP and Bangla Desh leadership which we have strongly recommended to GOP and continue to believe GOI can help facilitate.

7. Foreign Minister said since I departing soon for US he wished take opportunity to clarify perspective. He said it can be very misleading to break into chain of events at any one point in attempt to understand what has led Pakistan and India to present predicament. Basic realities are (a) Pak military repression unleashed six months ago continues; (b) refugee influx continues with September average 33,000 daily and recently up to 42,000, and current total in India of 9.5 million; (c) hard core of MB insurgency is formed by trained former Bengali military and police personnel totaling approximately 45,000, and highly motivated embittered East Bengali youth participating in insurgency in large numbers. If from 9.5 million refugees only one percent or 95,000 are highly motivated activists, these plus former Bengali

police and military would total around 150,000 insurgents, which reasonable figure and one used by Pak Ambassador Hilaly on TV in Washington. Moreover, Swaran Singh said, insurgents are reasonably well equipped with weapons taken upon defection or otherwise liberated from Pak army, as well as with weaponry purchased in Europe by fairly large number of well-to-do Bengalis living abroad. Singh stated GOI cannot stop these activities; it has tried to explain basic realities and greatly resents natural process of growing Bengali resistance being interpreted by US as bolstered from India. He said, "We have uneasy feeling US is saying if Mukti Bahini succeeds in inflicting serious blow upon Pak army, GOP will be justified in striking back against India." I interjected that I did not mean to convey that impression. I pointed out that I laid stress on diversionary activities by Indian army in support of MB operations. Furthermore US is pointing to danger of what might happen, not suggesting justification any such eventuality. Singh expressed gratification for clarification. He maintained most daily operations take place deep within East Pakistan and are not cross-border in character, for example, recent actions against ocean shipping and strikes in Dacca and in Chittagong. He said, "Trans-border operations are not whole picture. We cannot stop refugee influx into India nor return of some for whatever purpose into East Pakistan. We cannot shoot people down coming or going. With your vast intelligence resources you must be familiar with conditions in East Pakistan where there no effective border guards. India cannot prevent movement of such people and does not have heart to attempt to do so. It not quite correct to describe situation in which MB gaining strength as cross-border. If 40,000 Mukti Bahini are in India as alleged then still 100,000 are within East Pakistan."

8. Swaran Singh urged US consider profound, alienated attitudes of Bengalis demonstrated by defections of well-placed Pak diplomats, including most recently Pak Ambassador in Buenos Aires. History knows no parallel and situation demonstrates even hard-eyed diplomats taking decision. GOI impression is such psychological factors are not appreciated in US which is blinded by charisma of military regime in Pakistan. History will demonstrate US has greatest responsibility in present situation since support for GOP has contributed to hardening and continuation of Pak military policy of repression. Even at this late date, GOI appears to us to exercise all influence which it surely has to bring GOP to sensible view even in its own interest. Meanwhile East Bengali alienation is deepening.

9. Foreign Minister reiterated it contrary to reality to argue MB action could justify Pak reaction against India. In truth MB is itself a reaction to continuing root cause, i.e., Pak military repression. If MB succeeds it will be easy to say India responsible, but GOI strongly resents implication and is greatly disturbed that realities of situation are not

understood in US despite great pains to make them clear to President Nixon, Secretary Rogers and others in New York, Washington and New Delhi. GOI does not accept US distortion of sequence of events. GOI does ask US to exercise its immense influence with Yahya to bring him to reality. "We and I personally are under pressure. In my AICC speech, it was not slip of tongue, when I suggested Bangla Desh might be realized within framework of Pakistan, autonomy, or independence." Under existing circumstances, when US addresses GOI "in somewhat threatening manner" it seems to have ignored GOI statements as well as basic realities. Continuing US support to Yahya regime will only (a) deepen rift between East and West Pakistan, (b) make struggle in East Pakistan more bitter, and (c) rule out negotiated settlement. In latter regard, Foreign Minister said recent statement of Bangla Desh authorities ruling out compromise settlement was indirect repudiation of his AICC statement.

10. Foreign Minister said GOI knows perfectly well US officials are in close touch with Bangla Desh (BD) leaders and is aware of US efforts to promote settlement between Pakistan generals and some elements of Awami League. GOI urges US to focus any such efforts on genuine reconciliation, for it would be great mistake to seek to promote deal with break-away Awami League element. Situation is quite straight-forward. Yahya simply cannot ignore Mujib and Awami League leaders; they are true East Pakistan leadership. If Pakistan looking for excuse to start trouble India will defend self, however GOI sees no justification why this should affect Indo-US relations. "Please pass that on to your government. We are not speaking from excitement, fear or dialectic. But ask why Washington should think if Pakistan starts something, Indo-US relations would be affected? We shall continue to try to remove Indo-American misunderstanding and are particularly anxious to do so in light Prime Minister's forthcoming visit. Mrs. Gandhi seeks to reverse misunderstandings, and it would be unfortunate to burden her effort with extraneous considerations."

11. I said I never had met with BD representatives, although some of my junior officers had informally in Calcutta and New Delhi to listen to their stories. I cited pro-Communist *Patriot* allegation recently that I attempting disrupt MB and Awami League and cause internal friction. I said we do not have that kind of power and assured Foreign Minister we have done nothing of kind. I acknowledged we have gotten some conflicting stories about BD and suppose differences of opinion exist and with MB, but it not US intention to exacerbate same.

12. Foreign Minister said State Department knows of effort to bring about dialogue between President Yahya and Awami League, and GOI doesn't need to read *Patriot* for its view. I said effort to promote such dialogue seemed plausible but did not imply exploitation



of differences. However, Singh said US attempting to bypass Mujib. I told Singh American Embassy Islamabad under instructions from Washington had just finished urging President Yahya to establish dialogue with elected representatives of East Pakistan, which I took to mean Mujib. I expressed certainty US would be delighted if President Yahya held discussions with Mujib.

13. I asked Foreign Minister if he prepared tell me more about reported large-scale MB intrusions planned for second half October as well as alleged plan for Indian army diversionary action. Singh said he clearly and categorically wished to state (a) MB does not take GOI and Indian army into confidence, has own tactics and means, and "has never consulted us"; (b) GOI refuses to believe MB is on Indian border in such large numbers prepared to march openly into East Pakistan; (c) Indian Government believes MB operating in heart of East Pakistan but doesn't know of MB plans to step up activities except perhaps in reaction to highly publicized reports of Pak army intention make clean sweep in East Pakistan upon end of monsoon; (d) GOI will never attack Pak positions and will never commit any incursion against Pakistan territory; (e) if Pakistan starts war India will defend itself with every means available; (f) GOI will never undertake such "pin prick" diversions as alleged, since India mature country with mature and strong leadership and disciplined armed forces; and (g) MB operations cannot be valid excuse for GOP action against India.

14. As to proposed withdrawal of military forces from border Swaran Singh said there already are ground rules concerning border deployments which India honoring. However, he alleged there have been large-scale Pak military concentrations in Jammu/Chamb, Sialkot, Lahore, Bahawalpur and areas further south, and Pak army has moved troops forward from cantonment areas such as Peshawar and Quetta. I asked if Pakistan agreed to withdraw military forces from border, how would GOI react? Singh replied, "We can reconsider situation if they withdraw."

15. Comment to New Delhi 15778<sup>3</sup> applies. In particular, we continue to perceive no present GOI intention to initiate hostilities during next couple months.

**Keating**

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<sup>3</sup> Dated October 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, LEG 7 FRE-LINGHAUSEN)

**168. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 15, 1971, 0222Z.

189037. Subj: Risk of War in Indo-Pak Confrontation. Ref: (a) Karachi 2028, (b) New Delhi 15988, (c) Moscow 7529.<sup>2</sup>

1. In light Pakistani and Indian responses to our *démarches* regarding risks of war, we wish to emphasize and pursue further our proposal for mutual withdrawal of troops by both governments. For this purpose we wish to reinforce our approach for Soviet support with Indians and make further approach to GOI.

2. *For New Delhi:* Ambassador or Chargé should seek early appointment with FonMin and make following points:

A. We were pleased to note FonMin's categorical statement discrediting our report of large numbers of Mukti Bahini personnel prepared to invade East Pakistan and of concurrent Indian army diversion of defending Pak force. We also note FonMin's statement that India would never attack Pak positions and would never commit any incursion against Pakistan territory.

B. We wish to report that in response to our presentation to GOP, President Yahya assured us that Pakistan would not be first to initiate hostilities. In regard to our proposal for a pullback of military forces, President Yahya raised certain questions regarding how such pullback might apply to East Pakistan border but accepted proposal in principle subject to clarification on details such as with regard to East Pakistan. Specifically President Yahya suggested that mechanics of withdrawal might be worked out directly by India and Pakistan army chiefs of staff. USG has no particular desire to involve itself in regard such mechanics and suggests direct contact between military organizations at some level might be best way of carrying out withdrawal.

C. We wish to re-state and emphasize suggestion which was put forward solely on our initiative that India and Pakistan carry out a mutual withdrawal of troops from their borders. We make this proposal in all seriousness and ask that India give it the most careful consideration. We believe India would agree that neither it nor Pakistan would find escalation or present tensions in its interest. Yet proximity of forces

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on October 13; cleared by Curtis W. Kammon (EUR/SOV), Laingen, Van Hollen, and Haig; and approved by Acting Secretary Irwin. Also sent to Moscow and repeated to Islamabad, USUN, Tehran, London, Calcutta, Dacca, and Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Documents 165, 167, and 163.

along India–Pakistan borders present great danger of accidental war which each government has informed us it does not intend to initiate. We have made this proposal in hope that very substantial movement of men and matériel which has taken place on both sides of border might be reversed. We do not wish to involve ourselves in debate regarding details of which country has violated ground rules. Facts are that substantial movements have been made on both sides with resulting increase in dangers of escalation. Consequently we would appreciate India's reaction to Yahya's suggestion that the Chief of Staff on both sides might arrange the mechanics of the pullback. Alternately, we would be interested in any other Indian proposal for method by which pullback might be accomplished.<sup>3</sup>

3. *For Moscow:* Embassy Moscow authorized to brief Gromyko or other senior Soviet official on general outlines of our discussions with both Yahya and Swaran Singh. In particular Embassy should cover those portions of conversations regarding pullback proposal in detail and in such a way as to make apparent that US has obtained substantial agreement from GOP and that situation in regard to India is such that Soviets' use of their influence might enhance prospects of Indian agreement to withdrawal which we are convinced is as much in Soviet interest as in ours.<sup>4</sup>

**Rogers**

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<sup>3</sup> In Ambassador Keating's absence, Chargé Stone met with Foreign Secretary Kaul on October 16 and made a presentation based upon the instructions in telegram 189037. Kaul responded by reiterating Foreign Minister Singh's assurance that India would not initiate a military confrontation with Pakistan. He said that India viewed Pakistan's recent military moves as a threat to attack India, despite Yahya's protestations to the contrary. Kaul added that India could not accept the U.S. proposal for a mutual withdrawal of forces until the threat from Pakistan had been removed. He maintained that a withdrawal of forces from the border between India and West Pakistan would leave India at risk in that the proposed move to the closest military bases would put Pakistani forces considerably closer to the border than Indian forces. (Telegram 16247 from New Delhi, October 16; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK)

<sup>4</sup> Ambassador Beam met with Foreign Minister Gromyko on October 18 to urge that the Soviet Union support the proposal for a mutual withdrawal of forces. Beam said that President Yahya had accepted the proposal but Foreign Minister Swaran Singh had gone no further than to state that if Pakistan withdrew, India would reconsider the situation. Beam asked Gromyko to encourage India to accept the proposal. Gromyko said that the Soviet Union had also been in touch with both sides to urge restraint. India and Pakistan had both indicated that they would not initiate hostilities, but the conclusion drawn in Moscow was that the Indian assurance could be relied upon but that offered by Yahya could not. Gromyko did not agree to support the proposal for a mutual withdrawal of forces. He said that separating the troops confronting each other along the border was a good idea but not a solution. He urged the United States to join the Soviet Union in seeking a political settlement to the crisis. (Telegram 7794 from Moscow, October 18; *ibid.*, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) On October 19 Haig reinforced Beam's initiative with a telephone call to Dobrynin in which he said that the President was concerned that the situation on the subcontinent could take a dangerous turn. Nixon, Haig added, hoped the Soviet Union "could exercise maximum restraint on the Indians." (Transcript of a telephone conversation; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 998, Haig Chronological File, Haig Telcons, 1971)

169. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 19, 1971, 2159Z.

191555. Subject: Yahya Letter to President Nixon.<sup>2</sup>

Following is text of letter from Pres Yahya to President Nixon dtd Oct 9, delivered to White House Oct 19 by Pakistani DCM Farooqi:

*Begin text.*

Your Excellency

I write to express the sense of gratitude of the Government and the people of Pakistan for your sympathetic understanding of our difficulties during the recent crisis. We also appreciate your government's continuing interest in the affairs of the sub-continent, particularly, its concern for the well-being of the people and for the preservation of stability and peace in the area. In this context, may I state briefly, Mr. President, the latest position on the state of affairs in the sub-continent. In an already tense situation India's land, sea and air forces have been brought to a state of confrontation against Pakistan's frontiers in both the wings.

There are 7 divisions of the Indian army which are deployed against West Pakistan and additional forces have been put in a state of readiness to move to forward positions at short notice.<sup>3</sup>

A total of nearly 8 divisions have encircled East Pakistan.

Substantial forward moves have taken place from the rear to the forward operational positions in the last few weeks. In addition, the deployment of Indian forces on the Sino-Indian borders have been re-arranged in a manner that these could be simultaneously utilized in an offensive against Pakistan's frontiers as well.

The Indian air force has activated and occupied forward airfields and special facilities and stockpiling have been carried out. Tactical air-centres have also been established near Pakistan's frontier.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, Pakistan Chronology, Dr. Kissinger. Secret; Exdis. Drafted and approved by Van Hollen and cleared by Laingen and Jeanne Davis, Director of the NSC Staff Secretariat. Repeated to New Delhi and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> A signed copy of the letter delivered by Zahir M. Farooqi is in the Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 210, Geopolitical File, South Asia, Chronological File, Nov-Dec 1971.

<sup>3</sup> An intelligence report sent by the CIA to the White House on October 19 indicated that all Indian armed forces had been placed on full alert status. (CIA telegram TDCSDB-315/06207-71, October 19; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul-30 Nov 71)

A total of nearly 26 squadrons, inclusive of supersonic aircrafts, are today positioned against Pakistan. There is a virtual combat air ring around East Pakistan for offensive purposes.

The Indian navy has been put to a state of war-preparedness with sixty percent of its forces deployed against the coasts of West Pakistan. The remaining strength of the Indian navy is positioned to move against the shores of East Pakistan.

Mr. President, the inevitable conclusion that one can draw from this offensive posture of the Indian armed forces is that it is pointed in the direction of conflict and not of peace. Our concern is all the more grave since India has shown no inclination to give up its policy of instigating and assisting armed infiltration into East Pakistan. It continues to support, train, and launch rebels and insurgents who seek the dismemberment and destruction of Pakistan. I am constrained to say that if this state of affairs continues it may lead to dangerous consequences: a situation which we in Pakistan—and I am sure all the friends of Pakistan and India, particularly, the United States—would wish to avoid.

It is most unfortunate that to justify its aggressive posture, India continues to exploit the humanitarian question of displaced persons. As you perhaps know, Mr. President, my government has taken several constructive steps for the return and speedy rehabilitation of these persons who are our own kith and kin. This contrasts sharply with India's totally negative attitude and leaves us with no doubt that India does not wish an amicable settlement of this problem.

I would wish to add that the political situation in Pakistan is rapidly progressing towards the objective I have set out for transferring power to the elected representatives of the people. I have already taken some decisive steps, including the appointment of a civilian governor in East Pakistan, fixing a time schedule for holding by-elections in December this year, declaration of general amnesty and release of detained persons. These efforts towards the civilianisation of provincial government in East Pakistan have evoked a highly favourable response from the people. In addition, the food situation in the province is fully under control and the industrial and economic life is rapidly returning to normal. A very healthy improvement in the atmosphere in East Pakistan is thus discernible.

Mr. President, since you have always taken a keen personal interest in the preservation of peace in the sub-continent, I do hope that you would share my belief that whether it be for the creation of a climate conducive to the return of the displaced persons, or for the normalisation of situation, it is essential that India and Pakistan should work out necessary ways and means to reduce tension and allow normalcy to return at the earliest. Having this in mind, may I urge you to impress

upon the Government of India the need for urgent constructive steps with a view to arresting further deterioration of the situation in the sub-continent. As I have always maintained, war will solve nothing. I, therefore, earnestly hope that wise counsels would prevail in India and the Indian leaders would exercise restraint and caution in this highly surcharged atmosphere. I would request you, Mr. President, personally to take up this matter in your talks with the Indian Prime Minister during her forthcoming visit to Washington. On my part, I shall welcome any constructive suggestion that you may wish to offer in this regard.

With warm personal regards,  
A.M. Yahya Khan  
*End text.*

**Rogers**

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**170. Telegram From the Consulate General in Dacca to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Dacca, October 20, 1971, 1400Z.

4498. Subj: East Pakistan Insurgency—Evaluation.

1. Summary. East Pakistan insurgency has increased in tempo and geographic scope in last three months. Still unable challenge Pakistan army in urban areas, but shows increasing capability carry out ambushes and hit-and-run attacks in certain areas, while limited to minor sabotage elsewhere. Govt efforts reduce popular support by “civilianization” and general amnesty unsuccessful, except possibly among middle class in cities. Future course of insurgency will depend heavily on (a) Indian support, (b) tenacity of Islamabad Govt, (c) quality of Bengali leadership (Sheikh Mujib or other emerging leader). In meantime insurgency successfully disrupting major economic activities especially exports.

2. Over past three months East Pakistan insurgency has increased in intensity and widened its geographic scope of operations. Concentrating in the rural areas, with only token activity in cities (exception

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK. Confidential. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, Calcutta, and Karachi.

has been systemic and repeated disruption of power supply to Chittagong), Mukti Bahini (MB) have stepped up their disruption of roads, bridges, railroad lines in most parts of the country. In some districts, notably Dacca, Comilla, Noakhali, Faridpur, Bakarganj, MB seems able to move about almost at will and appears even to have set up parallel administration at some points. Evidence on hand suggests that insurgents are better armed than formerly, (automatic weapons, mortars, heavier explosives) and increasingly able to undertake sophisticated operations (mining of ships, effective sabotage of bridges, etc.). In central and southern districts mentioned, MB has demonstrated aggressiveness and skill in ambush operations against Razakars (voluntary home guards) and army, occasionally inflicting significant casualties. Areas other than those cited above, MB activities largely confined to destruction of bridges, culverts, railway lines, apparently avoiding contact with government forces.

3. Critical factor in increased insurgent capability up to now has been Indian support in form of training on Indian territory, supply, and assistance in infiltration into East Pakistan. Moreover, by adopting forward military posture on East Pak borders, Indians have pinned bulk of Pak army regular troops in border areas, so that internal defense against MB operations has devolved principally upon Razakars, police, and other para-military or semi-volunteer organizations which are less efficient than regular army and considerably less reliable. (Several reports received of defections, both individually and en masse, of Razakars to MB, taking their weapons with them; one report received that group of Razakars suspected of collaborating with MB were summarily executed by military [garbled] explanation frequently cited by GOEP officials for alleged recent intensification of Indian shelling of border areas is provision of cover for large scale infiltrations of newly-trained MB into EP.) EP press regularly carries accounts of massive captures of Indian-origin weapons and ammunition from infiltrating "Indian agents" allegedly intercepted after crossing border. While virtually overt and acknowledged support of India by MB is undoubtedly an important factor in sustaining the latter and making possible its increased activity, we believe MB is now sufficiently established in many areas of the country and has sufficient cohesion to sustain itself even if India cut down its support to a level which could be maintained by truly covert means. Continued Indian support at present levels will inevitably further extend MB range of operations.

4. Up to now and for a reasonably foreseeable future MB is not likely to present a dangerous threat to the Pak army, despite probable increases in numbers and scope of activity. In contrast with the situation in Viet-Nam, MB does not possess a redoubt in which it can concentrate masses of supplies and weapons, nor are there protected trails through which large quantities of heavy equipment can reach them from easily accessible

seaport. For many months to come Pak army will certainly retain advantage in equipment and training on other hand, even at present level of activity, MB is serious thorn in army's side. We have no means of accurate assessment of army casualties, but indications are that figure may run as high as 10 to 12 killed daily, with corresponding number of wounded. While not in itself crippling to Pak army contingent in EP, these figures over extended period of time could create serious morale problem among troops far from home, living among unfriendly people and in difficult and wearing climate. Concern felt by MLA authorities in Dacca is evidenced by precautions being taken to protect vulnerable points in city. Brick walls with rifle or machine gun ports being constructed entirely around airport, electric power stations, etc., while sandbagged strong points set up at many places along principal streets. Security check points maintained along main roads, and occasionally set up unexpectedly at other places. Series of pillboxes and fortifications have been installed along northern rim of Gulshan residential area.

5. Economy of EP slowly but surely declining as MB keep up pressure on roads, bridges, railroads, powerlines and fuel supplies. Dacca 4032<sup>2</sup> presents latest overall picture with no improvement noted since.

6. To extent that "civilianization" and general amnesty were intended damp insurgent activities, they have demonstrably failed. While weariness and desire for "peace at almost any price" apparent among middle class urban groups, we have impression that younger Bengalis, particularly those in countryside, are entrenched in their detestation of Islamabad Government and bitterness against Pak army. These attitudes reinforced by persisting reports atrocities and indiscriminate retaliation carried out by government forces, principally army or Razakars, to point where even many conservative Bengalis see no other outcome than to drive army out by force.

7. Such slim evidence as we possess indicates greater overall organization among MB, including recently-reported (Dacca 4374)<sup>3</sup> setting up of Mukti Bahini as kind of civil defense force. Problems of coordination and communication persist, with some units apparently following different lines of action and policy. Recent CAS reports indicate awareness on part of MB of danger of such radical insurgent groups as Naxalites to overall unity of movement. On other hand there have also been reports of differences of opinion between MB and group of Bangla Desh politicians at Calcutta. While we still believe that Sheikh

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<sup>2</sup> Telegram 4032 from Dacca, September 27, summarized the economic disruption occurring in East Pakistan as a result of the insurgency. (Ibid., E 8 PAK)

<sup>3</sup> Dated October 13. (Ibid., POL 23-9 PAK)



Mujib, released and allowed freedom of action, could assert control over MB and use it as disciplined instrument of his policy, longer he is restrained more likely we consider it that new leadership will emerge from among MB which, tempered by fighting and action-oriented, might one day challenge both Mujib and old Awami League leadership for primacy in independent or largely autonomous East Bengal. Orientation such eventual leadership on right—left spectrum impossible to predict at present.

Spivack

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**171. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 22, 1971.

SUBJECT

Indo-Pakistan Situation

The potential for an outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan remains high; but we have no information that either side intends to take the initiative at this time. A possible indicator of the level of tensions will be whether Mrs. Gandhi begins her three-week international tour on October 24.

We have urged maximum restraint on both India and Pakistan. Specifically we have suggested to both that they pull their troops back from the border. President Yahya has reacted positively in private. The Indians have said they would consider withdrawals only if Pakistan withdrew first. They indicated that India would have to withdraw much farther than Pakistan. Both President Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi have publicly discussed the circumstances under which they might withdraw in contexts which are probably mutually unacceptable at this point. We are now planning, if Ambassador Farland concurs, to suggest that President Yahya consider a unilateral and limited withdrawal as a signal to the Indians of his desire to de-escalate and reduce tensions. We believe he might be willing to do this without jeopardizing

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Constable and cleared by Laingen, Schneider, and Van Hollen.

his military position, in order to put the onus on the Indians to take reciprocal action.

Recognizing that the lack of a viable political settlement in East Pakistan continues to fuel the tensions between India and Pakistan, we are also suggesting that Ambassador Farland, if he agrees, discuss ways in which Yahya might move more rapidly toward such a settlement. We are particularly focusing on ways in which Yahya might begin a dialogue with the previously elected representatives of East Pakistan. Because President Yahya has already indicated willingness to establish contact with Bangla Desh leaders, we are asking Ambassador Farland to suggest that they be included in any such dialogue. To date, however, the Bangla Desh representatives have refused, insisting that nothing can be negotiated except independence and only Mujib can speak for the Bangla Desh group. Given the apparent importance of the arrested Awami League President Sheikh Mujib to a negotiated settlement, we are asking Ambassador Farland to raise again with President Yahya whether he believes there are possibilities for Mujib to play a part in a settlement.

On October 19 Secretary General U Thant offered his good offices to President Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi.<sup>2</sup> We support this initiative. For the moment, however, we hope to keep the Indo-Pakistan dispute from surfacing in open debate in the Security Council. Between now and the time of Mrs. Gandhi's visit on November 4 and 5, we prefer to work privately with both the Indians and the Pakistanis. During Mrs. Gandhi's visit, we hope you will be able to dispel some of the suspicions which have entered our relationship with the Indians. At the same time, we will want again to urge maximum restraint on Mrs. Gandhi, get her to support direct negotiations between Bangla Desh leaders and President Yahya, and seek her cooperation in trying to stabilize the situation in East Pakistan. We believe that India must bear a share of the responsibility for bringing stability back to East Pakistan, in part by exercising greater control over India-based guerrilla activity.

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<sup>2</sup> UN Secretary-General U Thant held separate meetings on October 19 with the Indian and Pakistani permanent representatives to the United Nations and gave them identical letters for Prime Minister Gandhi and President Yahya. In his letters, the Secretary General expressed concern about the deteriorating situation along the borders between the two countries and offered his good offices to seek a peaceful solution. (Telegram 3705 from USUN, October 21; *ibid.*, POL INDIA-PAK) The text of the letters, as conveyed to members of the Security Council on October 21, was transmitted to the Department in telegram 3766 from USUN, October 22. (*Ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, Oct 25-Nov 22 1971)

Following Mrs. Gandhi's visit, if it is necessary at that time, we may want to see the Indo-Pakistan situation aired in the Security Council and publicly in other ways in order to increase international pressure on both sides for restraint and de-escalation.

John N. Irwin II<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Under Secretary Irwin signed for Rogers.

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## 172. Briefing Prepared for President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 27, 1971.

### PRESIDENT'S THURSDAY BRIEF

*For the President*

*Widespread Famine Averted for Now in East Pakistan:* Maury Williams, after an on-the-spot review,<sup>2</sup> has concluded that the widespread famine—with associated deaths and an accelerated refugee flow to India—predicted by many last summer will not occur in East Pakistan this winter. The next critical period is March. He cites the following reasons:

—U.S. efforts in dramatizing the problem and in providing two-thirds of needed transport from ocean ports to river ports, plus continuing shipment of one million tons of grain, have been a major factor.

—Reduction of the East Pakistani population by the nine million (13%) more or less who have moved to India.

—The end of a black market flow of rice, normally one million tons annually, from East Pakistan into India as a result of border tension.

—The UN role in making food distribution neutral in the civil conflict.

—The prospect of the winter crop beginning in late November.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 575, Indo-Pak War, South Asian Relief, 8/1/71–11/23/71. Confidential. Prepared by Hoskinson and Saunders for an October 28 briefing of the President. The memorandum does not indicate who was scheduled to do the briefing, but it was customarily done by Kissinger.

<sup>2</sup> The briefing was based upon telegram 4614 from Dacca, October 26, a report from Deputy AID Administrator Maurice Williams, who was investigating the danger of famine in East Pakistan in his capacity as coordinator of relief assistance. A copy of telegram 4614 was attached to the briefing memorandum.

Williams cautions, however, that the situation in East Pakistan is still grim and that continuing relief assistance will be needed. There is still the likelihood that increased guerrilla activity will make food distribution more difficult. Serious pockets of need will continue to exist. A buildup of stocks will have to continue against the next critical period in March, and a further strengthening of the UN field staff remains important.

Beyond the humanitarian aspect, this is also a major U.S. contribution to peace in South Asia since the avoidance of famine at this critical juncture will mean that many millions more Bengalis will not flee to India. This will be a point worth making to Mrs. Gandhi when she asks how our relationship with Yahya has contributed to peace. It is hard to prove, but the situation could have been a great deal worse by now.

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

Washington, October 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

Military Supply to Pakistan

On the eve of Mrs. Gandhi's visit here, a potentially explosive issue concerning US arms supply to Pakistan has arisen.

You will recall that the USG has gone on the public record with Pentagon concurrence, informed Congressional committees and told the Indians that by early April:

—A hold was put on the delivery of FMS items from the Department of Defense stocks and that no such items have been released to Pakistan since then.

—We had suspended the issuance of new export licenses and renewal of expired licenses for items on the munitions list—for either FMS or commercial sales.

It was clearly understood that items already released from Defense stocks and already under valid licenses could still be shipped out of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country File, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971. Secret; Nodis.

the country. The Indians in Congress have been informed that about \$3.8 million of such items have been shipped to Pakistan on commercial carriers paid for by the Government of Pakistan.

It now turns out that some equipment has been released from Defense stocks since March 25—perhaps as much as \$2 million worth. So while our total figure of \$3.8 million shipped is correct, it is untrue that nothing moved from Defense depots.

State and Defense believed until recently that the two statements represented an accurate accounting of our military supply to Pakistan. Much to their surprise, however, a GAO investigating team acting on orders from Senator Kennedy has discovered that the initial orders issued by ISA to put the “hold” into effect were not followed completely by the services and that there has been substantial leakage. According to the best accounting ISA can make at this point:

—The Air Force continued to release \$2.4 million worth of spares (70% lethal) up to July. Some of the more urgently needed items were flown to Pakistan on the normal MAC embassy support flights on an almost weekly basis. All of these spares were under valid license so the customs people did not interfere.

—The Army “inadvertently” has released some \$83,000 worth of lethal spares to the Paks but these were not under valid license and therefore did not leave the country.

—The Navy is also thought to have released some \$100,000 in lethal spares but it has not yet been determined how much of this was under license and was shipped out of the country.

What this boils down to is that, allowing for shipment delays and expiration of licenses, probably at least half of the \$3.8 million shipped to Pakistan should never have been released under the ground rules which we imposed on ourselves and made public.

The most immediate problem facing us now is that this information could become public knowledge on the eve of the Gandhi visit since the GAO will be submitting its report to Senator Kennedy on Monday. It is hard to believe that he will not exploit this situation and, even if we attempt to explain it, think that we have not been trying to sneak arms to Pakistan behind the back of Congress. If it doesn't come out before the Gandhi visit it almost certainly will leak in the aftermath and could undermine whatever positive might come out of her talks with the President. This could make the harm caused by similar disclosures in the wake of Foreign Minister Swaran Singh's visit here, look mild by comparison.

It seems to us that the only thing to do now is to attempt to cut our losses with the Indians by explaining in good faith what happened. Our credibility with them is already so undermined that they might not believe us anyway but at least we will be protecting the President so that they cannot come back later with a charge that he misled them.

At the same time, the "drying up" exercise is coming to culmination.

You will recall that it began when Sisco broached to Ambassador Hilaly in August the idea of accelerating shipments of any outstanding military equipment the Pakistanis still wanted. You saw General Haq when he was here and gave him some additional time, i.e. until about October 15, to locate outstanding equipment and to collect it.

The Pakistanis have now designated the equipment which they would still like to ship and it amounts to 32 tons on a dock in New York. They are prepared to ask that licenses for the remainder be withdrawn, and they agreed when General Haq was here to a low-key public statement that the pipeline was "completed."

The main purpose of this exercise, as you will recall, was to get the troublesome military assistance issue out of the way in order perhaps to strengthen the Administration's hand in limiting the damage that would be done by excessively restrictive amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act. Since the Pakistanis have seemingly willingly cooperated in this exercise—perhaps seeing the congressional handwriting on the wall in any case—State has been working steadily toward wrapping this up as neatly as possible.

Now it comes simultaneously with (a) the increase in tension, (b) these impending new revelations of "bureaucratic bungling" on the release of military equipment and (c) the dock strike.

One physical complication in a neat wrap up is the dock strike. It had been hoped that all of the remaining equipment could have been shipped and then a statement might have been issued saying that the exercise was over. With the dock strike, it would be necessary to say that the shipment of military supply items is being completed, that there are no further outstanding licenses and that the final shipment of \$160,000 worth of equipment will be shipped when the dock strike ends.

Because of the untidiness of the situation, I have argued that we not make any kind of announcement. That would look like we were claiming credit for something we had not completely done since one more shipment is still to go. However, State would like to put itself in a position to answer a question at the daily briefing in the next few days by explaining how the pipeline is drying up.

A response might go something like this: "The embassy of Pakistan has informed the Department of State that it is completing Pakistan's shipments of military supply items. In view of this information, at the request of the government of Pakistan the office of munitions control is withdrawing remaining outstanding valid licenses." It would also have to be stated that we understand that the Pakistanis have a small amount of munitions list items that have

“cleared customs” and are pending loading on ship at the conclusion of the dock strike. It might also be said that the value of those items is about \$160,000 and the value of the unused licenses is about 2 million dollars. The content of the announcement would be worked out with the Pakistanis.

My question for you is: Do you see any objection to completing this exercise provided it is fully cleared with the Pakistanis and informing the Indians at the same time we tell them of the other problem?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kissinger initialed the yes option and added the following handwritten notation: “(No objection—but let me see what we tell them).” Ambassador Farland was instructed on November 1 to inform the Pakistani Government that Congressional support for the administration’s policies in South Asia would benefit if key Congressional leaders were informed that the military pipeline was being closed down except for a small final shipment awaiting the end of a dock strike. (Telegram 198915 to Islamabad; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) Farland met with President Yahya on November 2 and Yahya agreed to the necessity to close down the pipeline, subject to the understanding that title to the items on the New York dock had passed to Pakistan. (Telegram 10904 from Islamabad, November 3; *ibid.*) The same day Under Secretary Irwin called in Ambassador Jha and informed him of the plan to close down the pipeline to Pakistan and of the supply slippages not previously made public. (Telegram 200295 to New Delhi, November 3; *ibid.*, DEF 12–5 PAK)

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## 174. Briefing Prepared for President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 29, 1971.

### PRESIDENT’S SATURDAY BRIEFING

*Indo-Soviet Relations:* From all indications, the Soviets appear to be keeping an unusually close watch on the situation in South Asia. At the end of last week, Deputy Foreign Minister Firiyubin made a hurriedly arranged trip to New Delhi apparently to get a fresh reading on the situation. Then yesterday a military delegation, headed by the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Indo-Pak Crisis, Withdrawn Files, Boxes 570–573. No classification marking. Prepared on October 29 by Hoskinson and Saunders for an October 30 briefing of the President. The memorandum does not indicate who was scheduled to do the briefing, but it was customarily done by Kissinger.

commander of the Soviet air force and including representatives of the other services, arrived with little advance preparation.<sup>2</sup>

If nothing else, this is a graphic demonstration of the consultation clause in the new “friendship” treaty. It also would seem to reflect Soviet concern that the Indo-Pak military confrontation could blow up into full scale fighting.<sup>3</sup> By visibly demonstrating their support for India, the Soviets may hope to deter the Paks from taking any rash actions.

Saunders/Hoskinson

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<sup>2</sup> Deputy Foreign Minister Nikolai Firyubin visited New Delhi October 22–27. The military delegation, which arrived in New Delhi on October 28, was headed by Marshal Pavel Kutakhov, Deputy Defense Minister and Chief of Staff of the Soviet Air Force. An analysis prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research on November 3 concluded that Firyubin assured India of continued Soviet support in the event of hostilities and Kutakhov conveyed a Soviet willingness to discuss an emergency military supply program for India. (Intelligence Note; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK)

<sup>3</sup> An intelligence report circulated on October 15 indicated that the Soviet Union had assured India that in the event of a war between India and Pakistan, India “would not be alone.” (Intelligence Information Cable TDCS DB–215/06104–71; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71)

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## 175. Letter From President Nixon to Pakistani President Yahya<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 30, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your letters of October 6 and October 9<sup>2</sup> concerning the dangers to peace in South Asia. I am grateful to you for conveying your concerns to me and for the confidence and friendship in which your letters were written. The Vice President has conveyed your good wishes from Persepolis.

We share most deeply many of the concerns you have expressed. I am keenly aware of the continuing difficulties you face and know how much the threat of war adds to the burdens you already bear. I

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, Pakistan (1971). No classification marking. The text of the letter was transmitted to Islamabad on October 31 in telegram 198807 for delivery to President Yahya. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 US/NIXON)

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 161 and 169.



have asked Ambassador Farland to discuss with you as a concerned friend further steps that might be taken to reduce tension.

Because of our concern for peace, we have requested both your government and the government of India to consider withdrawal of forces along your respective borders as an action that would contribute to restoring mutual confidence and reducing the risks of war. We appreciate your prompt and positive response to this proposal. We hope that both your government and that of Mrs. Gandhi will keep this possibility under serious consideration in the days ahead. Your strong desire to avoid hostilities is most encouraging.

Nonetheless, there are still serious risks in the present situation and hostilities could still erupt inadvertently. Such hostilities could easily escalate with a much wider conflict with tragic consequences for the entire South Asian subcontinent. We therefore share your view that the United Nations has a serious responsibility in this situation to act in ways that will help reduce tensions and begin the difficult task of building a lasting peace in that area.

For those reasons we have welcomed the initiatives taken by the United Nations in recent months, both those designed to reduce the risk of conflict and those in the field of humanitarian relief. I know of the Secretary General's very recent letter to you and Mrs. Gandhi,<sup>3</sup> and I welcome the tenor of your response to that letter.<sup>4</sup> We intend to be in close touch with the Secretary General, with your government, and with the government of India to consider ways in which these initiatives might be followed through.

Meanwhile, I have asked Ambassador Farland to talk with you about what might be a feasible next step toward beginning the withdrawal of forces from their dangerous border positions. I know the importance you attach to enlisting the maximum degree of participation by the elected representatives of the people of East Pakistan. I also believe you agree that this process is essential to restoring those conditions in the Eastern wing of your country which will end the flow of refugees into India and achieve a viable political accommodation among all the people of Pakistan.

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 171.

<sup>4</sup> On October 26 the press in Pakistan printed the text of Yahya's October 25 letter to U Thant welcoming his offer to mediate in the dispute between India and Pakistan. (Telegram 10700 from Islamabad, October 26; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)

We have recently said farewell to Ambassador Hilaly who has completed more than five years of dedicated service to the cause of friendship between our two countries. I want you to know how much we have appreciated his wise counsel and understanding and how much I have enjoyed my relationship with him.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

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**176. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 30, 1971, 0056Z.

198660. Subject: Indo-Pak Confrontation. For Ambassador Farland. Deliver 8 a.m. October 30.

1. You should seek earliest possible appointment with Yahya to deliver President's letter<sup>2</sup> (septel) and to elicit response from Yahya to presentation below to be available here if at all possible before Mrs. Gandhi's arrival November 4. Overall objective of your talk is elicit maximum Pakistani package which can be used during talks with Mrs. Gandhi here in urging Indian restraint and reciprocal de-escalation.

2. You should emphasize at the outset that you are speaking as a concerned friend in a desire to be helpful and make most of the Gandhi visit in the context of common desire to preserve peace and to follow through with orderly political process. We need a Pakistani position that is as forthcoming and defensible as possible.

3. Presentation outlined below covers two subjects: (a) military pullback and (b) next steps in Yahya's political process. Question for Yahya is how he mixes variety of political and military moves open to him. US not the party to make that judgment. Approach described below designed strictly to help Yahya canvass options open to him.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Laingen and Constable on October 29; cleared by Schneider, Van Hollen, Sisco, and Saunders; and approved by Irwin. Repeated to London, Moscow, New Delhi, Paris, Tehran, USUN, Calcutta, and Dacca. A note for the record, attached by Saunders on October 29 to a draft of the telegram, indicates that Kissinger revised and cleared it. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep-Oct 1971)

<sup>2</sup> Document 175.

4. On military pullback, we now have response from both GOP and GOI to our proposal for mutual withdrawal of forces. Despite largely negative and now public nature of Indian response and some disadvantages in Yahya's going public with a proposal to which he has added his own conditions, we have achieved reaffirmation by both of their intention not to initiate hostilities and each has expressed a willingness to consider withdrawal in context some action by the other.

5. We believe our next step should be to advise Yahya directly of what we have heard from Indians and probe whether he prepared consider action unilaterally that might serve as means of triggering some response from Indians and thus be start of self-generating series of steps. We should also note Yahya's positive response to U Thant (Islamabad 10700)<sup>3</sup> and particularly reference to pullback to "mutually agreed safe distance." Promise of such a step would be useful here in talking with Mrs. Gandhi. At a minimum, a unilateral beginning of this kind could put pressure and onus on India to take a reciprocal step.

6. While we recognize difficulty for GOP of unilateral actions in present crisis (para. 5 Islamabad 10479),<sup>4</sup> it seems to us that Pakistan has most to gain from any reduction present military confrontation and that some risk, therefore, may be worth taking. Is such a pullback possible without diminishing significantly precautionary moves already made by GOP? In this connection, it is our understanding (on basis DIA information) that GOP was first to undertake major movement of forces when in mid-Sept. it deployed Sixth and Seventeenth divisions from Kharian cantonment to Sialkot border area. Indian reaction occurred in early October with movement of several divisions opposite Pakistan forces at Sialkot.

7. In this context, you should broach with Yahya whether some initiative by Pakistan along western border involving visible pullback of some specified force would be feasible and could be signaled by local commander to his opposite number by means that may be open to him. We leave it to you with DATT advice what specific examples you might cite, but pullback of elements Sixth and Seventeenth divisions noted above would be one possibility, particularly in light Yahya's comments to Chargé Sober in Karachi 2028<sup>5</sup> suggesting forces from Kharian and other cantonments as types that might move back from border if there were reciprocal move on Indian side. Alternatively, you should raise with Yahya possibility more limited withdrawal of forces (of kind spoken of in his letter to U Thant) in specified sectors of dis-

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 4, Document 175.

<sup>4</sup> Dated October 18. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)

<sup>5</sup> Document 165.

tances 3–5 miles but still of dimensions visible to Indians and of variety that could be used to achieve similar withdrawal by Indian forces. Yahya could also ask for UN verification that Pak units have pulled back. Such step, whether or not UN actually provided verification, would nevertheless increase incentive for India to take reciprocal step.

8. If Yahya prepared make this kind of beginning, we would like to be able to mention during Gandhi visit, pointing to this as indicative of Yahya's bona fides in desiring initiate process of gradually reducing force confrontation, in West to begin with, possibly in East later. We would press GOI immediately to respond with equivalent withdrawal of its own. Would seem desirable to proceed without publicity.

9. On political side, we continue to believe that long-term resolution of current crisis can only be found through progress toward political solution in East Pakistan, whatever comes of pullback proposal. So far, Yahya's responses to us in this area have been essentially to restate to us serious problems he feels would be involved in going beyond political timetable he has spelled out publicly. We fully appreciate these problems. However, we note that in your last talk with Yahya on Mujib, he did not exclude concept using Mujib as "trump card" at some point in the political process (Islamabad 9599).<sup>6</sup> We believe we should take up with him his request to you at that time for suggestions on dealing with political problem in a way that will focus on our concerns and reflect his that this is crux of matter.

10. If you agree with above, suggest you speak frankly and in some detail with Yahya about political timetable he has now outlined, specifically possibilities that might present themselves within this timetable to get privately across to BD clear signals that Yahya both recognizes strong autonomous sentiments of East Pakistan and does not exclude major realignment East-West Pakistan relationship within constitutional process. In this connection you should say that we attach significance to Swaran Singh October 8 statement Simla that GOI will accept any political solution "acceptable to people of Bangla Dsh or their elected representatives", including one within framework of Pakistan. (FYI: We note also Chib's comment in New Delhi's 16246<sup>7</sup> to effect that negotiations feasible with people Mujib might designate "speak for him". End FYI.)

11. Yahya knows we understand complexity his political problems and that we have no desire further complicate them by moralistic pronouncements or public advice. You should say frankly, however, that

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 7, Document 159.

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 16246 from New Delhi, October 16, reported on an October 15 conversation between an unidentified officer of the Embassy and Ashok Chib, the Indian Chargé in Islamabad. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 32-1 INDIA-PAK)

our judgment is that success of political-constitutional scenario he has worked out now depends heavily on his readiness himself to signal, through us or otherwise, his willingness engage in substantive dialogue with BD as a means of markedly broadening support for that process. The longer this dialogue is delayed the greater the depth of alienation of BD (not to mention MB) and the less reason to hope for any kind of political settlement. FYI: When we speak of negotiated settlement, we have in mind process of winning East Pakistani support for new constitution and involvement sufficient numbers key Bengalis to make its implementation a realistic possibility. End FYI.

12. What we have outlined below is illustrative of what might be conceivable and is not intended as any American blueprint. You will have other ideas to use yourself with Yahya to get our concern across that time may be rapidly working against political process Yahya envisions for implementing his constitution for united Pakistan.

13. With respect Mujib himself, we understand sensitivities and only note that, right or wrong, he seems to have become major symbol so at minimum it would seem necessary to success any political process to avoid any step such as publishing full transcript Mujib trial which would inflame Bengali opinion and might, as Yahya had already noted, produce “explosive” reaction in West Pakistan. Whether Yahya can use Mujib as “trump card” as he put it at some point we must leave entirely to his judgment. Short of that, we assume Yahya fully aware possibilities such as simple statement from Defense Attorney Brohi that trial was fair or use of any appeals procedure available which would both soften international criticism and provide further time to see whether some way open for negotiated settlement.

14. Re broader issues, you might sound out Yahya as to degree of autonomy for East Pakistan contemplated in constitution he intends to promulgate and how new constitution will handle provision for eventual constitutional review that would allow for evolutionary political development. While we have no formula on this point, it seems to us as sympathetic observers of Pakistan dilemma that, over long run, constitutional arrangements which are flexible and workable enough to provide for future re-examination of relationship between two wings might go a long way towards satisfaction Bengali needs. Such review provisions could provide basis for dissident elements within East Pakistan come forward and join in political process. Such measures might also provide useful signal to BD reps Calcutta that positive basis for negotiation with GOP exists.

15. In terms of present situation, and recognizing all problems involved, you might say that we wonder whether it would be feasible to convey in some way to BD Calcutta that new constitution would not exclude re-entry at some point of Awami League into political life in East Pakistan, with an amnesty extending to all Awami Leaguers. In

this connection, are there steps Yahya could take now that would encourage in some way Awami League sympathizers to enter and contest scheduled by-elections as independents? If these thoughts create major problems, what about indicating that under new constitution there would be possibility fresh elections within two years so that those now frozen out of process (by charges against them or by own choice) would see opportunity for their own eventual reintegration into political life of East Pakistan.

16. If you find Yahya in receptive mood on any of these "thoughts," you should use opportunity to probe more deeply Yahya's ideas on mechanics getting dialogue with BD started, reminding him that we have urged Indians and Soviets to get behind idea of open-ended political dialogue. You should emphasize, nevertheless, our basic view that this is not likely to get off the ground except through Yahya himself finding ways through suggestions indicated above or otherwise to signal BD directly that possibilities of dialogue exist (Calcutta 2713).<sup>8</sup>

17. In sum, remind you that main purpose this talk is to provide understanding here of maximum Yahya can offer as background for judicious use with Mrs. Gandhi.

18. *For Dacca*: You may wish to provide Embassy with your thoughts on these suggestions or with additional ideas including that suggested by Nurul Islam (Dacca 4497)<sup>9</sup> that might be discussed with President Yahya.

**Irwin**

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<sup>8</sup> In telegram 2713 from Calcutta, October 28, the Consulate General noted that a number of factors limited the maneuverability of the Bangladesh leadership, including increased activity by the Mukti Bahini in East Pakistan, growing tension between India and Pakistan, and leftist pressure within the Bangladesh movement. The Consulate General felt that the range of maneuver open to the Bangladesh leadership was further reduced by news stories published in London that revealed the role of the Consulate General in attempting to promote contact between the leadership and Yahya Khan's government. The conclusion drawn was that that effort had reached a "dead end" and it was time for Yahya to take the initiative and respond to the Bangladesh insistence that he make the first move in establishing direct contact with them. (Ibid., POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>9</sup> Consul General Spivack commented on October 27 on a proposal put forward by Nural Islam for indirect negotiations between Mujibur Rahman and the Martial Law Administration. The essence of Islam's proposal was that he and other members of his Bangladesh leadership group were sufficiently acceptable to Mujib and Yahya to act as a credible bridge between them. In Spivack's judgment there was no point in pursuing the proposal unless Yahya was in principle open to the idea of negotiating with Mujib. (Telegram 4497 from Dacca; *ibid.*)

177. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, November 2, 1971, 0810Z.

10905. Subj: Indo-Pak Confrontation—Military Pullback. Ref: State 198660.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary: Yahya agreed to unilaterally withdrawing military units as first step in defusing explosive situation in subcontinent. End summary.

2. I met with President Yahya Khan at the President's house in Rawalpindi at 0900 hours Tuesday, November 2. During the hour and twenty-minute conversation which ensued, among other matters which were topics for comment and which will be reported by septels,<sup>3</sup> the question of a unilateral military pullback was discussed at length.

3. Emphasizing at the outset that I was speaking as a concerned friend with a desire to be helpful and stressing the concern of the USG regarding the imminent possibility of a war on the subcontinent, I referred to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's November 4–5 visit to Washington for the purpose of discussions with President Nixon. I also made note of the fact that the Tuesday morning *Pak Times* carried an article datelined London, November 1, which reported "that the Indian Prime Minister said today that her government would never agree to a unilateral withdrawal of Indian troops from the borders of East Pakistan." I then went on to recall our conversation of October 28 during which he (President Yahya) had asked me for any specific suggestions which we might have for the purpose of defusing the explosive situation existing in the subcontinent (Islamabad 10802).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to New Delhi, London, Moscow, Paris, Tehran, USUN, Calcutta, Dacca, Lahore, and Karachi.

<sup>2</sup> Document 176.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 10927 from Islamabad, November 2, Farland reported that Yahya agreed during the conversation to meet with Nurul Islam and his group of former Awami Leaguers to discuss Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's future and to explore means of effecting contacts with representatives of Bangladesh. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23–9 PAK) Telegram 10964 from Islamabad, November 3, reported that the conversation dealt repeatedly with the trial of Mujib. Yahya agreed that a transcript of the trial should not be made public and said that he no longer considered the Awami League to be a "nefarious institution." He added that, if purged of its "secessionist leaders," he could foresee reestablishing the League as a participant in the political process. Yahya concluded the conversation by expressing his willingness to establish a dialogue with "appropriate Bangla Desh representatives who were in a position to act constructively." (Ibid., POL 29 PAK)

<sup>4</sup> Dated October 28. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 626, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VII, Sep–Oct 1971)

4. Responding to that request, a major suggestion of immediate moment, I said, was one which any leader of a nation under threat of attack would find hard to accept—doubly so when the leader of the nation had devoted his life to military pursuits—was to adopt an action diametrically opposite to that which Mrs. Gandhi had negated, i.e., agree to the concept of unilateral withdrawal.

5. Yahya didn't hesitate at all, saying spontaneously: "Of course I will. Now this doesn't mean that I would pull the troops back into the barracks but I will gladly promise to make the first move back from a forward military position."

6. I told Yahya that I personally considered this a most salutary development and I knew that my government also would so consider it. I added that I would convey this information to USG soonest so that Mrs. Gandhi might be apprised of his posture on this matter during her Washington conversations.

7. Yahya concluded this portion of our conversation by saying "What I want your government to know, is that in order to bring normalcy back to the subcontinent, I will do anything within my power short of simply turning Pakistan over to India."

8. FYI: Contrary to the suggestion contained in the reftel I felt it inappropriate to go into proposals relating to specific military units, or examples thereof, the pullback of which would be feasible and could be signaled by local commanders to their opposite numbers. As delicate as this particular conversation was, I believed it necessary to establish a commitment rather than become involved in specifics.

Farland

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**178. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 3, 1971.

SUBJECT

President Yahya on Military Pullback

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 627, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VIII, Nov-Dec 71. Secret; Nodis. Sent for action. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.



When I had my first talk Tuesday<sup>2</sup> with the new Pakistani Ambassador I asked him to provide you with the most forthcoming Pakistani position possible for your talk with Mrs. Gandhi. His reply this evening is as follows:

“As regards withdrawal of forces from the Indo-Pakistan border, the most appropriate and fair procedure would be for the armed forces of both the countries to withdraw simultaneously to mutually agreed safe distance. However, in the interest of peace and in order to provide an exit to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, *President Yahya Khan would be willing to withdraw Pakistani forces first from the border to varying distances, depending upon the terrain of different sectors, provided the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, gives an undertaking to President Nixon that the Indian forces will then also withdraw shortly afterwards.*

“As regards political plans, the National Assembly of Pakistan is to meet towards the end of December and other consequential steps are to follow. This is according to political plans already announced by the President of Pakistan. There is no other development.”

This provides nothing new on the political side. The significant point is that he is willing to pull some units back from the border on the basis of Mrs. Gandhi's oral assurance to you that she will take a reciprocal step.

The Ambassador in delivering this message was instructed to emphasize the risk involved for President Yahya. He would be taking a concrete step on the basis of an oral statement which Mrs. Gandhi could later disavow, on a pretext such as saying that the situation had changed. If India attacked, he would be vulnerable to charges of jeopardizing Pakistan's security. Despite this risk, he has sent this reply because of his trust in you.

Mrs. Gandhi with Prime Minister Heath voiced reservations about the pullback idea. There would be an advantage in trying this out on her, although it may have to be followed up later at a lower level. State Department is not aware of this detailed message from Yahya.

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<sup>2</sup> November 2.

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**179. Memorandum for the President's File<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 4, 1971, 10:29 a.m.–12:35 p.m.

**SUBJECT**

Meeting Between President Nixon, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Mr. Parmeshwar Narain Haksar and Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Following press photographs, the President welcomed the Prime Minister and expressed his pleasure at the opportunity that this meeting provided for an exchange of views on a range of subjects of mutual interest to old friends. The President suggested that the first session might be used to discuss the situation in South Asia and that the second session on Friday might be reserved for discussion of broader issues, to include the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union and the situation in Southeast Asia.

The Prime Minister agreed to this formula and expressed India's admiration for President Nixon's skill in handling both the Vietnam situation and his initiative in seeking the normalization of relationships with the People's Republic of China. It appeared from the Indian perspective that each move of the United States had been carefully thought out and well designed. Each move was accomplished in an imaginative and effective way, with a style which kept the main objective in view and which did not permit diversionary distractions to derail progress. The President thanked the Prime Minister for her expression of support and noted that the attitude of the Prime Minister's government had been most helpful in the process. He noted that the U.S. had

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 2, Memoranda for the President, Beginning October 31, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. Apparently drafted by Kissinger. The meeting was held in the Oval Office. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files) The conversation was also tape recorded. (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Prime Minister Gandhi, November 4, 1971, 10:29 a.m.–12:35 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 613–15) Prime Minister Gandhi's state visit to Washington began November 4 and concluded November 6. While Nixon met with Gandhi, U.S. and Indian advisers met in the Cabinet Room and discussed a number of issues concerning the situation in South Asia. The U.S. team was headed by Sisco and included Keating, Van Hollen, Saunders, Hoskinson, and Schneider. The Indian team was headed by Foreign Secretary Kaul and included Jha and Rasgotra. Sisco and Kaul led the discussion. The discussion was summarized in a November 4 memorandum from Saunders and Hoskinson to Kissinger. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 919, VIP Visits, India, PM Indira Gandhi Visit, Nov 1971) The memorandum is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 149. It was summarized in greater detail in telegram 203189 to New Delhi, November 4. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 INDIA)

expected a great deal of criticism domestically from more conservative elements who are opposed to the normalization of relationships with the People's Republic of China. On the other hand, he was convinced that the steps had to be taken in the interest of stability in Asia. The President stated that stability could best be served when parties are able to communicate and this has been his initial objective. Dr. Kissinger added that he agreed it was important that the People's Republic of China no longer remain isolated.

The President continued that the essential objective is to eliminate the frustrations that China's isolation can cause and thereby achieve increased moderation. The very act of communication between parties has a beneficial effect in relieving tensions. India's understanding of this process and support for it have proven very helpful. The U.S. has always had great respect and admiration for the Indian people and there is a deep-seated friendship for India among the American people. Americans want India to succeed.

With respect to the recent Senate action on the foreign aid, the President emphasized that he was fighting to have it restored and was equally confident that his efforts would succeed. On the other hand, there are strong sentiments in the U.S. which no longer favor an extensive foreign assistance expenditure.

The President then asked Mrs. Gandhi to present her views in detail on the situation in South Asia. In initiating this discussion, the President emphasized:

1. The U.S. has no illusions with respect to the realities of the situation.
2. The initiation of hostilities between India and Pakistan would be unacceptable from every perspective.
3. For this reason, U.S. policy toward Pakistan has been shaped by the imperative to retain influence with the Government of Pakistan.
4. In this regard our military assistance program has been retained in a most limited fashion to enable us to continue a dialogue with that government. The U.S. has and will continue to discourage military actions by the Government of Pakistan.
5. The situation demands the continuation of U.S. aid to relieve the plight of the nine to ten million refugees on both sides of the border. This is an enormous task which requires the concentrated efforts of all the parties. The U.S. objective is to be as helpful as possible without interjecting itself into the internal affairs of the parties.

The President then outlined the measures which the U.S. has taken to relieve the plight of refugees in India and in Pakistan. He listed specifically the following:

1. In June and July the U.S. Government persuaded Pakistan that a famine was likely in East Pakistan if massive forestalling efforts were not undertaken. We have just received a report from Mr. Williams in Dacca that widespread famine has probably been averted as a result

of major U.S.-Pakistani and UN efforts.<sup>2</sup> Such a famine could have further exacerbated the problem of the flow of Moslem refugees and created a tremendous new burden on India.

2. Despite initial opposition by President Yahya in April, following pressure from the U.S. Government he agreed to an international relief presence in East Pakistan.

3. At U.S. urging the Pakistani government accepted a civilian governor in East Pakistan.

4. U.S. pressure on Pakistan resulted in President Yahya's public proclamation of amnesty and specific public reference by him to returnees of all creeds, Hindus as well as Moslems.

5. U.S. representations brought assurance from President Yahya that Mujib would not be executed.

6. U.S. representations also resulted in President Yahya's agreement to pull some military units back from Pakistan's western border with India as a first step toward de-escalation.

7. President Yahya informed our Ambassador Tuesday, November 2, that he is prepared: to hold direct discussions with cleared Awami League leaders, to meet with a Bangla Desh leader from India and to consider our suggestion that Mujib be allowed to designate the representative.

The President stated that the Australian Ambassador shares India's concern and is most sympathetic with the difficulties that the situation in East Pakistan have brought the people of India. On the other hand, the U.S. could not urge policies which would be tantamount to overthrowing President Yahya. It is recognized that Mujib is a core factor in the situation and that unquestionably in the long run Pakistan must acquiesce in the direction of greater autonomy for East Pakistan, but the situation is extremely fragile and Yahya's flexibility is very limited in the short run. Unquestionably Mujib's fate is an essential aspect of the problem and ultimately he will have to play a role in East Pakistan's future. However, this depends largely on the way events proceed in the shorter term. The greatest danger of all would result if either side were to consider that military action could provide a solution that only an historical process can settle. Should India resort to force of arms, the current balance suggested that it would succeed in a military sense but in a political sense there could be no winner.

The President continued by observing that the consequences of military action were incalculably dangerous. In this regard, India's recent agreement with the Soviet Union was understood by this government but India must recognize that it is not popular in the U.S. It must, therefore, have an impact on the general attitude of the U.S. Government. Should the situation deteriorate to armed conflict, there is doubt that the conflict could be limited to just India and Pakistan. It would have implications and possibly great dangers for the whole framework of

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 172.

world peace. The American people would not understand if India were to initiate military action against Pakistan. While the U.S. could not expect India to determine its own policies based solely on U.S. attitudes, these attitudes should be taken into consideration.

The President then asked the Prime Minister if she believed that President Yahya could really survive if Mujib were released at this point in time. The President noted that the U.S. Government understood the political realities of the situation in East Pakistan. On the other hand, practical considerations and limitations on the courses of action open to all parties could not be overlooked. Nevertheless, many have attributed a lack of progress and the continuing deterioration of the plight of the refugees as somehow resulting from U.S. policies. For this reason, the President remained deeply concerned and had concentrated more time on this particular problem than on any other subject. Criticism, no matter how well meaning, tended to further limit the U.S. Government's ability to be helpful.

Prime Minister Gandhi stated that India was not being driven by anti-Pakistan motives. India had never wished the destruction of Pakistan or its permanent crippling. Above all, India sought the restoration of stability in the area and wanted to eliminate chaos at all costs. The Prime Minister recalled the genesis of the partitioning of the subcontinent and noted that the solution, largely dictated from abroad, had left the peoples of the area restive and dissatisfied. President Nixon agreed that the partitioning of the subcontinent had contributed to a permanent instability and noted that India had a larger Moslem population than Pakistan.

Prime Minister Gandhi observed that many harbor the feeling that her father had let the country down by accepting the partitioning along the lines ultimately reached. Nevertheless, once the decision had been taken it had been accepted. But the partitioning generated a persistent "hate India" campaign which resulted in the conflicts of 1947 and 1965. Since that time, U.S. arms shipments to Pakistan had become a major point of concern to the Indian people. The provision of armaments to Pakistan could not help but affect the attitude of the Indian Government even though its leadership attempted to restrain outraged public opinion. To the degree that these shipments continued, the Prime Minister was subject to attack even from her own party.

Following India's independence, it was the leaders of the independence movement who formed India's government. On the other hand, in Pakistan it was the loyalist or pro-British factions which formed Pakistan's government. Pakistan proceeded to imprison or exile leaders of the independence movement. Baluchistan, as well as the provinces along the northwest frontier, has a strong desire for greater autonomy. There has been, therefore, a long history of separatist policies in

Pakistan which heretofore has not necessarily been supported in India. Yahya was mistaken in trying to suppress Mujib.

India, on the other hand, has always reflected a degree of forbearance toward its own separatist elements. The pattern has been clear. West Pakistan has dealt with the Bengali people in a treacherous and deceitful way and has always relegated them to an inferior role. As the situation worsened, India attempted to ameliorate it by maintaining communication with all the parties.

The Prime Minister then turned to the great numbers of refugees who continue to stream across the border from East Pakistan. She noted that there were many estimates of what the totals might be and that precise calculations had to be inconclusive due to the confusion and the possibility of miscalculation.

President Nixon stated that this tragic situation demanded prompt and extensive humanitarian assistance and that for this reason he would continue to pressure the U.S. Congress to provide this assistance.

The Prime Minister noted that India had been accused of supporting guerrilla activity but that the situation was not that clear. She drew a parallel to the problems the U.S. Government had when Cuban refugees based in Florida launched forays against the Cuban mainland.

The Prime Minister then cited the additional problems which had resulted from the severe cyclone. She noted that the situation was aggravated by the differences in religion and background between the refugees and the local population in India on which they were superimposed. This situation demanded the utmost efforts on the part of the Indian Government to prevent communal riots and bloodshed.

President Nixon stated that U.S. policies were predicated upon the need to have the refugees return to their homes. The Prime Minister emphasized the great dilemma facing India. She noted that India does not object to observers but has difficulty in understanding what role they would play. She stated that, contrary to current criticism, foreign observers were free to go where they pleased.

President Nixon expressed sympathy with India's dilemma and noted that the U.S., and other nations as well, were greatly concerned with the problems posed by the flood of refugees from East Pakistan. He noted, however, that many of the tactics which were being employed by the Bangla Desh were increasing the dilemma. For example, it was difficult to understand their motives in harassing and destroying the flow of humanitarian supplies being carried in ships to Chittagong Harbor. Also it would seem that guerrilla activity of this type must involve sophisticated training and equipment.

The Prime Minister then described in detail the atrocities which were occurring in East Pakistan. She noted that despite oppressive measures, the Pakistani military had been unable to establish control in the area.

There were, of course, continuing accusations that India had instigated the guerrilla movement and continued to support it. However, the realities were that it was no longer realistic to expect East and West Pakistan to remain together. The pressures for autonomy are overwhelming.

The President agreed that accusations and counter-accusations on both sides made progress most difficult. It also complicated the U.S. Government's efforts to be helpful. There was no doubt that Pakistan must ultimately do more to relieve the situation.

The Prime Minister stated that President Yahya continued to speak of a Holy War. It may well be that the presence of Indian forces along Pakistan's frontier had deterred the initiation of military action by Pakistan thus far. This tense situation had influenced India toward making its treaty with the Soviet Union as a means of creating an additional deterrent. Stability in India was an important objective to the Soviet Union and, therefore, the Soviet Union had been pressing for a political solution. Many in India have been opposed to the Soviet treaty and the majority of the Parliament was concerned about this.

President Nixon asked the Prime Minister for her views on how a solution could be achieved. The Prime Minister stated that India's major concern was the impact of the situation on India itself.

President Nixon stated that U.S. efforts with respect to Pakistan were designed to alleviate the situation along constructive lines. The U.S. Government had always admired the people of India and shared its concerns. This had been clearly demonstrated. The restrictions we had placed on military assistance to East Pakistan had been undertaken with our relationships with India clearly in mind.

The Prime Minister replied that the crucial issue remained the future of Mujib who was a symbol of the imperative for autonomy.

The President reassured the Prime Minister that the U.S. Government had thus far placed great pressure on Pakistan. It had urged President Yahya to move his forces back from the border with India unilaterally as a deescalatory step. While the U.S. Government understood that India must make its own judgment in this regard, based on its national interests, some disengagement would serve the interests of lessening tensions.

Mr. Haksar noted the difficulties for India posed by the displacement of Indian forces.

The President expressed his understanding for India's problem in undertaking the displacement of forces, but he noted that President Yahya had indicated a willingness to undertake some pullback. If India now believed that such a step would not contribute to the lessening of tensions, it would be necessary for the U.S. to reconsider its efforts to effect such a pullback by Pakistani forces. Up to now, the U.S. had been urging President Yahya to take the first step and President

Yahya had expressed a willingness to do so on a unilateral basis. It had been the U.S. Government's view that if Yahya would undertake such a step we could then anticipate similar moves on the part of India. Obviously, however, India would have to make its own decision.

President Nixon assured the Prime Minister that the U.S. Government would continue to pursue all avenues to improve the situation. The U.S. Government would:

- continue to assist with humanitarian relief efforts, both through multilateral organizations and bilateral programs.

- continue to urge restraint on the Pakistan Government.

- explore with all parties measures to facilitate a political solution.

However, the President stated, nothing could be served by the disintegration of Pakistan. The initiation of hostilities by India would be almost impossible to understand. In some respects, the situation was similar to that in the Middle East, where the U.S. Government had told the Israeli Government that it could not support the initiation of hostilities by that government, despite our long established ties of friendship and respect. It would be impossible to calculate with precision the steps which other great powers might take if India were to initiate hostilities.

As the meeting concluded, President Nixon expressed the U.S. Government's continuing sympathy and support for the Government of India at this most difficult and trying time.

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## 180. Editorial Note

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger met in the Oval Office of the White House on the morning of November 5, 1971, to discuss Nixon's conversation with Prime Minister Gandhi on the previous day. Kissinger's overall assessment was that "the Indians are bastards anyway. They are starting a war there. . . . To them East Pakistan is no longer the issue. Now, I found it very interesting how she carried on to you yesterday about West Pakistan." He felt, however, that Nixon had achieved his objective in the conversation: "While she was a bitch, we got what we wanted too. . . . She will not be able to go home and say that the United States didn't give her a warm reception and therefore in despair she's got to go to war." Kissinger judged that Gandhi had been thwarted in her objective: "She would rather have had you give her a cool reception so that she could say that she was really put upon." Nixon agreed: "We really slobbered over the old witch." Kissinger felt that on matters of substance, nothing of importance had



been conceded: “You slobbered over her in things that did not matter, but in things that did matter, you didn’t give her an inch.” Nixon and Kissinger agreed that in the upcoming conversation with Gandhi the approach to take was to be “a shade cooler” and allow her to do more to carry the conversation than had been the case in the initial conversation. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, November 5, 1971, 8:51–9:00 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 615–4) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 150.

President Nixon and Prime Minister Gandhi met in the Oval Office at 11:20 a.m. on November 5. Kissinger and Haksar were also present. Nixon opened the conversation by discussing the objectives of his planned trip to China. Thereafter the conversation, which lasted an hour, became a diplomatic tour d’horizon, touching on many of the trouble spots of the world, but with scant reference to South Asia. Gandhi did not respond to Nixon’s proposal of the previous day to consider a withdrawal of forces from the borders of India and Pakistan. (Ibid., Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Prime Minister Gandhi, November 5, 1971, 11:20 a.m.–12:20 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 615–23) Kissinger prepared a memorandum of the conversation (ibid., White House Special Files, President’s Office Files, Box 2, Memoranda for the President, Beginning October 31, 1971) which is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 151.

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### 181. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 8, 1971, 2045Z.

203187. Subject: Secretary’s Meeting with Prime Minister Gandhi; East Pakistan Problem. Following is Noform, FYI only, unclassified and subject to revision on review:

Summary: In response Secretary’s request, PriMin described manner in which East Pak situation was threat to Indian security and very

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 INDIA. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on November 5, cleared by Laingen, and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to USUN, London, Paris, Moscow, Bonn, Islamabad, Calcutta, Dacca, and Tehran.

great domestic pressures on her to take firmer action. Secretary indicated steps USG had taken: dried up arms pipeline; secured Yahya's agreement to unilateral withdrawal; and obtained Yahya's agreement meet with Awami League representative and consider meeting with Awami Leaguer designated by Mujib. Said we hoped India would respond if there was unilateral withdrawal. PriMin described problems in way of withdrawal and raised questions regarding Bangla Desh/Yahya talks. Sisco responded if there was merit in ideas we have suggested, such questions can be worked out. PriMin questioned that Yahya genuinely sought political solution. Secretary and Sisco affirmed our evaluation that he did and Secretary pointed out USG has done its utmost to assist. End summary.

1. Secretary met with PriMin Gandhi at 10 AM November 5. Secretary accompanied by Ambassador Keating, Sisco and Schneider. PriMin accompanied by Ambassador Jha, Haksar and Sathe.

2. Secretary opened conversation by expressing interest in Mrs. Gandhi's views on East Pak problem. PriMin replied Indian security threatened by East Pak development. Threat caused not only by presence Pak armed forces on Indian borders but by massive refugee flow and GOP continuing actions in East Pak causing flow. This creates not just economic burden but also political and social problems which can affect Indian stability and integrity. PriMin pointed out crisis has created great pressures on her. Even within Cabinet there is feeling that by following "weak-kneed policy" PriMin is jeopardizing security of India. PriMin explained that she had had some experience with war, having been in London during worst period of World War II blitz. Said she understands larger ramifications of conflict, but India has been pushed step by step to confrontation. Most of her colleagues and leaders other parties had thought she should not make current trip. She concluded tensions would have become more severe if she had canceled. Therefore she concluded she had to go. She had told army even if there were casualties it should refrain from action, but this would be difficult to explain to Parliament. She was sending daily messages to Delhi. Even from here, she explained, she was trying to hold back pressures for more action. Said she had large majority in Parliament but on this issue it was not absolutely in her control.

3. Secretary replied he agreed with PriMin's judgment that tensions should be curbed. As President had told Mrs. Gandhi it would be world tragedy if there were India-Pakistan war. We understand India's problem, which caused by others. We want to assist and have taken certain steps which we hope are in accord with Indian views. First, we have dried up arms pipeline to Pakistan. Some \$160,000 worth of items remain on docks in New York. Arms matter is now behind us. We wish to brief Congressional leaders next week and thereafter make

information public. Second, we accept Indian position that we should not equate India with Pakistan and in fact we never have. Taking this into account, we have asked Yahya if he could unilaterally withdraw some of his military forces. He has said that he would. Third, we recognize this is not just military problem. It is political problem. We have had active discussions on political problem with Yahya and Awami Leaguers. Yahya has agreed to meet with a cleared Awami Leaguer, or meet with a Bangla Desh representative from India. Furthermore, he has agreed to consider meeting with Bangla Desh leader designated by Mujib. We think this is encouraging indication process can be started under which troops could be moved from border and political negotiations begun. We will continue to work to get this process started. This is all we can do. We cannot ask Yahya to release Mujib. This would not work. We would hope India could consider some response if Yahya makes unilateral withdrawal.

4. PriMin replied that Yahya would make withdrawal from western border, while major pressure on India is in east. Haksar explained that because of defections from East Pakistan Rifles, GOP had moved regular army forces to border and violated ground rules. These forces repeatedly shelling Indian territory. Kaul pointed out Pak bases were closer to borders and therefore they could more easily withdraw. Secretary and Sisco indicated we had not gone into details regarding withdrawal with Yahya. Questions Indians raised were understandable. Our hope was that Indians could get together with Paks and see if some equitable modality could be worked out.

5. Following further discussion of negotiation proposal Sisco concluded that if Indians saw merit in ideas we had suggested there would remain a number of questions which could then be worked out.

6. Returning to withdrawal question Kaul said withdrawal without political settlement would incorrectly suggest crisis coming under control. Secretary responded that political settlement would be difficult under threat of imminent war. If war started, there could not be political solution. Furthermore, without political solution, war likely to start.

7. PriMin and other members Indian delegation stated doubts that Yahya actually desires political solution. Secretary and Sisco indicated their belief that Yahya sincerely seeking such solution; that he in fact felt that he had to have one. Indians presented detailed recent history events in East Pakistan to demonstrate lack of sincerity on part Yahya. Asked what is evidence that Yahya in fact seeks political solution. Secretary replied he wanted make it clear that US had done all it could in this regard. Haksar intervened to say this was not matter in dispute between US and India. Indian questioning of Yahya's motives was not criticism of US but was attempt seek understanding with US regarding

start [*state*] of play in East Pakistan. Jha pointed out he did not believe anyone had said USG should have done more.

8. Secretary concluded conversation referring to success of President's efforts restore peace to various parts of world. Said we fully understand problems brought to India by East Pak situation and Indian domestic political problems. US is doing best it can to help with these problems to avert danger of war.

9. Following Secretary's meeting with PriMin, Kaul told Sisco that if GOI could be assured that there had been contact with Mujib and that Mujib, free of coercion, had designated an individual to negotiate with Yahya, India could give this proposal its cautious support.

**Rogers**

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## **182. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 11, 1971, 0147Z.

205540. Subj: Indo-Pak Military Confrontation.

1. Assistant Secretary Sisco called in Pakistan and Indian Ambassadors November 10 to express our concern over continuing clashes along East Pakistan/Indian borders, including cross border shelling and report of Indian attack at Kamalpur to silence Pakistani artillery action. Representations made in view of evidence we have that Indian troops involved in latter attack may still be on Pak side of border and that Pakistanis may be seriously considering retaliatory attack.

2. Sisco told Raza that representations we wanted to make were against background of appreciation for Yahya's expressed willingness to begin withdrawal process including his willingness to consider unilateral effort to lessen tensions. Said we also appreciative of Yahya's willingness to cooperate in any way with UN to prevent outbreak of hostilities and of Yahya's repeated assurances that Pakistan would not initiate hostilities. Nonetheless we were increasingly concerned over reports of clashes along East Pakistan/Indian borders and particularly

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Laingen and Quainton on November 10, cleared by Schneider and Van Hollen, and approved by Sisco. Also sent to New Delhi and repeated to USUN, Moscow, Tehran, Calcutta, and Dacca.

over current situation Kamalpur, and we were therefore making representations today to both Raza and Indian Ambassador to caution against any action that would increase tensions or provoke incidents between Pakistan and Indian armed forces. Sisco said we would hope Pakistanis would continue to demonstrate their awareness of fact that any military initiatives or retaliatory actions on their part could be seized upon by Indians as excuse for strong countermeasures.

3. Raza responded that GOP was acutely conscious of current situation and had every intention to avoid beginning hostilities. Indian tactics were clear, however; i.e. to provoke Pakistan into steps that could be seized upon by GOI as excuse to commence broader hostilities. He thought GOP would be patient and careful but wanted also to say there was a limit to what GOP could tolerate.

4. In conversation with Indian Ambassador Jha, who accompanied by Rasgotra and Verma, Sisco led off with appreciation for positive way in which visit of PriMin Gandhi had gone. He noted we had tried to go beyond established positions in order to put forward some concrete ideas which would begin to reverse trends. He said he was impressed with PM's expression of her commitment to peace and her desire to avoid war. He felt that she had got this idea across. In addition, he noted that there was parallelism of views on importance of political settlement. USG has agreed with point Indians have made that we should not merely take steps to defuse the crisis but should also move ahead on the political front.

5. Sisco then went on to note that we are concerned at reports we have received since PriMin's visit that Indian army had crossed into East Pakistan. We are fearful that this kind of crossing would tempt and invite Pakistani retaliatory action, and we therefore hope India would take some step to deescalate situation.

6. Sisco informed Jha that we had already called in Pak Ambassador and conveyed to him our equally strong concern about situation and risks of any retaliatory action. We wished to reiterate our hope that India and Pakistan will not take any steps to undermine efforts we are making toward getting a political dialogue going, a dialogue in which GOI has expressed cautious interest.

7. Jha asked if we had independent confirmation of reports which he has seen in press re action near Kamalpur. Sisco replied that we are satisfied there is substance to reports. Van Hollen noted that we understood regular forces had crossed border in some strength last week in order to silence shelling from Pakistani side. Rasgotra noted that official spokesman had twice denied report appearing in press, but indicated that Embassy had no further information.

183. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 12, 1971, 11:09 a.m.–noon.

## SUBJECT

South Asia

## PARTICIPANTS

*Chairman*—Henry A. Kissinger*State:*

Mr. Joseph Sisco  
 Mr. Christopher Van Hollen  
 Mr. Bruce Laingen  
 Mr. David Schneider

*DOD:*

Mr. Armistead Selden  
 Mr. James H. Noyes  
 B/Gen. Devol Brett

*JCS:*

Gen. John D. Ryan  
 Lt. Gen. John W. Vogt

*CIA:*

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman  
 Mr. John Waller

*AID:*

Mr. Donald MacDonald

*NSC Staff:*

Col. Richard T. Kennedy  
 Mr. Harold Saunders  
 Mr. Samuel Hoskinson  
 R/Adm. Robert Welander  
 Mrs. Jeanne W. Davis

Dr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Cushman) What is the situation?

(Gen. Cushman briefed on the situation—text attached.)<sup>2</sup>

When you say the casualty rate in the Pakistani Army has doubled, what does that mean?

Gen. Cushman: There are five or six casualties a day as opposed to three a day before October.

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret; Nodis. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. John Waller, Chief of the Near East and South Asia Division of the Directorate of Operations in the CIA, prepared a briefer record of the meeting on November 12. (CIA Files, O/DDO Files, Job 79-0229A, Box 7, Folder 9, WSAG 1971) Another record of the meeting was drafted on November 17 in OASD/ISA by Brigadier General Devol Brett. (Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jun–Nov) 1971)

<sup>2</sup> Based on the attached briefing notes, Cushman reported that there had been numerous clashes along the border between India and East Pakistan. He predicted that major hostilities could occur at any time with little warning. Mukti Bahini guerrillas were increasingly effective in East Pakistan and Cushman estimated that up to 30 percent of rural East Pakistan was under guerrilla control. Tensions between India and Pakistan had increased as Indian border security forces and Indian army troops joined in the fighting along the border between Pakistan army forces and Mukti Bahini guerrillas. Cushman noted that on the border between India and West Pakistan both sides had made preparations in anticipation of war. The CIA assessment was that the Soviet Union was still urging moderation on India and that China was not likely to help Pakistan very actively if it came to war.

Dr. Kissinger: You mentioned the Pakistan Navy. Where is that?

Gen. Cushman: They don't have much, but there are a few ships off Chittagong.

Dr. Kissinger: What does State think?

Mr. Sisco: I would make two points: 1) we will get a clearer determination of the likelihood of war only when Mrs. Gandhi returns and we see how she plays her U.S. visit and how she plays the situation when she talks to Parliament which opens on Monday, November 15; 2) we should consider whether there is anything we can or should do before Monday to encourage Mrs. Gandhi, or to strengthen her hand in any attempt to keep the lid on.

Dr. Kissinger: If she is trying to keep the lid on.

Mr. Sisco: I agree—there's a real question. We have given her enough to get her off the hook, if she wants to. We don't know whether she does. But I think we should discuss what further diplomatic steps over the next 48 hours might help.

Dr. Kissinger: Is it your judgment that war could come very quickly if she strikes the wrong note on Monday with Parliament?

Mr. Sisco: If she decides to continue the pressure on Yahya, I think there is likely to be an intensification of the present situation. Indian strategy has been to continue the pressure on Yahya and to suck Pakistan in militarily so that the principal onus for starting a war would fall on Pakistan. Any one incident where the Pakistanis retaliate can provide a *casus belli*. The Pakistanis know this. The Pak Ambassador understands that India is trying to suck them in.

Dr. Kissinger: India claims this is a Pakistani problem, but they are deliberately creating conditions which make it insoluble. This is one of the most brutal operations I have seen.

Mr. Sisco: It's as two-faced as one can describe. For the purpose of our objectives, we must assume that Mrs. Gandhi wants to put the lid on. The President made a real impact on her and he gave her something to work with if she wants to use it. But I am convinced that any indication of progress or lack of progress on the political track will be the most decisive element in terms of deterring a war.

Dr. Kissinger: If she wants to. India will never again get the Paks in such a weak position. We've cut off aid to them; other countries have cut off aid. Even the most moderate Indian would conclude that they could settle the Pakistan problem once and for all in this situation. And if they settle the East Pakistan problem in so traumatic a fashion, West Pakistan will probably collapse. If the price for Mrs. Gandhi's keeping the lid on is for us to do these things for her politically, then we will have to consider it. But I am sure the President will not lean that way. Our policy is not to encourage India to attack or to do India's work for them. The President will have an NSC meeting on this next week. We

called this WSAG meeting to give me a chance to tell you what he has already told you. We will encourage political evolution. But we will not support the Indian strategy to force the pace of such evolution so that West Pakistan can't survive. When you (Sisco) started your movement toward the Bangla Desh, India immediately escalated their demands, so that they were not possibly fulfillable in the existing time frame. The tilt of this policy is just not what the President has in mind. He thinks we must discourage India from going too far. He won't do anything before Monday unless there is a very strong feeling in this room that we should.

Mr. Sisco: I think everyone is asking himself what we could do to prevent the balloon from going up.

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't there another way than meeting India's demands?

Mr. Sisco: India has had one demand which they have made consistently and unchangingly—release Mujib, since he is the only man Yahya can negotiate with.

Dr. Kissinger: No, they started by saying Yahya must talk to the Awami League leaders and he must not kill Mujib. Then when they got agreement to that, they escalated to the position that Yahya must talk to Mujib.

Mr. Sisco: I think the President's proposal to Mrs. Gandhi was very sensible. It's a happy compromise if she wants to get off the hook.

Dr. Kissinger: What did you think the proposal was?

Mr. Sisco: Of the three alternatives, she seemed most interested in Yahya's possible willingness to consider meeting with a representative designated by Mujib.

Dr. Kissinger: Do you think that is a real proposition? What is it that will deter India? I suppose we will know on Monday.

Mr. Van Hollen: It's not so much a question of our reinforcing Indian demands but of providing a formula to give Yahya a way out short of meeting India's demands.

Mr. Sisco: That's what the President suggested.

Dr. Kissinger: I could be wrong, but my instinct tells me that Yahya didn't consider this as a serious proposal but more as a last resort.

Mr. Sisco: I agree there was a clear distinction between that and the other two proposals. He indicated only that he is willing to *consider* this. But not only is he feeling the pressure in West Pakistan but there is increasing insurgency in East Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger: What do you suggest we do between now and Monday?

Mr. Sisco: We could do nothing. Or we could call in (Ambassador) Jha and stress again the necessity for them to keep cool. We could point out that we have put forward some concrete proposals for the Indian



Government to consider, that failure to grasp the proposals would be a clear indication of their position, and that we await a further indication of their views.

Dr. Kissinger: What would this add to what you've already said?

Mr. Sisco: Not a great deal.

Dr. Kissinger: What would we tell the Pakistanis?

Mr. Sisco: I think we should report the results of the President's discussions directly to Yahya. We should tell him India seemed interested in the third alternative and ask how he feels about it.

Dr. Kissinger: Mrs. Gandhi didn't indicate much interest in anything in her conversations with the President. She spent most of her time telling him that Baluchistan should never have been made a part of Pakistan. When he asked her about military withdrawal, she said she would let him know the next day, and she didn't even have the courtesy to mention it again.

Mr. Sisco: On the other hand, calling in the Indian Ambassador might reflect some undue nervousness on our part. I don't think reinforcement of our position over the next 48 hours is of overwhelming significance. I do think it is important to report to Yahya on the discussions, however. I reiterate that if any action along the political track can begin, it would be the most determining feature.

Dr. Kissinger: You could also have made a good case that the best way to deter war would have been to continue arms deliveries to Pakistan. What we have done is to put India in the best position they have been in for years.

Mr. Sisco: Even if the alternative would have been to get into an arms race with the Soviet Union? I don't agree with you.

Dr. Kissinger: It's too late now. We do not want to bring additional public pressure on Pakistan. On the third track, if Yahya is willing to do it, the sooner the better. The best way to find out is from Pakistan Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan when he comes next week.

Mr. Van Hollen: Sultan Khan is only a senior civil servant. The channel for these discussions has been Yahya to (Ambassador) Farland. We'd only complicate matters if we tried to use Sultan Khan.

Dr. Kissinger: Can the Soviets be helpful?

Mr. Sisco: It would be highly desirable to talk to the Soviets. We could recall Gromyko's conversations with the President and the Secretary and yourself (to Dr. Kissinger), saying they had indicated they didn't want a blow-up in South Asia. There's no question that their provision of arms to India has been emboldening. We could say we think the situation is getting risky and that they may be on an irreversible course. We might also tell them what we have provided India as a way out.

Dr. Kissinger: But we would not push the third course.

Mr. Sisco: No one is suggesting that we push the third course or that we push Yahya. Those are straw men.

Mr. Van Hollen: The political track is the only likely track. We would merely pick up the third track and try to explore it further.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Sisco) I have cleared your cable.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Sisco: The original cable was much too complicated. I did a shorter version which I hope Al Haig has shown you. We would merely go to Yahya, say India showed interest in the third alternative and ask for his reaction. I wouldn't go beyond that.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Selden) What is the Defense view?

Mr. Noyes: I don't underestimate the psychological effect, but the physical effect of our military supply actions with regard to Pakistan wasn't determining.

Dr. Kissinger: But India kept getting arms and Pakistan was not.

Mr. Noyes: Not from us, possibly, but they were getting them from China.

Mr. Sisco: (to Mr. Noyes) Are you saying that our policy on arms supply didn't immobilize the Pakistan Army?

Mr. Noyes: They're not immobilized.

Dr. Kissinger: Gen. Ryan, what do you think?

Gen. Ryan: I have nothing to add. India seems to be in the driver's seat at the moment.

Dr. Kissinger: What do we do if war breaks out?

Mr. Sisco: There are some other preparatory steps we can take over the next two or three days. We are still operating on the private gambit with Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi. If her statements on her return increase the likelihood of imminent war, I think we should move into the UN Security Council and seek some sort of restraining order. I am under no illusion about the practical effect of such a resolution or that it will be an easy exercise. But I think it is important that we go public before the balloon goes up. After it blows up, we will be in the Security Council anyhow to get a cease-fire. With this in mind, I'd like to pre-position a few things. We have started drafting a resolution and a scenario for a move into the Council. This would, of course, be the first test of the Chinese Communists, and I would expect them to be helpful. Of course, this puts the Soviets in a helluva position. They

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to telegram 206661 to Islamabad, November 12, which instructed Farland to seek an appointment with Yahya to brief him on the Gandhi visit and to suggest that he consider the possibilities opened by the "cautious support" the Indians had offered during the visit to the suggestion that a political solution might be facilitated by talks between Yahya and a representative designated by Mujib. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 7 INDIA)

would be confronted in the Council with the same reality as we are. I would see this as a preempting move.

Dr. Kissinger: What would the resolution say?

Mr. Sisco: It would be very simple. It would note the situation, call on both sides to refrain from further activity to exacerbate the situation. We would have to weigh very carefully whether we wanted to call for everyone to stop shooting. A cease-fire would be very complicated. The issue between India and Pakistan would be easy, but we have the argument that what is going on in East Pakistan is a liberating movement, so we would have to be very careful. But I think it would be important to air the issue, bring out the facts, get some speeches, and get the Council to say everyone should keep their shirts on.

Dr. Kissinger: What would be the operational significance of a UN resolution?

Mr. Sisco: I don't overestimate the significance. Of course it can't prevent a war.

Dr. Kissinger: What about timing? At what point would we say we have made all the moves?

Mr. Sisco: That could come later.

Dr. Kissinger: A Security Council resolution doesn't do a damned thing. What could it do?

Mr. Sisco: It would draw world attention to the situation, expose the facts, including what is happening militarily, and clarify where the responsibility lies.

Dr. Kissinger: Both sides would claim the other side has made the first move. The Pakistanis aren't so stupid as to challenge India militarily now. If a war starts, it would have to be by India.

Mr. Sisco: Any restraining order would obviously be pointed more toward India.

Dr. Kissinger: What if the Indians say they can't control the situation—that only the Pakistanis can control it? Wouldn't this give them another excuse to go to war to defend the UN resolution?

Mr. Sisco: A restraining order wouldn't reinforce India's justification for going to war.

Dr. Kissinger: But India will say their troops aren't doing anything and that it is the Pakistanis who aren't obeying the cease-fire.

Mr. Van Hollen: The public would be made aware that it is Indian forces which are continually crossing an international border.

Mr. Sisco: I don't overestimate the practical effect of a UN resolution, but what is the alternative?

Dr. Kissinger: If Mrs. Gandhi wants a way out, we should try to give it to her. But we have broken our backs to help her and what has

she done? She hasn't accepted one thing we've offered. She has said friendly things about the President, but they were not related to what he said. She's merely trying to jockey us into position as the villain of the piece. The question is how are we restraining her by giving her two-thirds of what she wants and letting her use that as a basis for the next move? We should just say that the use of force is not justified.

Mr. Sisco: There will have to be some expressions along this line in the SC. It will be made very clear that the Indians have refused every offer.

Dr. Kissinger: Would you want to go into the Council by next Tuesday<sup>4</sup>—the timing makes a difference. Would you see the debate as being on military intervention or on political atrocities?

Mr. Sisco: The debate would have to cover both. To return to your earlier point, I see no way in which the SC could be turned around so as to justify Indian military action. I agree the practical result of SC debate is likely to be nil in terms of practical deterrence, but I don't have a better alternative.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Cushman) What do you think?

Gen. Cushman: We think there is a good chance that these acts are designed to provoke war. They may, however, be to assist the guerrillas so that they can solve the problem themselves. We may know more after Mrs. Gandhi speaks.

Dr. Kissinger: When will that be?

Mr. Van Hollen: She gets home Saturday and Parliament opens on Monday.

Mr. Schneider: She may say something at the opening of Parliament, but may schedule her formal report later.

Mr. Sisco: We may have a little time beyond Monday.

Gen. Cushman: Mr. Sisco's plan might have a good effect domestically if it were pointed at India.

Dr. Kissinger: But we won't get that.

Mr. Sisco: I agree. We don't get a resolution pointed at India. It should be an interesting session, though. The Russians would be hard put to veto a proposal to put the SC on record in favor of a cooling of the situation. The PRC position hopefully would be helpful. But, I repeat, I don't overestimate the practical effect.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Ryan) Do you have any thoughts or recommendations?

Gen. Ryan: What assurance do we have that the Paks won't preempt the situation and move against the Indians?

<sup>4</sup> November 16.

Mr. Sisco: That's a definite danger.

Dr. Kissinger: If they will lose East Pakistan politically anyhow, why not lose in a war?

Mr. Van Hollen: It might be easier for them to lose it in a war.

Gen. Cushman: They know they can't get rid of the guerrillas unless they remove their base camps and sources of supply.

Dr. Kissinger: If India doesn't want to settle the matter, we can do whatever we want to on the political track. The Indians will just keep coming back with new elements and we will become the negotiator for the Indians.

Mr. Van Hollen: But it's also possible that we would be helping Yahya out of a box short of war.

Mr. Sisco: Yahya doesn't think we have been pressuring him. He's a desperate man. I was a little surprised at how much we got from him in his discussions with (Ambassador) Farland.

Mr. Van Hollen: Yahya asked for suggestions from Farland, including political suggestions.

Mr. Sisco: I'm not suggesting we should pressure Yahya. I just want Farland to tell Yahya about the discussions with Mrs. Gandhi.

Dr. Kissinger: I understand. I cleared your cable.

Mr. Sisco: Our good friend Bhutto is in Communist China now. He was one of the chief causes of the trouble originally, advising Yahya not to accommodate Mujib. Now he is saying he should deal with Mujib. He is only complicating Yahya's position.

Mr. Van Hollen: Or easing it, possibly.

Dr. Kissinger: Is Bhutto coming here?

Mr. Van Hollen: No. They floated the suggestion, but we said we would leave this to Yahya.

Dr. Kissinger: What do we do when war breaks out?

Mr. Sisco: We might talk a little about our contingency plans.<sup>5</sup> The first steps should be close consultations with the Russians and the Chinese Communists.

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<sup>5</sup> An undated paper outlining contingency planning in the event of the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan and an attached analytical summary of the paper dated November 11, the former apparently prepared in the Department of State and the latter by the NSC staff, were forwarded to Kissinger under a covering memorandum on November 11 by Hoskinson and Richard Kennedy. The covering memorandum and both papers are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/12/71. The analytical summary is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 153.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) When you go to the Security Council, you will not approach the Chinese in New York. No one is to approach the Chinese in New York until we hear from Peking.

Mr. Sisco: We will review every step of the scenario before we move. If we go to the UN, though, all the SC representatives will be around the table.

Dr. Kissinger: No one is saying you can't talk to them at the table.

Mr. Van Hollen: We envisage a variety of steps: a cease-fire resolution in the SC; termination of military supply to India—

Dr. Kissinger: You can count on that.

Mr. Van Hollen: (continuing) Diversion of American ships containing military supplies; cessation of military training for both countries; a broad range of activities concerning military supply. Termination of aid to both sides—

Dr. Kissinger: But the decision may be to terminate aid only to the country that started the war.

Mr. MacDonald: We have our data organized to accommodate any decision on an aid cut-off.

Mr. Sisco: There is a prior question of overriding and fundamental importance—if there is a war, we will have to come to an understanding on the non-involvement of the major powers.

Dr. Kissinger: India doesn't need to involve anyone else to beat the Paks.

Mr. Sisco: We will have to talk to the Russians and the Chinese Communists—to give them some signal as to our intentions. I don't think big-power involvement is likely, but it will require some exchange of views. We could all get together and concert in the context of the Security Council to bring about a cease-fire. The Russians will drag their feet if India is winning and if they have made up their minds to shear off East Pakistan. If war starts, there is no question but that the Indians have preponderant strength.

Dr. Kissinger: In the West as well as the East?

Gen. Ryan: In the West too. The Paks are outnumbered 3 to 1. The Indians have better air equipment too.

Mr. Sisco: The Paks are no match and Yahya knows it.

Gen. Ryan: Neither country could sustain a very long war without outside aid, but Pakistan is worse off than India.

Mr. Van Hollen: On contingency planning generally, the WSAG Working Group has been reviewing all the various steps we could take in military supply, economic assistance, trade, air services, evacuation, etc. We are keeping everything up to date. The only question is the political framework.

Mr. Sisco: (to Van Hollen) You had better mention the ships.

Mr. Van Hollen: There are two ships from MIDEASTFOR which are due to call at Karachi tomorrow for approximately four days. We have queried both New Delhi and Islamabad and neither has any objection.

Mr. Selden: One has a critical fueling problem.

Dr. Kissinger: I see no problem with this.

Mr. Sisco: We just wanted to be sure both you and the President knew about it.

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#### 184. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 15, 1971, 4 p.m.

##### PARTICIPANTS

Sultan Khan, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan  
Agha Mohammad Raza, Ambassador Designate of Pakistan  
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President  
Harold H. Saunders, NSC Staff

Dr. Kissinger had met the Foreign Secretary for a relaxed conversation after dinner at the residence of the Pakistani ambassador the previous evening. The conversation therefore began against that background.

Dr. Kissinger began by asking what had come up at Secretary Rogers' lunch for the Foreign Secretary. The Foreign Secretary noted that there had been considerable interest in how to launch a political process which in some way involved Mujibur Rahman within the limits which President Yahya felt constraining him.

Dr. Kissinger, apparently referring to the conversation of the previous evening, said that in view of the fact that Ambassador Farland had instructions to see President Yahya there was probably little need to ask for clarification on that point until we have a report on that conversation. The other question that had come up, though, was still of interest—what could he convey to the Russians?

The Foreign Secretary said he felt that whatever is known to the Indians will also be known to the Soviets. He noted an article of No-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971. Secret; Nodis. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office at the White House. Sultan Khan was in Washington November 13–16 to consult on the crisis.

vember 12 in the *Washington Post* from New Delhi [attached]<sup>2</sup> which had amounted to an Indian leak of the idea that President Yahya would be willing to engage in negotiations with an approved Bangla Desh leader. The Foreign Secretary noted the part of the article which said that India would have to approve any such negotiator. He said that India does not want to approve such negotiations and felt that the leak was designed to kill the idea. He noted that fragmentary reports on Mrs. Gandhi's speech to the parliament after returning to New Delhi were just coming in and indicated that she had not made a definitive statement. He felt that the determining factor would be what actually happens on the borders over the next week or so. He concluded by saying that it looks as if Pakistan had exhausted the process of accepting suggestions. He enumerated those that Pakistan had accepted ranging from the offer for a unilateral military pullback through the willingness to negotiate with Bangla Desh leaders. He did not see what else Pakistan could do, although the government of Pakistan would always be receptive to suggestions from the United States.

Dr. Kissinger said that he felt it would help to issue a comprehensive statement of everything that had been done. The Indians have a monopoly on getting out a one-sided picture of the situation. Putting out a clear picture that Pakistan has done a fair amount could serve as a brake on military action and a one-sided justification of it.

The Foreign Secretary said he wondered whether one statement could brake such momentum. India has created a position for itself where one statement may not be able to do that. The one possible hope that he saw was help from the Soviets in restraining the Indians.

Dr. Kissinger, noting that the Foreign Secretary and the ambassador should not repeat this to the State Department, said that he had talked to the Soviet ambassador that morning on other business. He had told the ambassador that we take "the gravest view" of the situation in South Asia.<sup>3</sup> An outbreak of war there would not be understood here. If the Soviets were thought to have had a role in the outbreak of such a war, it would make US-Soviet relations worse. He also noted that Soviet shipment of military equipment was hard to understand. [The Foreign Secretary carefully repeated this wording to be sure that he understood it.]

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<sup>2</sup> All brackets in the source text. Lee Lescaze reported on November 12 in *The Washington Post* that President Yahya had privately expressed willingness to meet with leaders of the Awami League.

<sup>3</sup> Kissinger told Dobrynin in a telephone conversation on November 15 that the United States was "extremely concerned about the South Asian situation." He said: "We think India is determined to have a showdown," and added: "In our view, sending arms into India is adding fuel." (Transcript of a telephone conversation, November 15, 12:33 p.m.; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 395, Telephone Conversations, Dobrynin, Sept 1971-Apr 1972)



The Foreign Secretary suggested that the Soviet ambassador could be asked what the USSR sees wrong about supporting the US proposal for a military pullback. Dr. Kissinger replied that he knew what the Indian answer would be—that Pakistan should withdraw from the East Pakistan border. The Foreign Secretary said that would be fine if India were to pull back from that border and terminate its support for the guerrillas on the border.

Dr. Kissinger said that he would raise the point. He then returned to the issue of Mujib, saying that he was not pressing the Foreign Secretary at all but simply needed to understand Pakistan's position as clearly as possible.

Dr. Kissinger asked whether he had understood the Foreign Secretary correctly the night before—that over a period of months the government of Pakistan would be able to show more flexibility toward Mujib.

The Foreign Secretary said that, in the absence of instructions from President Yahya, he could only say that once a civilian government is formed if it finds that it is unable to arouse the cooperation of the people of East Pakistan it will have to devise measures for improving that support. The government of that day would have to deal with this issue. If the provincial government said it was not getting the response from the people that was required, it would have to take this question up with the central government. He said he had to note that feeling in the armed forces remained high against Mujib, so even a civilian government would have to weigh carefully any action taken in connection with Mujib.

Dr. Kissinger said he personally believed that whatever demand is met there would be another from the Indian side. But nevertheless "we" need a platform to prevent the appearance of a totally negative position. The Indians have made Mujib central in their estimate of what a resolution of the situation requires. Dr. Kissinger said he personally felt that Mujib would "be devoured by the process" in Calcutta if he were released. But as of now he is perceived by many to be central to a solution.

Dr. Kissinger continued saying that it would be extremely desirable for him to have an authoritative statement of President Yahya's view on the role of Mujib over the next six months. He said that he is constantly confronted by interpretations of what President Yahya's view is and he would prefer not to be in a position of constantly "fighting a rear guard action" on behalf of President Yahya here without really knowing what the President's views are. In response to the Foreign Secretary's question, he said that it would be important to know President Yahya's views in case the situation arose where we might have some ideas on how to transform some aspects of the situation into a concrete proposal.

The Foreign Secretary said it was extremely important to avoid telling the Indians of Pakistan's positions because they will leak them in order to embarrass President Yahya. He again cited the recent *Washington Post* article on negotiations with Bangla Desh representatives.

At this point Dr. Kissinger took the Foreign Secretary in to see the President for seven or eight minutes.

When they returned it had been agreed, after some discussion of how this might be communicated, that the Foreign Secretary would speak with President Yahya and make his own personal assessment on this subject of Mujib which would be sent in the back-channel to Dr. Kissinger. Dr. Kissinger noted that if there were military action, the issue might be moot.

The Foreign Secretary double checked by saying that the question Dr. Kissinger had asked was: Exactly how far can Mujib's role and personality be used in stabilizing the situation and over what period of time?

Dr. Kissinger concluded by saying that the Foreign Secretary could wait until he got back in five days or so before replying. He repeated again how grateful he had been for his reception in July and President Yahya's kindness in connection with his trip to Peking.

**Harold H. Saunders<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

**185. Memorandum From Rear Admiral Robert Welander to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 15, 1971.

SUBJECT

Pakistan/India Contingency Planning

Prior to the 12 November WSAG meeting on the Pakistan–India Situation, HAK was advised that General Ryan,<sup>2</sup> the Acting Chairman, might bring up a CINCPAC proposal to ready a WESTPAC attack carrier task group for Indian Ocean operations to dissuade “third party” involvement.

The matter was not broached during the WSAG meeting. The JCS considered the matter Saturday<sup>3</sup> morning and have advised CINCPAC in the attached<sup>4</sup> that his concept is approved *for planning purposes only* and, should the situation deteriorate, that he may place a carrier task group on 48 hours readiness for such deployment.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, Oct 25–Nov 22, 1971. Secret; Eyes Only. Sent for information. Rear Admiral Robert O. Welander was assigned to the Chairman's Staff Group in the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The memorandum was written on National Security Council letterhead, which suggests that he was detailed to the NSC as a staff member.

<sup>2</sup> General John D. Ryan, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force.

<sup>3</sup> November 13.

<sup>4</sup> JCS telegram 7115 to CINCPAC, November 13, was attached but not printed.

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**186. Editorial Note**

President Nixon met at the White House on the afternoon of November 15, 1971, with Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan. Nixon briefed Sultan Khan on his conversations with Prime Minister Gandhi, assuring him that “we talked very directly” with her. With regard to United States policy in dealing with the developing crisis in South Asia, Nixon said: “What we are trying desperately to do is not to allow this terrible tragedy, the agony that you’re going through, [to] be a pretext to start a war.” “The important thing,” he added, “is we know, I know, that this is one of those terrible problems that, frankly, must be solved

by political solution, it must not be solved by force. We simply want to play a role that will be helpful. We will try to restrain to the extent that we have any influence the Indians. We will do everything we can to try to help you in your cause." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Foreign Secretary Sultan Mohammed Khan, November 15, 1971, 4:31–4:39 p.m., Oval Office, Recording No. 617–17)

Sultan Khan also met with Secretary of State Rogers on November 15. A summary of their conversation was transmitted to Islamabad on November 17 in telegram 208999. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 PAK)

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**187. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 15, 1971.

To be delivered opening of business November 15, 1971.

1. The President would appreciate it if you could give us in this channel your personal assessment of the situation in South Asia. We are receiving conflicting views as to the situation and how it is perceived by Yahya Khan. Some say he is desperate and cannot continue for long to control situation and therefore he would welcome our pressing him to a political solution. Others doubt this view.

2. Would appreciate your assessment of how seriously Yahya views the three proposals which he discussed with you and how he sees their relative priority.<sup>2</sup> State, for example, thinks that the third proposal, i.e., agree to talk with anyone chosen by Mujib, is a

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to proposals affecting a possible political settlement put forward by Yahya in his conversation with Farland on November 2. Yahya indicated that he was willing to consider revision of the constitution to restructure the relationship between the two wings of the country. He also said that he did not view the Awami League as a "nefarious institution." If purged of its "secessionist leaders," he saw "no obstacle to its revalidation by the forthcoming civilian government." Finally, Yahya said that he was willing to engage in substantive discussions with Bangladesh representatives who were in a position to act constructively. (Telegram 10964 from Islamabad, November 3; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 29 PAK)

serious one which we can pursue. Is this assessment accurate in your judgment?

3. The President's views have not changed. He does not want our pressure to be added to that of India, but does wish to be helpful to Yahya. If you feel any instructions you receive go beyond our discussions in July, you should seek guidance directly in this channel before taking any action.

4. We are counting on you in this delicate situation to keep us fully informed, to give us your candid assessments of developments and to keep the lid on impetuous moves.

Warm regards

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**188. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

Maury Williams' Views on Pakistan

As you know, Maury Williams has just returned from a trip to Pakistan. It was from Dacca that he reported his conclusion that we had succeeded in averting a nation-wide famine in East Pakistan. Since his return, he has written the attached memorandum<sup>2</sup> containing his views on the broader situation there. They are disturbing and I think you should see them.

His main points in brief are that President Yahya has only decreasing control over his government's policy in East Pakistan because the Pakistan Army there is "nearly autonomous." The army's policy is such that the running battle with guerrillas is likely to continue with little attention to changing practices in a way that could restore genuine civilian government.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 627, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VIII, Nov–Dec 71. Secret. Sent for information. Drafted by Saunders and sent to Kissinger under a November 12 covering memorandum. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> The attached 4-page report from Williams to Secretary Rogers on his trip to Pakistan, November 5, which indicates the President saw it, is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 152.

Williams' reasoning follows:

—Two key advisers to President Yahya told Williams that Yahya is increasingly isolated from events in East Pakistan.

—The Pakistan army in East Pakistan is operating in many respects independent of the policies and direction of President Yahya. The recently appointed civilian government is really run by a major general who is the military adviser to the governor.

—Only foreign affairs is firmly in the hands of Islamabad. What this means is that all official American suggestions are taken seriously in Islamabad and lead to major policy statements by President Yahya. Their implementation is in the hands of army commanders in the East who are not subject to foreign influence.

—The reality in East Pakistan is that army policies and operations—behind the facade of a civilian governor—are “progressively and seriously alienating the Bengali population.” Despite orders from Islamabad that the army not engage in terrorist operations against the civilian population—and repeated assurances to US officials to this effect—Pakistan army commanders continue to carry out terror raids against the population and villages. With villagers caught between the army and local vigilantes on the one hand and the guerrillas on the other, law and order is breaking down rapidly in rural East Pakistan. The rural population is moving either to the cities or to India.

—The military has picked the candidates for the by-elections to fill vacant assembly seats. [More than 70% of the candidates have already been declared “uncontested and elected.”]<sup>3</sup>

—Reprisal operations continue to focus against Hindus.

These observations suggest that it may be time to add a new chapter in our strategy toward Pakistan. The strategy laid out in August for trying to reduce the flow of refugees by humanitarian assistance has worked to the extent that we have helped stave off a major famine and therefore a major new flood of refugees. That strategy has revealed, however, that the current level of refugees stems not from hunger but from a continuing deterioration of local order as the rural population is caught between the guerrillas and the army along with its local allies.

If President Yahya's own electoral process and the practices of his army will not win wide enough support to defuse the guerrilla campaign, the question then arises what other political steps he might take to establish a viable political alternative to the guerrilla's demand for independence. Unless he can devise such steps, he may face the

<sup>3</sup> Brackets in the source text.

prospect of losing East Pakistan in a war which could have repercussions for the integrity of West Pakistan as well.

The WSAG met Friday<sup>4</sup> to discuss not only further steps that might be taken to defuse the military confrontation, but also what more may be possible in helping President Yahya develop a political alternative.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> November 12.

<sup>5</sup> President Nixon highlighted the final paragraph, underlined the last four words, and added a marginal handwritten note that reads: "K—This is now imperative give me a recommendation."

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### 189. Letter From Indian Prime Minister Gandhi to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi, November 16, 1971.

Dear Mr. President,

I should like to thank you for your warm reception and kind hospitality during my recent visit to Washington. It was a privilege to meet you and Mrs. Nixon again.

The opportunity to discuss matters of immediate concern and also wider international issues with you was of great value to me.

Immediately on my return to Delhi three days ago, I spoke to my colleagues in the Cabinet and to the leaders of the Opposition parties in Parliament about the broad results of the discussions which I have had with you and with other Heads of States and Governments.

The winter session of our Parliament began yesterday and I made a statement there. I am asking Ambassador Jha to invite your personal attention to it.<sup>2</sup> It reflects our anxiety and hope. I made it in the faith that justice will prevail and the reality of the situation appreciated. This faith is sustained by the discussions I had with you which, I believe,

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). No classification marking. An advance copy of the letter was sent to the White House on November 18 by Ambassador Jha. (Ibid.) Chargé d'Affaires Rasgotra delivered the signed letter to the White House under a covering memorandum to Kissinger on November 24. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Gandhi's statement in Parliament on November 15 was distributed by the Indian mission to the United Nations. A copy was sent by the Indian Embassy to the White House and is *ibid.*

led us to a common understanding of the root causes of the tragedy in East Bengal. I also believe that we generally agreed about the manner in which this crisis could be resolved so that we would be relieved of our suffering and the danger to our country.

I hope that the vast prestige of the United States and its wisdom, which you personify, will be used to find a political solution acceptable to the elected representatives of East Bengal and their leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On my part I shall make every effort to urge patience on our people. However, I would be less than honest if I were not to repeat that the situation in which we find ourselves has long been an unbearable one.

I am somewhat concerned to learn of efforts to involve the Security Council. However well-intentioned these may be, I have little doubt that any public debate at this stage will lead to a hardening of attitudes, which would make the task of reconciliation an extremely difficult one. This is part of the common experience of many countries. Such a move would obstruct the path of the solutions which we jointly seek. In India it will create the impression that the participants are interested not so much in a lasting solution as in side-tracking the main issue, namely, the revolt of the people of East Bengal against the tyranny of the military regime of West Pakistan, first in denying them the fruits of development and then in suppressing their legitimate demand for democratic rights. I hope that the influence of the United States will be used to prevent the development of such an impression.

We have all admired the great courage which has inspired you in taking several important and decisive initiatives to resolve complex problems. I sincerely hope that the same clear vision will guide relations between our two democracies and will help us to come closer. It will always be our effort to clear any misunderstanding and not to allow temporary differences to impede the strengthening of our friendship.

With warm regards and best wishes to you and to Mrs. Nixon,  
Yours sincerely,

**Indira Gandhi**



## 190. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 17, 1971.

### SUBJECT

Indo-Pakistan Situation

### PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary  
Ambassador Dobrynin  
Peter B. Johnson, Special Assistant to the Secretary

Ambassador Dobrynin was called in today to meet with the Secretary. Dobrynin departs on November 19 for Moscow where he will attend a Central Committee Plenum and then take a two or three-week vacation. He expects to be back in Washington toward the end of December. A summary of the discussion on November 17 follows:

The Secretary opened the discussion with the India–Pakistan issue. He pointed out that Ambassador Beam had already talked with Soviet officials reporting on talks here with Mrs. Gandhi and the Pak Foreign Secretary. The Secretary summarized those talks and emphasized that the U.S. had urged that maximum restraint should be exercised on both sides. We had told the Paks that we could not decide for them what the settlement should be but that it was important to get a dialogue started looking toward a political settlement. The Paks have indicated a willingness to talk with representatives of the Bangla Desh presently in Calcutta and President Yahya has told us that he would consider discussion with a Bangla Desh representative acceptable to Mujibur Rahman.

Dobrynin asked about the Indian reaction to our suggestions and if a Bangla Desh representative had been designated. The Secretary said Mrs. Gandhi had appeared rather negative toward the prospects of such discussions. However we had stressed the vital importance of starting discussions looking toward a political settlement. Although a representative had not been designated by the Bangla Desh, we believed that President Yahya would be interested in such a procedure and that Mrs. Gandhi should support it.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Johnson and approved in S on November 23. The meeting was held in the Secretary's office. The memorandum is part I of III; separate memoranda were prepared for the discussion of European issues and the Arab-Israeli situation. (Ibid.)

The Secretary said we had suggested troop withdrawals from the frontier in the discussions with Prime Minister Gandhi and that President Yahya had indicated a willingness to withdraw troops unilaterally on the understanding that India would reciprocate by subsequent withdrawal. We would not evaluate the merits of any withdrawal plan but discussions could well begin on the subject between the parties. The Secretary said that the Indians did not seem to view the idea with favor but he could not see what more the Paks could offer to do. He added that the U.S. Government considers President Yahya's agreement to consider talking with a Bangla Desh representative a major concession. Dobrynin said he had not known about this.

The Secretary characterized Soviet arms shipments to India as "not helpful."<sup>2</sup> Dobrynin said he would check out the size of the shipments but believed them to be small. He said, as often happens in these cases, there is more propaganda than reality to the reports of the size of the deliveries.

The Secretary stressed our mutuality of interests in having peace in the subcontinent. Dobrynin agreed that both countries would profit from a political settlement and neither would gain from an outbreak of war in the area. Dobrynin agreed that there were essentially no contradictions in our respective positions.

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<sup>2</sup> In a November 26 memorandum to the President, Kissinger reported on a conversation he had with Dobrynin on November 18. Kissinger warned Dobrynin that if Soviet "actions" led to a war on the subcontinent, it would have a bad impact upon U.S.-Soviet relations. Dobrynin rejoined that there was no danger of that, and maintained that the Soviet Union was urging restraint on India. (Ibid., Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8)

**191. Briefing Prepared for President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 19, 1971.

PRESIDENT'S SATURDAY BRIEFING

*Situation in India:* Ambassador Keating reports that since Mrs. Gandhi has returned to New Delhi most observers feel that she is attempting to lower the political temperature there for the time being at least. She seems to be telling the Indian people and the world that, while she has no intention of reducing the pressure on Pakistan by withdrawing Indian troops from the frontiers or reducing support to the guerrillas, she is prepared to wait for some unspecified period to see whether the international community's efforts to get Yahya into a dialogue with the Awami League are successful before initiating more decisive action. A frequent comment from Indian and foreign observers is that Mrs. Gandhi remains, as before her trip, less hawkish than the country as a whole and that she apparently continues to work to avoid a major war.

The above is the positive side of the picture. Our intelligence indicates that complementing this public posture is continuing planning for possible military intervention in East Pakistan and serious incidents, reflecting an aggressive Indian posture in support of the guerrillas, continue to flare up along the East Pakistan border. It is also worth noting that some official U.S. observers believe that the Indian and guerrilla pressures on the Pak forces could be gradually building up to a point at which the Paks could be goaded into counteractions which could precipitate a full-scale war.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, Oct 25–Nov 22, 1971. Secret. Prepared on November 19 by Hoskinson and Saunders for a November 20 briefing. The memorandum does not indicate who was scheduled to do the briefing, but it was customarily done by Kissinger. A note indicates that the information was distilled from telegram 11476 from Islamabad, November 18; telegrams 17736 and 17805 from New Delhi, November 15 and 16, respectively; and CIA telegram TDCS DB-315/06847-71, November 16; copies of which were attached.

**192. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, November 19, 1971.

Foll for Dr. Henry Kissinger from Ambassador Farland:

1. Have reported results of my conversation Nov. 18 to State through Islamabad 11484.<sup>2</sup> It reflects that Yahya is determined to proceed on his own political plan of action for a 'political solution' between East and West Pakistan. He considers he has a viable plan of operation going for him. Will convene Assembly Dec. 27 and expects to turn power over to civilian government within about two weeks thereafter. He gave me the impression he was zealously anxious to extricate himself from a deteriorating situation by stepping down, thus accomplishing his prime objective, i.e., the transfer of power. From our conversation I seriously question if he will deviate from what he has as his blueprint.

2. As reported reftel, Yahya is not interested in discussing political settlement with Mujib's designee, but continues to be interested in talks as reported paragraph 6 Islamabad 10927.<sup>3</sup>

3. I have definite impression that Yahya is beginning to feel cornered. For the first time he was somewhat testy during our conversation. He reaffirmed fact that he would not institute war with India, but we are dealing with a military man whose reactions have been pre-conditioned. Therefore I sincerely hope that Mrs. Gandhi be cautioned to the fullest by all interested governments, and that as a result of these admonishments she will prevent her generals from instituting any further incursions into Pak territory. Otherwise this thing could blow.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The text of this message was conveyed to Haig in a November 19 memorandum. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 11484 from Islamabad, November 19. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK) The telegram is summarized in Document 193.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 10927 from Islamabad, November 2, Farland reported on a conversation he had with President Yahya that day. Paragraph 6 outlined Yahya's conditions for meeting with a leader of the Bangladesh rebels. Yahya said he would grant "white flag" passage to and from West Pakistan, but he would not meet with a Bangladesh representative who had been judged guilty of a major crime. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 32-1 PAK)

193. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 20, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

*Yahya's Views:* Ambassador Farland has met with Yahya to brief him on the results of Mrs. Gandhi's visit here. Yahya made the following major points:

—He expressed appreciation for the U.S. efforts to lessen the tensions that were daily becoming greater.

—Mujib was not the key to negotiations but rather Indira Gandhi held "both the key and the lock."

—He expressed disinclination to permit Mujib to designate a Bangla Desh representative who could speak on his own behalf and negotiate for the Bangla Desh movement with the Paks. On the other hand, his government would be happy to meet with Bangla Desh representatives under other conditions as he had said before.

—He sketched his scenario for a political settlement through promulgation of a constitution in mid-December, convening the National Assembly on December 27 and transfer of power "several weeks" thereafter. Then the new civilian government could, if it wished, deal with Mujib and Bangla Desh.

—He reaffirmed his decision to avoid war if at all possible and said that he would not start war.

—He is thinking of a plan which would turn over completely to the UN the administration of camps for returning refugees.

Farland had the impression that Yahya believes he is being boxed in by numerous pressures that are being exerted on him at home and abroad. For the first time he sensed "agitation" in Yahya. He thinks that Yahya had decided that his political plan is his only means of extricating himself from an untenable military and economic situation inflamed and fueled by India.

*Situation in India:* Ambassador Keating reports that since Mrs. Gandhi has returned to New Delhi most observers feel that she is attempting to lower the political temperature there for the time being at

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

least. She seems to be telling the Indian people and the world that, while she has no intention of reducing the pressure on Pakistan by withdrawing Indian troops from the frontiers or reducing support to the guerrillas, she is prepared to wait for some unspecified period to see whether the international community's efforts to get Yahya into a dialogue with the Awami League are successful before initiating more decisive action. A frequent comment from Indian and foreign observers is that Mrs. Gandhi remains, as before her trip, less hawkish than the country as a whole, and that she apparently continues to work to avoid a major war.

The above is the positive side of the picture. Our intelligence indicates that complementing this public posture is continuing planning for possible military intervention in East Pakistan and serious incidents, reflecting an aggressive Indian posture, in support of the guerrillas, continues to flare up along the East Pakistan border. It is also worth noting that some official U.S. observers believe that the Indian and guerrilla pressures on the Pak forces could be gradually building up to a point at which the Paks could be goaded into counteractions which could precipitate a full-scale war.

[Omitted here is a summary report on a foreign policy issue unrelated to South Asia.]

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#### 194. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 22, 1971, 2:39–3:14 p.m.

SUBJECT

South Asia

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. No drafting information appears on the minutes. A briefer record of this meeting, prepared by James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971.

State	CIA
John N. Irwin, II	Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman
Joseph Sisco	John Waller
Christopher Van Hollen	AID
David Schneider	Donald MacDonald
Samuel DePalma	NSC Staff
Defense	Brig. Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
David Packard	Harold H. Saunders
Armistead Selden	R. Adm. Robert O. Welander
James H. Noyes	Samuel Hoskinson
JCS	Chester A. Crocker
Adm. Thomas H. Moorer	Jeanne W. Davis
Capt. Howard N. Kay	

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

- 1) State would prepare a scenario for an approach to the UN including a draft resolution;
- 2) State would prepare telegrams for approaches to Mrs. Gandhi and to Yahya;
- 3) the WSAG would meet at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, November 23.

Mr. Kissinger: (to General Cushman) Bob, can you give us a rundown?

(General Cushman briefed from the attached text.)<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Irwin) What do you think?

Mr. Irwin: We think the Pakistanis are probably overplaying the situation and the Indians are underplaying it. We think increased participation by Indian regulars is designed either to put enough pressure on Yahya to get a more favorable political situation, or to try to provoke a Pakistani attack on India and thereby put Pakistan further in the wrong in the eyes of the world. We believe the first reason is more likely than the second. We think we can do two things: (1) go back to Yahya on the basis of his latest conversation with (Ambassador) Farland,<sup>3</sup> which

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the briefing notes prepared for the meeting, General Cushman reported that press reports from Pakistan indicated that India had launched an offensive on the border of East Pakistan in the Jessore area with two infantry divisions supported by armor. The CIA assessment was that, even if the reports were exaggerated, the size of Indian incursions into East Pakistan were apparently increasing. President Yahya did not want to fight a war he knew Pakistan would probably lose, but Cushman concluded that he might soon decide that he had no choice but to do so. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/22/71)

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 192.

we found somewhat disappointing with regard to Mujib; and (2) go to the UN.

Mr. Kissinger: Because Yahya has been attacked, you would bring pressure on Yahya?

Mr. Irwin: No, the move into the UN would put pressure on India. I just think we should go back to Yahya to talk further about Mujib.

Mr. Kissinger: But if we do that, and Yahya doesn't agree to talk to Mujib, we would be contributing to putting Yahya in the wrong. All this has to go to the President, of course.

Mr. Irwin: I was merely following up the discussion at the last meeting.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you think, Dave (Packard)?

Mr. Packard: It's damned hard to know what is going on. We've got to get the facts, first.

Mr. Irwin: One way to avoid war, though, would be through some political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: That's all right if we assume we want to do India's job for them.

Mr. Irwin: I don't think that's doing India's job for them. It's one way to avoid a war.

Mr. Kissinger: But India is saying they will go to war unless Pakistan meets their political demands.

Mr. Irwin: I'm only saying that this would be one way to avoid war. Also, it is a step in a process that is already started.

Mr. Kissinger: Yes, we have been moving step by step along a line the President has indicated he doesn't want to go. You can't use the last step, which the President accepted only reluctantly, as the basis for the next step. Also, the assumption on which we made our last move was wrong. We had assumed that Yahya had asked us for suggestions as to what he might do politically, and this turned out to be wrong, if I read the cables correctly. (to Moorer) What do you think, Tom?

Adm. Moorer: We've all sent out flash messages to try to find out what is happening. There's no question that the Indians have superiority in all areas—157 aircraft to 18, for example, along the East Pakistan border. Also, they have deployed forces along the West border and have reorganized them into three sectors so as to manage them more effectively. There's no question that a conflict is going on. I personally think the Indians are trying to provoke the Pakistanis to move in the West. I have some information on the POL and logistic positions that may be interesting. The Indians have a 30-day war reserve of POL, small arms and artillery, plus some local production



capability, so ammo is no problem. They also have an additional 90-day POL reserve, but this would have to come from Iran and would probably be cut off in the event of war. Pakistan has a 70-day POL supply, but four-fifths of this is in Karachi which makes it vulnerable to a single attack. They have 34 days of jet fuel in the West, and practically no air position in the East. I think the first thing we must do is get the facts.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) What do you mean when you say we could go to the UN?

Mr. Sisco: There would be two principal purposes in such a move: (1) in the present circumstances, where we do not have an all-out war but do have a significant increase in the number of incidents, we could try to get some form of restraining order from the Security Council which hopefully would arrest or slow down further deterioration of the situation.

Mr. Kissinger: Could we see the text of such a resolution?

Mr. Sisco: We'll do one. The second purpose would be to involve the UN in some form of good offices instrumentality. We obviously need facts. But I think we know enough about the nature of the insurgency to believe that it would be a good thing to begin to move our efforts somewhat more into the public domain and to begin to place some of the responsibility on the shoulders of the UN. We have withheld a firm recommendation on going to the UN on one ground—as long as our private efforts offered any opportunity for success we thought that approach was better than going public. The Indians have already rejected any UN involvement in a statement by Mrs. Gandhi. If the reports of the fighting are confirmed, I believe any idea of going back to Yahya should go by the board. Yahya can't seriously consider accepting what he turned down 48 hours ago.

Mr. Kissinger: And the President wouldn't approve.

Mr. Sisco: If we conclude that there is little else to be gained by private efforts, the only alternative is to turn to the public domain, and to begin through the UN. I see four options: (1) the most likely development, if the military situation is confirmed, is that the Pakistanis will move into the Security Council; (2) we could go to the Secretary General, give our assessment of the danger of the situation, and suggest that he, on his own initiative, convene the Security Council on the grounds that the situation is a threat or potential threat to the peace; (3) we might get two or three of the smaller powers on the Security Council to take the initiative, after they had been thoroughly briefed; this would be a lot more complicated; or (4) the U.S., in concert with the UK, might move to convene the Security Council.

Mr. Kissinger: To what end? What would we want to accomplish by going to the UN?

Mr. Sisco: To avoid broadening the conflict. To try to get some dialogue going through some UN instrumentality.

Mr. Kissinger: Dialogue between whom?

Mr. Sisco: That's a question. The Indians would press for a dialogue between East and West Pakistan. There would be strong Indian opposition to making India a party at interest. The basis for Security Council consideration would be the reports of outside involvement. That is why the Indians are denying that any Indian troops are involved—why they are saying that it is only the Mukti Bahini. Each side would, of course, present its case.

Mr. Kissinger: And we will get caught between India and Pakistan and, more important, between the Soviets and the Chinese. I'm confident there will be no approval from this building for any free-wheeling exercise in the UN with no clear idea of what we want to come out of it. We need a scenario, the draft of a resolution, and some idea of exactly what would be likely to come out of such an approach. If a resolution results which can be interpreted as directed against Pakistan. . . .

Mr. DePalma: The Chinese won't let that kind of a resolution come out.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't want the Chinese to be the only country supporting Pakistan.

Mr. DePalma: There's a pretty good balance in the Security Council.

Mr. Kissinger: You'll have to tell us what we want to come out with. What sort of a resolution do we want?

Mr. Sisco: We can put something on paper. There is no one who can call the shots now in terms of what will come out of the Security Council.

Mr. Kissinger: We can call the shots on what we will agree to.

Mr. Sisco: Our objective is to try to discourage war on the subcontinent.

Mr. Kissinger: That's a generalization. We can do that by giving India what she wants. We can also do it by discouraging India from using military force to break up Pakistan. The Indians are trying to break off East Pakistan in a fashion so traumatic as to bring West Pakistan to collapse. Mrs. Gandhi spent a good deal of time telling the President why Baluchistan should never have been made a part of Pakistan. What if the Pakistanis should complete a transfer of power to a new team in East Pakistan? They wouldn't necessarily be completely representative but at least the new people would not be tied to the earlier regime. Is it unreasonable to ask India to wait for four weeks to see how that comes out? If we want to force a political solution now,

you would have a different kind of UN resolution. The President has made his views very clear on this issue, although he has obviously had some difficulty in communicating them to some of you. We have got to get some form of resolution which we can support. Are we trying to force Yahya to a political solution now? Or are we trying to get India to relieve some of the pressure on Yahya? These require different kinds of resolutions. We don't just want the mish-mash of discussion at the UN.

Mr. Irwin: Anything that starts at the UN will run the danger of ending as a mish-mash.

Mr. Kissinger: Not if we know what we want. Sam (DePalma), you're the expert on this. What do you think?

Mr. DePalma: As its first target, the UN could be directed toward stopping the Indian incursions. But as UN involvement continues, it will undoubtedly focus on the political situation in East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: That is what the President wants.

Mr. Sisco: The first half or the second half?

Mr. Kissinger: He wants the first half, and he has agreed reluctantly to the second half.

Mr. DePalma: That means talking among the five powers in the Security Council. I agree that it is probably premature, but we can't escape it.

Mr. Kissinger: How much time do we have?

Mr. DePalma: We don't know enough about the situation on the ground to know.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm sure we will be in the Security Council before two or three weeks are out.

Mr. Sisco: More likely two or three days. If there is any confirmation of the military reports, the Pakistanis will move into the Council. The Paks know they are in a weakened position militarily. They have taken several initiatives toward the UN but have been blocked each time by the negative Indian attitude. We will give you our best judgment on what the Security Council can do and what is likely to come out of Council consideration.

Mr. Kissinger: And how we should play it.

Mr. Sisco: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm sending Secretary Rogers everything we have from the Chinese on the subject.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> On November 22 Kissinger sent to Rogers a copy of an undated note "just received" from China which supported President Yahya's proposal for a mutual troop withdrawal from border areas. The note claimed that India was interfering in Pakistan's

Mr. Sisco: I think the Chinese will be helpful in the Security Council. There is a relatively even balance in the Council. There will probably be things in the discussion and in any resolution which neither side will like.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm not sure the President will take the position that we have to accept anything we don't like.

Mr. Irwin: That goes without saying. The Soviets won't accept anything the Indians disapprove of.

Mr. Kissinger: Could we have by the opening of business tomorrow: (1) a precise scenario for going to the UN; (2) a draft resolution, including a discussion of what we would be willing and what we would not be willing to have in a resolution; (3) an idea of how consultations would be conducted at the UN and with whom—who approaches whom? We will meet again tomorrow. Even if this present thing blows over, within a week there will be another incident. If India gives us any reasonable chance to get something going, we might then go back to Yahya.

Mr. Sisco: I think we can assume India will keep the pressure on both militarily and politically.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm not sure they want Mujib to settle the situation in East Pakistan; I think they want the situation to collapse.

Mr. Irwin: They might well. But if we don't go to the UN, what would be our next move?

Mr. Kissinger: We have a special problem at the UN—we don't want to get caught between the USSR and China in this first major involvement of the five powers.

Mr. Sisco: This is, of course, inherent to some extent. The Russians will give direct support to India in the Security Council and the Chinese will support the Pakistan position. This automatically puts the U.S. in a delicate position.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't want to push into the UN without knowing exactly how it is to be played. We won't participate in any game in New York without being sure of the real views of all the participants.

Mr. Irwin: I agree. But suppose we don't go to the Security Council? Where should we move bilaterally, if, indeed, we should do anything?

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internal affairs and concluded: "Should Pakistan be subjected to aggression by India, China will support the Pakistan Government and people in their just struggle." (Kissinger memorandum to Rogers; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 849, For the President's File, China Trip, China Exchanges, October 20, 1971)

Mr. Kissinger: If the military developments are confirmed, you could make a good case for a cable to Mrs. Gandhi, pointing out everything we have done and making it clear that in this context Indian military activity would simply not be understood.

Mr. Irwin: Fine. We have been telling them this one way or another all along. Would we also go back to Yahya in the same tone as before?

Mr. Packard: What would we accomplish by going back to Yahya?

Mr. Irwin: If he were willing to talk to Mujib, it might possibly dilute the military pressure on East Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: If the Indian military activity is confirmed, I don't think it would be wise to go back to Yahya to press him on the Mujib talks.

Adm. Moorer: I agree.

Mr. Kissinger: We should go to Mrs. Gandhi and the Soviets, if anyone, pointing out all the things we have gotten from Yahya. Mrs. Gandhi never even answered us on the offer of mutual withdrawal. Let's get the UN material and both telegrams (for approaches to Mrs. Gandhi and to Yahya) over here tonight, and we'll meet at 8:30 tomorrow morning.

(Time of meeting later changed to 9:00 a.m.)

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### 195. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 22, 1971.

SUBJECT

Indo-Pak Fighting<sup>2</sup>

The Pakistanis today claim in radio broadcasts that India "without a formal declaration of war, has launched an all-out offensive against East Pakistan." They claim that the attack is concentrated in

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 570, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, Oct 25–Nov 22, 1971. Confidential. Sent for information. A handwritten note on the memorandum reads: "The President has seen."

<sup>2</sup> Kissinger initially reported on the expanded fighting in East Pakistan in a telephone conversation with the President at 12:45 p.m. on November 22. He said: "There is no doubt there is a large encroachment taking place and it is heavily backed by the

the Jessore sector not too far from Calcutta and includes infantry, armor, and aircraft. The Paks also claim that fighting has flared up in several other locations along the East Pakistan border. The Indians claim that these reports are "absolutely false." They do say, however, that several Pak planes have intruded into their airspace, that the Paks are trying to increase tension and create a "warlike situation" and that some Indian radio broadcasts say that a "concerted" guerrilla offensive is underway.

At this point, we have no independent evidence but it seems apparent that there has been a major incident. These are the possible explanations for today's developments:

—The Indians may be supporting a major guerrilla offensive. If they are following the pattern of smaller past incidents, their forces would move the Pak forces back from a very narrow strip of border territory and then let the guerrillas hold it. Initial reports suggest that this is the least that has happened.

—The Indians may have begun a joint action that will continue with Indian regular forces seeking control of a major area rather than one of the smaller border areas that have been the object of actions over the past few weeks.

—The Pakistanis might have decided that war was inevitable and could have decided on the basis of this largest incident to date to charge the Indians now with having begun it in order to free them for whatever reaction they may feel necessary.

I held a special WSAG meeting this afternoon and will have another early Tuesday<sup>3</sup> morning to consider what we might do to help contain this situation if at all possible. Much will depend, of course, on what has actually happened and whether the action spreads.

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Indians." Nixon responded: "I want you to lay it out hard that I have made a determination that all aid to both sides stops. Cut it to both India and Pakistan." Kissinger warned: "We haven't completely cut it to Pakistan yet. That might put them over the brink." (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

<sup>3</sup> November 23.

## 196. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 23, 1971, 9:12–10:01 a.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin, II

David Schneider

Christopher Van Hollen

Bruce Laingen

Samuel DePalma

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman

John Waller

AID

Donald MacDonald

NSC Staff

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Jeanne W. Davis

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

1) Telegrams, as revised at the meeting, should be sent to Ambassadors Farland, Keating and Beam instructing them to make *démarches* to the respective Foreign Ministers expressing our concern and urging restraint;

2) State will do a memorandum on a cutoff of aid;

3) A proposed scenario for UN action and a draft SC resolution will be sent for comment to USUN and Embassies Islamabad and New Delhi.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Cushman) Where do we stand?

(General Cushman briefed from the attached text).<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Irwin: How long does it take to get some feedback [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. No drafting appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. A briefer record of the meeting, prepared by James Noyes (OASD/ISA) is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971.

<sup>2</sup> General Cushman summarized reports of the fighting occurring along the border between East Pakistan and India. He noted that Pakistani military authorities alleged

Gen. Cushman: We should get it within a day.

Mr. Packard: Do we have pretty good coverage there?

Gen. Cushman: [2 lines of source text not declassified]

Mr. Kissinger: Does it look as though this is a limited operation or will they keep going?

Gen. Cushman: They have the option of stopping it or of throwing more in. It looks like a limited operation to us.

Mr. Irwin: The cable<sup>3</sup> says that there are spearheads directed against Chalma and Chittagong. Is it feasible for them to get there?

Gen. Cushman: They have the capability.

Adm. Moorer: Do you have anything on the Indian Navy—there were reports that they had fired on a British ship.

Gen. Cushman: We have nothing on that.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) What do you think?

Mr. Irwin: We have nothing to add. General Cushman summarized what we have in the cables.

Mr. Kissinger: We have received a letter from Yahya.<sup>4</sup> It doesn't add anything. (Copies of the letter had been given to Under Secretary Irwin and Mr. Van Hollen at the table.)

Mr. Van Hollen: The first point is a repeat of what Additional Foreign Secretary Alvie told Ambassador Farland. The rest is an appeal for help.

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that Indian armed forces had penetrated East Pakistan in the Jessore area to a depth of eight miles. Other information, however, indicated that, while Indian and Mukhti Bahini forces had attacked in strength, they had not pushed back the Pakistani forces around Jessore. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/23/71)

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to telegram 11557 from Islamabad, November 23, which summarized a conversation between President Yahya and Ambassador Farland on November 23. Yahya informed Farland that India had initiated offensive operations against Pakistan, with Indian spearheads directed against the ports of Chalma and Chittagong. Yahya said that in the Chittagong sector Indian forces had penetrated 20 miles into Pakistan's territory. In response to these developments, Yahya stated that he was declaring a national emergency. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK)

<sup>4</sup> President Yahya's undated letter to President Nixon, which was delivered to the White House by the Pakistani Embassy on November 23, provided a detailed account of what Yahya described as unprovoked, large-scale Indian attacks into East Pakistan. Pakistan, Yahya wrote, would mount a vigorous defense of its territory. Yahya still hoped to avoid a general war with India, but he added that the Indian attacks in East Pakistan were pushing Pakistan to the point of no return. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 759, Presidential Correspondence File, 1971) The text of the letter was transmitted to Islamabad on November 23 in telegram 212620. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)



Mr. Kissinger: Has everyone seen the three draft cables (to New Delhi, Islamabad and Moscow)?<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Saunders: Yes, they have them at the table.

Mr. Kissinger: The President asked for three cables last night—to the Soviets, the Indians and the Pakistanis. I talked to Secretary Rogers last night to confirm that the cables would not be sent until they had been considered at this meeting. The cables were very well done, but the President wanted to add some reference to his conversation with Mrs. Gandhi. He told her we were sympathetic on the refugee situation but that a resort to war “simply would not be understood.” I have written in a sentence on page three of the draft cable to Delhi.

Mr. Irwin: The question is whether we should send these cables out now or wait for more independent confirmation of what has happened. If we do send them now, should we refer to “Indian armed forces” or should we generalize? Also, if we send the cables now, might it be better to make the *démarche* at the Foreign Minister level, saving an approach to Yahya and Mrs. Gandhi for later when we will know more.

Mr. Kissinger: What more do we have to know?

Mr. Irwin: We could use better confirmation of what forces are involved from some external source.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) What do you think?

Mr. Irwin: If we send them now, I think we should phrase them so as not to appear to be automatically accepting the reports as fact. Also I think it would be good to go in at the Foreign Minister level—to Swaran Singh. Then we could be prepared to go tomorrow, or when-

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<sup>5</sup> Copies of these draft telegrams were sent to Haig on November 22 under cover of a memorandum from R.T. Curran, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Department. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/23/71) After discussion and revisions made during the WSAG meeting, they were sent on November 23 to Islamabad as telegram 212549, Moscow as telegram 212550, and New Delhi as telegram 212564. Telegram 212549 to Islamabad instructed Ambassador Farland to inform President Yahya that the United States was expressing deep concern to India and to the Soviet Union about reported military operations in East Pakistan. Farland was instructed to urge Yahya to exercise the greatest degree of military restraint. In telegram 212550 to Moscow, Ambassador Beam was requested to seek an appointment with Foreign Minister Gromyko to emphasize the dangers of escalation in the building conflict between India and Pakistan. Beam was instructed to point to reports of Indian and Mukhti Bahini offensive operations against East Pakistan, and to urge the Soviet Union to exercise a restraining influence on India. Telegram 212564 to New Delhi instructed Ambassador Keating to see Foreign Minister Swaran Singh to express the “grave concern” of the United States over recent military action along the East Pakistan border. Keating was to remind the Foreign Minister of Prime Minister Gandhi’s assurances to President Nixon that India would not initiate hostilities. The sentence that Kissinger added to the telegram regarding Nixon’s warning to Prime Minister Gandhi that the U.S. would not understand an Indian recourse to war, was incorporated into the second paragraph on the second page rather than at the end of the cable. (Telegrams 212549 to Islamabad and 212564 to New Delhi are *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK; telegram 212550 to Moscow is *ibid.*, POL 7 INDIA)

ever we have more information, to the Prime Minister. This would give us a double push.

Mr. Kissinger: Would you change the text for an approach to the Foreign Minister or keep it the same?

Mr. Irwin: Essentially the same.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Packard) What do you think?

Mr. Packard: I think it's probably just as good to indicate our serious concern by going right to the top, but I don't feel strongly about it.

Mr. Irwin: I would fuzz the second line on page 2 of the telegram to Delhi (which expressed "our grave concern at recent engagements between military forces of India and Pakistan") by referring to "reported engagements" between "regular military forces."

Mr. Packard: I would also take out the sentence on page one which says: "GOP has characterized these most recent incidents as 'all out' Indian offensive against East Pakistan."

Mr. Irwin: If we're going to refer to the President, we should probably go to the Prime Minister rather than the Foreign Minister. My choice would be to go to the Foreign Minister first then, when we learn more, go to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Kissinger: We can mention the President to the Foreign Minister, can't we? Is there anything wrong with that?

Adm. Moorer: If we go to the Foreign Minister and the action escalates drastically meanwhile, there would be no point in talking to Mrs. Gandhi about starting a war. It would be a *fait accompli*, and we should be talking about withdrawing rather than withholding. Personally I think there's no question that Indian regular forces are involved.

Mr. Kissinger: There is no way guerrillas could get tanks and aircraft and be operating in brigade formation. We can play this charade only so long. What kind of a world is it where countries can claim these are guerrilla actions? It doesn't make sense, and we certainly don't have to play along. I have no strong view about whether to approach the Foreign Minister or the Prime Minister first. Should I ask the President about this?

Mr. Packard: We should also be thinking carefully about the next step if the situation escalates.

Mr. Kissinger: I know what the President will do—he will cut off aid. (to MacDonald) Can we operate on the basis of the paper<sup>6</sup> you

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<sup>6</sup> Reference is to a paper prepared on November 2 in AID/NESA/SA entitled "A.I.D. Actions During First 96 Hours Following Decision to Terminate Aid." The paper was summarized on November 23 by Saunders and Hoskinson in a briefing memorandum prepared as background for that day's WSAG meeting. The four steps in the proposed process of terminating economic assistance to India and Pakistan are those outlined during the WSAG discussion by Donald MacDonald. The projected amounts of assistance involved were \$225 million for India and \$29 million for Pakistan. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/24/71)

did as part of the contingency planning, or will we need something else?

Mr. MacDonald: You can operate on the basis of our paper.

Mr. Kissinger: What would we do—take the first two steps?

Mr. MacDonald: We would propose taking the first four steps: (1) announce a cutoff of economic assistance to India or Pakistan or both; (2) freeze all action on pending obligations and agreements; (3) instruct U.S. banks not to issue new letters of credit against outstanding letters of commitment balances—this amounts to about \$100 million; (4) ask U.S. banks informally not to make disbursements against outstanding lines of credit without checking with AID.

Mr. Kissinger: At what point would we take these steps?

Mr. MacDonald: I defer to State on that.

Mr. Irwin: That's uncertain. We think we should wait until we know more.

Mr. Packard: We could send them the warning to slow up. If they don't, we could take the aid cutoff steps.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree, we certainly won't do it today. Who would be hurt more by an aid cutoff—India or Pakistan?

Mr. Van Hollen: In the short term, neither country would be hurt very much. There would be an important political and psychological impact, but very little economic effect. There's still a large pipeline to both countries.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we cut off the pipeline?

Mr. MacDonald: Any aid cutoff would have only a marginal effect. It would be possible to cut off the pipeline, but it's an extremely complicated process and would take some time. They have funds in 39 commercial and investment banks, and lines of credit are in the hands of thousands of suppliers.

Mr. Kissinger: The effect of the cutoff would be felt in what time period?

Mr. MacDonald: It would take about a month to get the instructions out.

Mr. Kissinger: When would India begin to feel the effect?

Mr. MacDonald: In about three months.

Mr. Kissinger: Who would be hurt more—India or Pakistan?

Mr. MacDonald: It's marginal, but probably Pakistan. They have had a leaner diet from the consortium than India.

Mr. Packard: What would you do about the aid to the refugees?

Mr. MacDonald: That is mostly food and could be handled separately—it will be complicated, though.

Mr. Kissinger: Could we cut off aid to India alone?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes, we can do it to either or to both.

Mr. Irwin: If we cut off aid because of an invasion of East Pakistan, I question whether we should cut off aid to Pakistan too.

Mr. Packard: Does refugee aid go to Pakistan.

Mr. MacDonald: It goes to both countries.

Mr. Van Hollen: I think there is a question of whether it would be in the U.S. interest to cut off aid. The effect would be minimal, it wouldn't be felt for at least a month or two, and any war would probably be of short duration.

Mr. Kissinger: Unless India felt that they would begin to hurt in a month or two and this had a restraining effect on them. Could we stop all shipments?

Mr. MacDonald: The U.S. Government would have to take title to all goods that are now under Indian and Pakistani title. We have the right to do this under our agreements, since we are loaning them the money to buy these goods. But it would create chaos in the commercial world and probably involve years of litigation if we should try to cancel the pipeline.

Mr. Kissinger: How much is involved?

Mr. MacDonald: For India, some \$224 million. One quarter to one-fifth is on the high seas, about half in U.S. bottoms and half in foreign bottoms, some Indian bottoms. We would have to instruct the shipping companies to off-load at intermediate ports, arrange for storage and return of the goods—it would be very difficult. Three-quarters to four-fifths of the material is still in the U.S. in various stages of manufacture or transportation. Some is being loaded on ships.

Mr. Van Hollen: Unless we have unequivocal evidence of an all-out Indian attack on East Pakistan, there is a real question as to whether a cutoff of aid will enhance our ability to influence Mrs. Gandhi toward restraint, or the reverse. I'm not convinced that a cutoff would have a restraining effect on her.

Mr. MacDonald: The empirical evidence is that a cancellation of aid tends to lessen our influence rather than enhance it.

Dr. Kissinger: But granting the aid hasn't helped us. I understand your argument, but I don't see how a cut-off of aid could lessen our influence.

Mr. Selden: There's also some military aid going to India—\$2.2 million in FMS sales.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we get our pipeline experts to work on this?

Mr. Van Hollen: There is a memorandum from the Secretary<sup>7</sup> coming over. There is about \$5.2 million in the pipeline.

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<sup>7</sup> Not found.

Adm. Moorer: We're in a helluva fix. We're scattering aid all over the world where it isn't doing us any good, then when we try to cut it off we're told it would be counterproductive.

Dr. Kissinger: And we're getting nothing for it. It's not right to have military aid going to India and not to Pakistan.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have a memo from the Secretary to the President on this in train.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we get it today?

Adm. Moorer: What do you mean by an all-out attack? How about a little attack? How much of an attack are we talking about?

Mr. Van Hollen: I agree the situation is complicated, but the Indians are publicly denying that their regular forces are involved. It's a question of the effect of an aid cut-off on our ability to get the Indians to exercise restraint.

Adm. Moorer: Should we wait for the Indians to admit it?

Mr. Irwin: We should wait for outside information.

Dr. Kissinger: What would be outside information?

Mr. DePalma: They haven't captured any Indian troops yet.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Indians claim they have captured some Pakistani pilots, and the Pakistanis claim to have captured a few regular Indian soldiers.

Dr. Kissinger: It doesn't make sense. You have 12 planes against 200. It's the Germans claiming they were attacked by the Lithuanians. If, for cynical reasons, we want to play this game, all right. But let's not pretend to believe it.

Mr. Packard: I think it's okay to send the telegrams because they will not be public. But we should think twice about taking a public action, such as an aid cut-off, that may do no damned good. It won't look very good for us to take a step that is ineffectual.

Dr. Kissinger: I didn't hear the same arguments about cutting off the military pipeline to Pakistan. There was no such solicitude expressed that the move might be ineffective.

Mr. Van Hollen: The rationale for this action, which was taken in consultation with Pakistan, was quite different. The fact was that the military shipments were causing us disproportionate trouble on the Hill and with our public to the detriment of achieving more important objectives.

Mr. Packard: I would have no objection to cutting military aid to India.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we get the paper on this?

Mr. Van Hollen: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: It's very difficult not to cut aid to India when we have cut aid to Pakistan. We have to consider the aid program not only

in terms of stopping an Indian attack. The Indians have been told that an attack would have serious consequences. They are facing us down, and we have to consider whether we can let them do it.

Mr. Irwin: There would be a symbolic impact, but not a practical one. I'm hesitant about involving the President unless we have external confirmation of the attack—prisoners, dead bodies, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] etc. But there would be no harm in going with the cables to the Prime Minister, as long as they were phrased as a *démarche* from the U.S. Government to their Government.

Dr. Kissinger: These are not messages from the President. It is merely the U.S. Government quoting a phrase from the President. They aren't Presidential letters.

Mr. Irwin: The President could always enter individually later on.

Mr. Selden: How about the cable to the UN? Shouldn't we let someone else take the initiative?

Mr. Irwin: We think we should send the cable to USUN to get some reaction.

Dr. Kissinger: We could live with this resolution (contained in the draft telegram to USUN).<sup>8</sup> It's a good cable; I have no problem with it. Let's get the views on the UN approach, then meet again. Does anyone have any problem with this?

Mr. Irwin: We want to show the telegram to the Secretary. He hasn't seen it yet.

Mr. Van Hollen: If the Pakistanis are determined to go to the Security Council, there is a question as to whether we shouldn't approach the Secretary General or a third party to try to have the call for an SC meeting come from somewhere else. We might get a more balanced outcome if the call did not come from Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger: You might have a less acrimonious debate, but I don't think you'll have a good outcome.

Mr. Packard: We should not take the initiative.

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<sup>8</sup> Reference is to a draft telegram sent to Haig on November 22 under cover of a memorandum from Curran. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/23/71) Sent to USUN as telegram 212583 on November 23, it indicated that, in view of the deteriorating situation along the border between East Pakistan and India, recourse to the Security Council was being considered in Washington. A scenario for possible action by the Security Council was outlined and USUN was asked to comment. Security Council action on the matter could eventuate as a result of a Pakistani initiative, an initiative by the United States, and the United Kingdom, by two or three small powers on the Security Council, or by the Secretary-General. The preferred course was to have the Secretary-General take the initiative. The proposed resolution called upon all states to refrain from actions that would endanger the peace of the area, or that would violate the territorial integrity of India and Pakistan. Beyond that, the resolution encouraged both parties to take up the good offices offer of the Secretary-General. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)

Mr. Irwin: We prefer the Secretary General or some smaller powers take the lead.

Mr. Van Hollen: We would have to put the Secretary General up to it.

Mr. Irwin: And he is ill.

Dr. Kissinger: Doesn't someone substitute for him?

Mr. DePalma: This would be a very daring move for a substitute to take.

Dr. Kissinger: We're not approaching anyone else yet, are we?

Mr. Irwin: No.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's send the cables as we have revised them here. The President has already asked me if the cables have gone and if they were tough. I couldn't satisfy him on either count.

(9:50—Mr. Kissinger left the room.)

Mr. Irwin: (to Gen. Cushman) What are our chances on getting further information?

Gen. Cushman: We're getting more information but I can't say when we'll have proof of Indian involvement. The fact that the Pakistanis admit they have lost tanks, which they do not normally do, indicates that the Indians must be operating there.

Mr. Van Hollen: Is there any way of closing the [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] time gap?

Mr. Waller: [*2 lines of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Van Hollen: [*1½ lines of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Waller: [*1 line of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Irwin: (to Gen. Cushman) What is the one you have?

Gen. Cushman: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reporting damage to the Jessore airfield [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Irwin: Are they within range of the border?

Gen. Cushman: [*3½ lines of source text not declassified*]

(9:58—Dr. Kissinger returned.)

Mr. Irwin: We will get all four of the cables out. At what level should we go in?

Dr. Kissinger: What is the consensus?

Mr. Packard: I think we should go right to the top to emphasize our concern. But we should also begin to think about the next steps.

Dr. Kissinger: We should cut off the military pipeline.

Mr. Irwin: My inclination would be, until we have firm confirmation of the attack, to go to the Foreign Minister and then escalate to the Prime Minister, but I have no strong feeling.

Mr. Packard: It might be better to start at the lower level.

Dr. Kissinger: OK, but let's get the telegrams out within the hour.

Mr. Van Hollen: We have the same problem, with cutting off the pipeline, of the impact on U.S. effectiveness with the Indians.

Dr. Kissinger: I'm only talking about the military pipeline.

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**197. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 24, 1971.

Appreciate your personal assessments of the situation<sup>2</sup> and share your concern for its gravity. Because there may be some differences in approach within the bureaucracy, I wanted you to be aware of actions we have taken over the past twenty-four hours, and am providing information via this channel with the confidence that it will be kept exclusively to you although you may draw on it in discussions with Yahya. I also provided this information to Pakistani Ambassador Raza today on an exclusive basis. Details include:

1. Meeting with the British Ambassador today during which I informed him that U.S. is prepared to support the UN Resolution along the lines contained in State 212583.<sup>3</sup> I emphasized, however, that we would leave up to the Government of Pakistan decision as to whether the issue should be referred to the Security Council. I asked him to request that his Government support Pakistan in UN and if this proved impossible for them, to at least refrain from supporting India.

2. Decision to send stronger *démarche* to Prime Minister Gandhi on situation. Specific inquiries would be included concerning India's failure to respond to our proposal already agreed to by Yahya calling for pullback of forces from border between West Pakistan and India.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. Dated November 24, but an attached memorandum from Haig to Kissinger indicates that it was sent on November 25 at 1233Z. (Ibid.) Haig signed for Kissinger, but a copy in another file indicates that Kissinger revised and cleared the telegram. (Ibid., Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, July 1971)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 192.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 8, Document 196.



3. My discussion with Chancellor Brandt on November 23 during which I informed him of our position with respect to Security Council Resolution and suggested that we would welcome *démarche* from FRG to Indians registering FRG concern for the situation.

4. Instruction to Ambassador Beam to register again our concerns to Moscow.

5. Daily meetings of Washington Special Actions Group from which several additional actions are pending. These meetings have resulted in issuance of strictest Presidential instructions to tilt toward Pakistan in our public stance.

In addition to informing Ambassador Raza of the foregoing, I recommended that he check promptly with the PRC UN delegation in New York to ascertain their views on the desirability of introducing the issue into the UN as well as their views on the draft resolution. I informed him that we believe PRC views should be considered by Pakistan as they decide whether or not to proceed in UN forum.

We will continue to follow the situation very closely and you can assure Yahya that President is personally involved in all aspects of the problem. Please keep me informed via this channel of any additional steps that you believe should be considered here.

Warm regards.

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## 198. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 24, 1971, 9:29–10:05 a.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Codeword. 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 James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971.

State	JCS
John N. Irwin II	Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
Joseph Sisco	Capt. Howard N. Kay
Samuel DePalma	AID
Christopher Van Hollen	Donald MacDonald
Bruce Laingen	NSC Staff
Defense	Brig. Gen. Alexander M. Haig
David Packard	Harold H. Saunders
Armistead Selden	Col. Thomas C. Pinckney
James H. Noyes	Samuel Hoskinson
CIA	Jeanne W. Davis
Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman	
John Waller	

Mr. Kissinger: (to Cushman) What is the situation?

Gen. Cushman: We still have conflicting Pakistan and Indian versions of the action, but there is little doubt that regular Indian troops have entered Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: Is there *any* doubt? How long can they maintain this charade?

Gen. Cushman: There's no doubt in my mind.

Mr. Packard: They call it "protective reaction."

Mr. Kissinger: There's no doubt in my mind what is meant by "protective reaction."

Mr. Sisco: Mrs. Gandhi's statement yesterday<sup>2</sup> didn't deny that Indian troops had crossed the border. There's no doubt in my mind that they have.

Gen. Cushman: There is no doubt for our purposes, but it is questionable whether we could prove it in the UN.

Mr. Irwin: The question, also, is how the troops are being used.

Mr. Kissinger: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

Gen. Cushman: [*17 lines of source text not declassified*]

Mr. Kissinger: Why can't we find out more?

Gen. Cushman: We are getting all the information available in the capitals, but we don't have anyone on the ground where the fighting is.

Mr. Kissinger: Are we getting from the Pakistanis everything they have? They must have captured some prisoners by now. Ask them.

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<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Gandhi's statement in the Lok Sabha on November 24 was summarized in a November 24 memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon. Gandhi told the Indian parliament that Pakistani allegations of Indian aggression were wholly untrue, and that Indian troops were under orders not to cross borders, except in self-defense. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Indo-Pak Crisis, Withdrawn Files, Boxes 570-573) The speech was also reported in *The Washington Post* on November 25.

Gen. Cushman: We will.

Mr. Sisco: [1 line of source text not declassified]

Gen. Cushman: [1 line of source text not declassified]

Mr. Irwin: Do we have contacts in East Pakistan?

Gen. Cushman: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: Tell them that it is essential we have objective information on the situation.

Gen. Cushman: We have.

Mr. Waller: [3 lines of source text not declassified]

Gen. Cushman: [3 lines of source text not declassified]

Mr. Irwin: [1 line of source text not declassified]

Gen. Cushman: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: Is there any doubt in the mind of anyone in this room that the Indians have attacked with regular units across the Pakistan border? And if there is, does it make any difference? Can we possibly believe that these are guerrillas attacking across hundreds of miles, with tanks and aircraft—that this is an indigenous movement?

Mr. DePalma: There is no question that these forces are armed and supplied from the outside, but we can't make an airtight case in the UN.

Mr. Kissinger: The question is what hard data we have to support whatever action we want to take. We have no doubt that India is involved and that they are probably across the border. But we need something to nail down the exact nature of their activity and we need it in a day or two.

Adm. Moorer: They may be making a distinction between their regular forces and their border security forces. [2½ lines of source text not declassified]

Mr. Irwin: (to Moorer) What do you think their purpose is? Are they trying to cut off supplies? Are they primarily supporting the Bangla Desh guerrillas, or are they planning to go further? Are they putting forces in to take and hold territory or to protect the Bangla Desh?

Adm. Moorer: Initially to support the Bangla Desh, and then to whip hell out of the Pakistanis. The Bangla Desh are moving to the border where the Indians can assist in attriting the Paks.

Mr. Kissinger: So our situation is that we don't know enough now to do anything, and by the time they are in Dacca, it will be too late to do anything. In these circumstances, we should move early rather than later, since if we are late, any move we make will be ineffectual. That is our dilemma.

Mr. Packard: We should also think about the steps we could take. We have sent the messages to the Ambassadors for the approaches to the Foreign Ministers.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: Have we any answers?

Mr. Sisco: Farland couldn't get in to see Sultan Khan.

Mr. Kissinger: How about India?

Mr. Sisco: No reply, yet.

Mr. Packard: The first thing we can do is escalate to a higher level. We will also get the reaction from our telegram on possible UN activity.<sup>4</sup>

Adm. Moorer: I personally am confident that Indian forces are inside the East Pakistan border, but I don't think they have the drive to penetrate deeply.

Mr. Irwin: They can cut two vital supply routes with only a short penetration. They haven't done it yet, though.

Adm. Moorer: They don't have enough forces for a deep penetration. I think they're trying to open up the Paks so the guerrillas can defeat them. The Paks have only a limited reinforcement capability. The Indian Navy could prevent reinforcement.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) What do you think?

Mr. Sisco: From the Indian point of view, I think this is a substantial probe in force with both a political and a military objective. The political objective is to increase pressure on Yahya in terms of dealing with Mujib. The military objective is to increase the strength of the insurrection. I don't think the Indians have made any decision in terms of this being a prelude to something more militarily.

From Yahya's point of view, he shows every evidence of wanting to wash his hands of the situation. I think his immediate objective is to proceed with the elections and then to turn the situation over to Bhutto. Once Bhutto takes over, whatever slim possibility exists of a reconciliation between West and East Pakistan is reduced considerably. The Bengalis have always been willing to deal with Yahya but not with Bhutto. Indeed, Bhutto was the primary problem in the trouble in March. Bhutto's sole objective is to achieve power—in all of Pakistan if he can, but, at least, in the West.

Mr. Kissinger: But he has it.

Mr. Sisco: I mean literal power. He will have it if the election schedule goes forward. Yahya is willing to go ahead and dump the problem in Bhutto's lap. If this happens the possibility of reconciliation is reduced.

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 196.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 8, Document 196.

Mr. Kissinger: Do you seriously believe India wants a reconciliation? Don't they control the situation?

Mr. Sisco: In answer to your first question, no, I don't. I was merely stating one option—the transfer of the problem by Yahya to Bhutto. Another option is for Yahya to deal with Mujib directly.

Mr. Kissinger: Why can't Bhutto deal with Mujib?

Mr. Sisco: He might, but there is considerably less prospect of success. Not only are the Bengalis very reluctant to deal with Bhutto, but Bhutto and Mujib are potential rivals. The likelihood of a Mujib/Bhutto reconciliation is considerably less than the Bengalis agreeing to talk to Yahya.

Mr. Kissinger: But that assumes that the difficulty is between East and West Pakistan. Nothing India has done indicates that they want to see a reconciliation between East and West Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: I don't think Mujib's objective in March was complete separatism or independence. Even now I don't think some form of loose confederation between Yahya and Mujib is impossible.

Mr. Kissinger: So, India having attacked Pakistan, the logical conclusion is that we should squeeze Yahya to talk to Mujib. What Indian troops can't achieve, we should achieve for them. That's the implication of what you're saying.

Mr. Sisco: I have asked myself why the Pakistanis haven't already moved into the UN. It would seem to be very attractive to them, particularly since they are the weaker power and there is a possibility that the UN could dampen the immediate military situation. But, to be a reality, the Security Council would have to defuse the situation and would immediately get into the question of political accommodation. If Yahya is not able to move toward Mujib directly, why should he not use the UN as a facade?

Mr. Kissinger: Unless he doesn't want to do it at all.

Mr. Sisco: I agree. He has three options: do it directly with Mujib; do it through the UN; don't do it at all. If East and West Pakistan can't get together, the U.S. can live with an independent East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't give a damn.

Mr. Sisco: However, Yahya, by going to the UN will have internationalized a situation which he has maintained is an internal matter. In these circumstances he would be forced to deal with Mujib.

Mr. Kissinger: Does anyone seriously believe India wants a reconciliation between East and West Pakistan?

Mr. Sisco: I believe India would be willing to go along if Mujib were restored to power by peaceful means. India doesn't want war. If Mujib were back in power, he would organize an East Pakistan Government and it wouldn't be long before it was a separate entity or in-

dependent. However, Mujib, in a confederal tie with West Pakistan, would have as much fly-paper attraction for the West Bengalis as would an independent East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: You say that a chance of reconciliation exists more under Yahya than under Bhutto. Therefore, the four weeks before Yahya turns over to Bhutto must be used.

Mr. Sisco: I say they could be used. If power is turned over to Bhutto we will have more war in the subcontinent. The Indians have the upper hand—they will get East Pakistan one way or another. What are our interests? Maybe we can live with a war for three or four weeks. We won't become involved, and I don't think the Russians or Chinese will either. But we don't want one power to dominate in the area, and the defeat of Pakistan would certainly strengthen the Soviet position.

Mr. Kissinger: You say an opportunity exists to use Yahya to get a reconciliation. But we know that any reconciliation won't last since Mujib will go separatist in any event. We tell the Pakistanis "let's have a reconciliation." Then we tell the Indians "why fight, since you are going to get it anyway." Yahya may say "if we're going to lose anyway, why me? Why not Bhutto?"

Mr. Sisco: Maybe it doesn't make any difference. If we stay out of it, the situation will evolve by military means rather than peaceful means.

Mr. Kissinger: That's a phony. Everyone is for peaceful means, but do you honestly believe there is any chance of getting India to desist militarily? If the situation were reversed and Pakistani troops were moving into India, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would be committing mass hara-kari, and there would be marches on Washington. When you say we should work for a peaceful settlement, are we going to help India grab what they want? Maybe we should, but don't say we have the choice of peace or war.

Mr. Sisco: But India has the upper hand—they are stronger than Pakistan. I have not put this in terms of choosing.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you recommend we do?

Mr. Sisco: We should do nothing for the moment.

Mr. Kissinger: The President, the Secretary of State and I have told the Indians there will be consequences if they start a war.

Mr. Packard: But what can we do? I don't see that we have any effective leverage on India.

Mr. Kissinger: We can cut off aid. We can move diplomatically.

Mr. Packard: Fine—we should, but with what the likelihood of success? We don't know. One alternative would be to back up the Pakistanis, but we have to evaluate the chance of success and the price of failure.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't have to back up the Paks. It's not outrageous to ask that Yahya be given four weeks to try to adjust the political situation in East Pakistan. What is India doing other than pressing an attack on East Pakistan with a view to settling the hash of West Pakistan?

Mr. Sisco: I agree.

Mr. Kissinger: And we haven't mentioned China. What will be the effect if, the first time something like this happens where China is involved, the U.S. doesn't make some move. You (to Sisco) say we have two choices—do nothing or press Yahya to release Mujib.

Mr. Sisco: No. We still have a heavy cannon to use with India. We have shot one cannon in the approach to the Foreign Minister. But we are limited in what we can do.

Mr. Irwin: We could raise the level of the approach to the Prime Minister, or we could cut off aid. State doesn't think we should cut off aid right now.

Mr. Kissinger: When should we do it? If the Indians go deeper, you will say it's too late.

Mr. Packard: We can watch the situation carefully and should have a better fix in a day or two.

Mr. Kissinger: Did we get the State paper on military aid?

Mr. Saunders: We got a paper from the Pentagon<sup>5</sup> but not from State.

Mr. Kissinger: Why not?

Mr. Irwin: We did a paper and had a two-hour meeting with the Secretary on it yesterday. He asked that it be expanded, which is being done, and it will come over to you.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: You can't accuse the White House of acting unilaterally, if you don't get your papers here. We will meet tomorrow.

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to a November 24 memorandum from Laird to Kissinger that summarized the status of U.S. military sales and grants to India. Laird noted that, except for training, direct grant aid for India had been suspended since 1965 and \$2.8 million of an \$8.8 million grant to support a highway project remained to be delivered. There was also over \$24 million in approved military sales in the pipeline to India. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 597, Country Files, Middle East, India, Vol. IV, 1 Jul–30 Nov 71)

<sup>6</sup> Sent on November 24 as a memorandum to Kissinger, the Department of State assessed military sales and economic assistance programs for India, noting that military sales to India were limited to non-lethal items, which included ammunition, and put the total of approved military sales in the pipeline to India at over \$20 million. The memorandum noted that approximately \$38 million in approved PL-480 economic assistance remained to be delivered to India, and added that a new PL-480 agreement in the amount of \$72 million had been tentatively approved within the executive branch. (Ibid., NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/24/71)

## 199. Editorial Note

President Nixon, Secretary of State Rogers, and National Security Assistant Kissinger met in the Oval Office of the White House at 12:30 p.m. on November 24, 1971, to discuss developments in South Asia in light of the expanding conflict in East Pakistan. Rogers began the conversation by denying that there was any difference in perspective on South Asia between the White House and the Department of State and offering his assessment of how the United States should respond to the crisis. "First, it seems to me we should engage in the maximum diplomatic efforts to do everything we can to caution restraint on both sides at the highest level always so that everyone can look at the record and see that we have done everything that we can diplomatically. Secondly, I think that our relations with Yahya are good and should continue to be good and we should continue to keep very close to him. Three, I don't think we should try to mastermind a political solution. I never thought so. I don't think it is possible and I think he [Yahya] is coming to the conclusion that something has to be done politically." Rogers went on: "He is going to have to do it on his own." He added: "I think he is going to be forced to do something, either that or he is going to get out. There is the possibility that he will turn over to Bhutto, which would not be a good development. . . . I think the thing we have to face up to, and not make any decisions so this is not to ask you to decide anything, but I think, I want to express my view that I think it is probably going to get worse. I don't see any solution for—so I think our principal objective should be to do what we can to prevent fighting from breaking out."

Nixon referred to news reports on the fighting in East Pakistan and asked if the Indians were still denying that they had divisions fighting there. Rogers responded that they were denying it and that while they did not have divisions involved, India was in East Pakistan in brigade strength. Kissinger noted that the Indian brigades were supported by artillery, air, and armor. Rogers concluded that India would "get more involved" in the fighting in East Pakistan and that Pakistan's position would progressively deteriorate. "I think we have to face the fact that Yahya's position militarily is extremely weak. He's got 60–80 thousand men in East Pakistan." Nixon interjected: "He'll be demolished there." Rogers pointed to the logistical problems confronted by Pakistan. "It is a 2500 mile flight" to resupply the troops in East Pakistan. "The logistics, you know, are impossible. . . . My own judgment is that probably it will get worse, and probably we will have to face up to the fact that it will get worse." He added: "Our ability to affect the course of events is quite limited." Rogers noted that he had instructed Department of State officials to delay processing export licenses to



India and not to make any commitments on economic assistance to India. But he felt that these were effectively symbolic gestures that would not serve to deter India: "The leverage we have on India is very minimal. If we take some action against them, which you might decide to do, it would be symbolic rather than substantive."

There was inconclusive discussion about whether anything would be gained by submitting the crisis to the United Nations Security Council. Nixon then reverted to Rogers' observation that the United States appeared to be limited to symbolic gestures in attempting to restrain India. "I know it can be said that it won't do any good, and we don't have any leverage, and it's only symbolic and the rest. But on the other hand, I want you to look into what we could do that is symbolic because "I think we need some symbolism." He recognized the realities of the situation: "Looking at the balance there, the Indians are going to win. . . . Pakistan will disintegrate." It was therefore "very much in our interest to get the damned thing cooled if we can. . . . Under those circumstances, it seems to me that, clearly apart from the fact that Yahya has been more decent to us than she has, clearly apart from that, I think that our policy wherever we can should definitely be tilted toward Pakistan, and not toward India. I think India is more at fault. . . . Having said that, it seems to me that our whole game has got to be played—if you could find something symbolic to do I think it really has to be . . . [He did not complete this thought.] She knows that we did not shoot blanks when she was here. Maybe it doesn't mean anything . . . . In terms of the merits of the situation, to the extent that we can tilt it toward Pakistan, I would prefer to play that. That's where the UN game comes in." Rogers felt that if the issue was taken up by the United Nations "Pakistan will come off better than India."

Rogers "agreed fully" that the United States should tilt toward Pakistan. The question was how to do it. He felt there were several possibilities. "One would be right now we'd just announce that we're not going to grant any more export licenses. . . . We actually could embargo everything in the pipeline. . . . We may have \$10 or \$15 million worth in the pipeline, . . . military equipment. . . . We could say that we're not going to permit economic assistance [to be] committed, it's about \$11 million worth. It's insignificant. I think that would be probably not a wise thing to do because we're going to have to provide help for them for the refugees anyway." Rogers added that "300 and some odd million is done in irrevocable letters of credit, so we can't get out of that." Nixon said "I just may want to take a hard line on that." Kissinger agreed with Rogers that it would be hard to finesse the letters of credit that had been issued.

Whatever the constraints, Nixon was determined to do something that might serve to restrain India: "I feel that we ought to do some-

thing symbolic, I really . . . feel that something symbolic might have an effect on restraining India." Rogers suggested an announcement on November 26 of a suspension of any further export licenses. Nixon indicated that he wanted to review his policy options before meeting again on November 26. He was wary of economic sanctions that might prove "useless." He said he was looking for an approach that was "very firm." "In anything that we say," he added, "there should be a very positive statement that the United States commitment to help refugees, to help hungry people, et cetera remains." He felt that military assistance, on the other hand, should be halted.

The conversation continued with Kissinger's interpretation of India's objectives in the crisis. He saw India as striving to split the two wings of Pakistan, with West Pakistan ultimately reduced to the status of Afghanistan, and East Pakistan similarly reduced to the status of Bhutan. Rogers viewed the conflict as growing out of the deeply ingrained sectarian animosity that had animated the initial division of the subcontinent. There was general agreement with Nixon's assessment of Yahya Khan as a "decent and reasonable man" if "not always smart politically." All three viewed the prospect of Yahya stepping aside in favor of Bhutto with trepidation. Nixon's assessment of Bhutto was that he was "a total demagogue." In a concluding admonition to Rogers and Kissinger, Nixon said: "I don't want to get caught in the business where we take the heat for a miserable war that we had nothing to do with." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among Nixon, Rogers and Kissinger, November 24, 1971, 12:27-1:12 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 624-21) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 156.

**200. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Moscow, November 24, 1971, 1525Z.

8767. Subj: Indo-Pak Military Escalation. Ref: State 212550.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary: In response my presentation, Kuznetsov said Soviet Government has approached Indian and Pak Governments in recent days with appeal that they show wisdom and patience and avoid steps that could worsen situation and lead to war. He acknowledged situation was worsening and said Soviets intended make further approaches in both New Delhi and Islamabad designed to lessen tensions and prevent military clashes. End summary.

2. Gromyko being unavailable until Friday because of Supreme Soviet session, I saw First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov this afternoon to make presentation specified reftel, emphasizing that I was acting under instructions my government, which was concerned at growing danger of war. Kuznetsov interrupted me once to ask source of our information concerning military actions in East Pakistan. I said I assumed our info represented digest of our current intelligence from that area. I noted we were taking steps to bring our concern to attention of both Indian and Pakistani Governments. We intended remind Indian authorities of the concrete steps we had discussed with Mrs Gandhi in Washington, on which I had briefed Kuznetsov in our last meeting. We felt these ideas needed to be given time to work and we would emphasize this to the Indians in our approach.

3. Kuznetsov thanked me for info and expressed gratification that USG was keeping Soviet Government informed of steps it was taking to facilitate normalization of situation in this region. He said that in recent days Soviet Government had approached Governments in both New Delhi and Islamabad with appeals that they exhibit wisdom and patience and not take steps that could worsen situation and lead to war. Mrs Gandhi had again said that India did not intend to unleash war but she had reiterated need for urgent Pak measures aimed at po-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, Dacca, USUN, Calcutta, London, and Tehran.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 212550 to Moscow, November 23, Ambassador Beam was instructed to see Foreign Minister Gromyko to express U.S. concern about the dangers of escalation in the confrontation between India and Pakistan. The instruction reads in part: "At this critical juncture we hope USSR will make renewed efforts to restrain India and will not further encourage Indian military actions against East Pakistan by further deliveries of military equipment." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, Nov 23–Nov 30, 1971)

litical settlement. On military situation itself, Kuznetsov noted Soviet info was confusing and incomplete. However, they had received recent reports from New Delhi concerning apparent Pak efforts to provoke military conflict on the Indo-Pak border. While this info less than fully reliable, apparent downing of three Pak planes over Indian airspace and capture of two Pak pilots, if confirmed, suggested that Paks were guilty of violations Indian airspace.

4. Kuznetsov said situation in general seemed to be worsening and Soviets were preparing to make new approaches in both New Delhi and Islamabad designed to lessen tensions and prevent military clashes. Referring to our previous conversation, he said Pak authorities were still not taking necessary measures for political settlement. For example, release of Mujibur Rahman would improve atmosphere and facilitate negotiations with Awami League. Soviets intended to stress this point in their approach to Yahya Khan.

5. Asked how Paks had responded thus far to Soviet approaches, Kuznetsov said Yahya had announced he would not launch military actions but had tried to place blame on Indian side and had said nothing definite on key question of political settlement.

6. In general, Kuznetsov said situation was extremely complicated. It was difficult to find out what was going on and which side was initiating military acts. He asked if USG had any new suggestions. I said we had no formula for solution but felt Indians were providing support to insurgents in East Pakistan, which amounted to hostile act against Pakistan. Kuznetsov reiterated his earlier view that responsibility lay on Pakistan for present situation. He expressed hope that US side would use its good offices to convince Pak authorities to see that main step leading to normalization of situation in East Pakistan and would be speediest possible implementation of political arrangements taking into account will of East Pak population as expressed in Dec 1970 elections.

7. In closing, Kuznetsov urged that we keep in contact and emphasized that Soviets were also working with both sides to keep situation from getting out of control.

**Beam**

**201. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 25, 1971, 0303Z.

214136. Subject: Secretary's Meeting with Ambassador Raza.

1. Secretary Rogers called in Ambassador Raza of Pakistan November 24 to discuss current crisis and inform him of steps just taken with India. Minister Farooqi, Sisco, Laingen and Holmes also present.

2. Secy Rogers said USG deeply concerned with recent developments in South Asia. Secretary said he had just finished talking with Indian Chargé<sup>2</sup> and had (a) urged maximum Indian restraint, (b) pointed out consequences of escalation which were "almost beyond comprehension," (c) noted Yahya's earlier offer of unilateral withdrawal from borders if followed by an appropriate Indian response, and (d) expressed our difficulty in understanding why India had not responded more favorably. Secretary said he had just returned from long meeting with Pres. Nixon and stated that President feels strongly on need for maximum restraint. Secretary said "You know and Yahya knows how strongly we feel about need to resolve this problem." Told Raza we had also been in touch again with Soviets on need to achieve restraint. Secretary expressed hope all would act with restraint.

3. Raza mentioned alleged U.S. press statements quoting Dept as saying it has no evidence to substantiate Pakistani claims of Indian attack. Secretary replied that we have simply said "we have no independent information to confirm or deny" the Pakistani charges or the Indian denials. The USG does not want to be put in position of being asked to judge reports of a conflicting nature. Again referring to press report Raza said he had heard that USG had requested urgent meeting UNSC. Secy said this obviously erroneous report; said we understood GOP has recourse to UN under consideration and would be ready to discuss this with GOP whenever it wished do so.

**Irwin**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by James H. Holmes (NEA/PAF) on November 24; cleared by Laingen, Quainton, and Van Hollen; and approved by Sisco. Repeated to New Delhi, London, Moscow, Tehran, USUN, Kabul, Dacca, and Calcutta.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 202.

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**202. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 25, 1971, 0314Z.

214138. Subj: South Asia Situation.

1. Secretary called in Indian Chargé Rasgotra November 25 [24] to discuss South Asia situation. Sisco and Quainton present from NEA. Rasgotra accompanied by First Secretary Verma.

2. Secretary began by stating that basic US position was to urge both sides to exercise maximum restraint. Nothing can come out of hostilities except greater tragedy for people in immediate vicinity and for millions of others. Secretary noted that he had just had long conversation with President Nixon and that President had expressed appreciation for his discussion with Prime Minister Gandhi and for assurance he had received that India would not initiate hostilities. Secretary noted that we had taken various positive steps. We have dried up military pipeline. We have continued to give maximum assistance for refugee relief. We have passed on President Yahya's willingness to take first step in withdrawing troops if other side reciprocated. We very much hope that proposal could be reconsidered. We have also put forward ideas in order to get political negotiations started looking towards a political settlement. We agree a political settlement is essential. Secretary said he could not emphasize too much the attitude which the US Government and people would have to take if war breaks out. He stated it is very difficult to get at facts, since both sides engaged in combat. We would like impartial observers to find out what was happening. Secretary asked whether Rasgotra had any ideas how this might be done.

3. Rasgotra said he had no suggestions. He admitted Pakistanis saying one thing and GOI another. It was GOI duty keep USG informed of situation as it saw it. Rasgotra denied facts of Schanberg article in November 25 *New York Times* reporting that Schanberg had seen Indian forces crossing borders. He acknowledged that skirmishes had taken place but insisted that India had no interest in precipitating a war.

4. Secretary said he wished to stress President's deep personal concern at recent turn of events. We have friendly relations with India and Pakistan. In this situation if forces could be withdrawn and separated a distance, so that neither side could take advantage of situation,

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted on November 24 by Quainton, cleared in S/S by Eliot, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to Islamabad, London, Moscow, Dacca, and USUN.

it would be a good thing. Sisco noted statement of Indian spokesman November 25 that troops have orders giving them right to cross borders in self defense. This was an added factor of concern and underscored need to disengage.

5. Rasgotra said he would pass on to New Delhi President's concern. He thought spokesman's announcement was nothing new and was consistent with earlier statement by Defense Minister that if India attacked it would reply. India had no intention of making major invasion.

6. Secretary said he wished to close by saying we do not see any hope of cooling situation unless both sides show willingness to disengage and get political process started. Sisco said we would particularly appreciate getting GOI's concrete reaction to our proposals on withdrawal, Rasgotra asked whether we had any indication of where and when Pakistan would withdraw. Sisco said no, but GOP was willing to take first step. India and Pakistan would have to work out details.

7. Sisco also noted that we had told Prime Minister of our ideas for political discussions between Bangla Desh representatives and GOP. Said we had looked at Prime Minister's most recent letter<sup>2</sup> but had found no answer to our proposals but only reiteration of position that Mujib should be released. Rasgotra said that in order to react on second point, GOI would have to get BD reaction. There had been no reaction to date.

8. Rasgotra said he did not know whether GOI could accept withdrawal proposal. Secretary noted that it not a question of accepting anything, merely of discussing with GOP of whether it possible or not. Sisco added that we would hope GOI would be willing to discuss whatever is possible by way of withdrawal. We could facilitate means of discussion but we have no blueprint or detailed solution. Secretary said that it would be difficult for American public to understand how India could say it did not want hostilities and yet would not disengage because it did not know terms of disengagement. Rasgotra noted that if India withdrew it would leave basic situation in East Pakistan unchanged. He asked whether there had been any change in Pak attitude towards use of military in East Pakistan. Sisco said there had been no change, but GOP claimed that as long as Mukti Bahini supported by Indian troops was active in East Pakistan it would not be possible to reduce military actions.

**Irwin**

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<sup>2</sup> Document 189.

203. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan:* Reports in the last twenty-four hours do not reflect an escalation of the fighting. The principal activity in that period has been diplomatic.

Indian Foreign Minister Singh in a rambling two-hour conversation with Ambassador Keating made these points:

—Even now, it is not too late for President Yahya to make a dramatic political gesture. The situation would be immediately defused by such a gesture. This should involve negotiations with East Pakistan's elected representatives and not going ahead with "his farce of elections." He thought Yahya could still free Mujib and start talks—if not overnight, perhaps in two or three weeks.

—If Pakistan withdrew its troops from the border then another situation would arise and India would certainly consider that situation. However, Yahya is only prepared to withdraw contingent on India's reciprocal withdrawal.

—Pakistani talks of an Indian offensive was to provide an alibi for Pakistani losses. Singh said "I would like to say categorically that Indian troops are not there" (in East Pakistan). The Indian Army had gone into action when its own positions were attacked.

President Yahya saw Ambassador Farland early this morning. Reports so far—still coming in—say that Yahya made these points:

—In response to a tentative suggestion by Farland, Yahya said with enthusiasm that he would advise his UN Ambassador immediately to institute a request for UN observers on the Pakistani side of the border.

—He has decided next week to tell his UN Ambassador to take up with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (Prince Sadruddin) the idea of inviting a large UN group to take complete charge of refugees returning to East Pakistan. The UN would have control from establishing corridors to the border to resettlement in the villages.

—He would continue to exercise the greatest possible degree of military restraint.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, November 17–30, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.



A further report will be furnished if later telegrams reveal more.

Indian High Commissioner Atal has returned to Islamabad from high-level consultations in New Delhi “carrying an important message.” Atal is an old friend of Yahya’s. After a long conversation with Yahya a week ago, Atal was reportedly impressed with Yahya’s plan to turn his government over to civilian leaders. Atal returned to New Delhi and, according to [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reports from there, he planned to urge Mrs. Gandhi to give Yahya’s political timetable a chance. We have had no reports yet on the outcome of those talks except for the fact that he is now back in Islamabad asking to see Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan immediately.

On other diplomatic fronts, the press reports that Soviet Ambassador Rodionov has delivered a note to Yahya, but we have no firm knowledge yet of its contents. Press reports also indicate that Chou En-lai reaffirmed the Chinese support for Pakistan stated to the Pakistani delegation two weeks ago, urged discussions to avoid war and accused India of intervention in Pakistan’s affairs.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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#### **204. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, November 26, 1971, 0749Z.

[*number not declassified*] 1. Met with Yahya 0930 hours local this morning.<sup>2</sup> In conversation judiciously drew from info contained your wire of the 24th.<sup>3</sup> Specifically assured Yahya that President is personally involved in all aspects of the problem.

2. Yahya is continuing to exercise maximum restraint, but expressed regretfully that there was limit thereto in event India renews

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret. Received at 10:40 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> This conversation was also reported to the Department of State in telegram 11696 from Islamabad, November 26. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL INDIA–PAK)

<sup>3</sup> Document 201.

attacks. Immediately bought my suggestion that he ask for UN observers on Pak side of border even though none stationed on Indian side.

3. If tilt towards Pakistan becomes evident, and as further proof of GOI's military aggression becomes public, you might wish consider cut-off of military spare parts to India as evidence even-handed policy in subcontinent.

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## 205. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 27, 1971, 0058Z.

214924. For Ambassador. Subject: Presidential Message to Mrs. Gandhi.

1. In view of further deterioration in Indo-Pak situation you should at request of President seek earliest possible appointment with Prime Minister to present following letter.

2. "Dear Madame Prime Minister:

I have read with care your letter of November 18<sup>2</sup> in which you shared with me your most recent thoughts on the current situation in South Asia. I very much share your hope that our discussions and the continuing dialogue between us will indeed clear away misunderstandings and lead to the strengthening of the friendship between India and the United States. Your visit to Washington helped to clarify views about many of the problems affecting South Asia and about the steps which are required to achieve a viable political solution. Hostilities between India and Pakistan would negate the efforts which we hoped to make toward such a solution. I appreciate your assurance that you will make every effort to urge patience on your people.

Unfortunately in recent days the danger of war has increased. I am distressed at the recent deterioration of the situation and at the ominous trend of events. Military engagements along India's border with East Pakistan have increased in number and strength. Tanks, aircraft

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-US. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Quainton and Sisco on November 25, cleared by Van Hollen and Kissinger, and approved by Irwin. Repeated to Islamabad, Dacca, Moscow, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> Document 189.

and regular forces have been involved on both sides. In this connection, I note your Government has confirmed that your armed forces have been engaged on Pakistani territory. The situation has reached a critical stage and there is danger of all-out hostilities. As I indicated to you during our visit, the American people would not understand if Indian actions led to broad-scale hostilities. Hostilities would inevitably affect our ability to be helpful in many other ways.

In our conversations, I mentioned to you that President Yahya would be willing to take the first step in disengaging his forces on the frontier with West Pakistan provided India were willing to take reciprocal action subsequently. I have not heard from you on the point, and I hope you would agree promptly to designate a representative who could discuss a limited disengagement with a representative named by President Yahya. On the frontier of East Pakistan he has agreed to permit the stationing of UN observers even if India does not reciprocate. Such steps would be in the interests of both India and Pakistan and of peace in the world. It is only in a defused situation that progress can be made in the direction of a political settlement for which we continue to work.

In view of the seriousness of the situation, I have also written to President Yahya and Premier Kosygin.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon"

3. In making presentation Ambassador should stress the President's deep personal concern at the developments of recent days, reiterate the degree to which an Indian decision to have recourse to war would not be understood in the United States, and complications for US-Indian relations.

**Irwin**

**206. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 27, 1971, 0101Z.

214925. For Ambassador Farland. Subj: Presidential Message to President Yahya. Ref: State 212620.<sup>2</sup>

1. This cable contains Presidential letter to Yahya for delivery soonest.

2. As you will see from septels<sup>3</sup> President has written to Mrs. Gandhi and PM Kosygin to urge that India agree promptly to talks with Pakistan looking towards mutual withdrawal of forces. In presenting President's letter to Yahya, you should stress that we have urged GOI to name a representative promptly who could talk to a representative named by Yahya on how to achieve mutual withdrawals. You should also tell Yahya that we have also indicated to GOI willingness of Yahya to take first step in this regard, provided there is assurance of an Indian response. You will also want to tell President Yahya that we are informing Mrs. Gandhi of willingness expressed to you by Yahya in your conversation November 26 (Islamabad 11710)<sup>4</sup> to consider UN observers on Pak side of East Pak borders.

3. For your information we believe GOI and GOP high level military representatives are best way to proceed; we do not want to get into middle of trying to work out details of disengagement. This has to be done on ground by military reps of two governments.

4. Text of letter to Yahya follows:

"Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your letter of November 22 in which you describe the deepening conflict along your country's eastern borders with India. I am grateful to you for the continued friendship and candor in our relationship which your letter represents. You know the importance I attach to this.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Laingen on November 25; cleared by Van Hollen, Sisco, and Kissinger; and approved by Acting Secretary Irwin. Repeated to New Delhi, Moscow, London, USUN, Tehran, Calcutta, and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 212620 to Islamabad, November 23, transmitted the text of the letter from President Yahya to President Nixon, which was received at the White House on November 23; see footnote 4, Document 196.

<sup>3</sup> Documents 205 and 207.

<sup>4</sup> Dated November 26. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK)

I am especially gratified to have reaffirmation of your strong desire to avoid what you so wisely say would be a senseless and destructive war with India. I have asked Ambassador Farland to convey to you directly what we have been trying to do recently, as friends of both Pakistan and India, to counsel restraint, to accomplish a withdrawal of forces, and to contribute to a lessening of tensions. I have made clear to the Government of India that the people and government of this country would not understand it if Indian actions led to broad scale hostilities. We are also continuing to make our views known on this to the Soviets, at the highest level.

Mr. President, my government intends to continue as a concerned friend of Pakistan to act in ways that hopefully might help prevent war between your country and India.

I have asked Ambassador Farland to keep in closest touch with you and your associates in the days ahead. We will welcome any suggestion your government may wish to discuss with us that will help reduce the risk of further conflict in South Asia.

With warm regards,  
Richard M. Nixon"

Irwin

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**207. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 27, 1971, 0103Z.

214926. For Ambassador. Subject: South Asian Crisis.

1. We are increasingly concerned at deteriorating military situation in South Asia and at prospect of full-scale hostilities between India and Pakistan in near future. You should seek earliest possible opportunity to present following letter from President to Chairman Kosygin.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Quainton and Sisco on November 25; cleared by Davies, Van Hollen, and Kissinger; and approved by Acting Secretary Irwin. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, Dacca, and USUN.

2. "Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have been following extremely closely developments on the South Asian sub-continent. The recent border incidents which have involved engagements between Indian and Pakistani aircraft, tanks, and artillery in the Jessore sector of East Pakistan have been of particular concern to me, as I am sure they have been to you. The situation has reached a point at which there appears to be an imminent danger of full-scale hostilities between India and Pakistan.

As Ambassador Beam has made clear to Foreign Minister Gromyko and Mr. Kuznetsov, the United States Government is doing all in its power to assist in deescalating the crisis. It is neither in the interests of the United States nor of the Soviet Union that there be war in South Asia. I welcome the assurances that your Government is using its influence to promote a peaceful resolution of this crisis.

In order to deescalate the crisis, we have proposed to the Governments of India and Pakistan that they withdraw their forces a limited distance from the frontiers. President Yahya has indicated his willingness to take the first step of withdrawal on the West Pakistan-Indian frontier if he could be assured that the Indians would reciprocate subsequently. On the frontier of East Pakistan he has agreed to permit the stationing of UN observers even if India does not reciprocate. I believe that these measures would directly contribute to a lowering of tension and would make possible the pursuit of the political settlement. I hope that your Government would give support to these ideas and, in connection with the pullback proposal, encourage India and Pakistan to designate promptly high level representatives who could work out the details.

Finally, I agree fully that our governments should continue to consult closely on this matter.

Sincerely yours,  
Richard Nixon"

**Irwin**

208. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan*: Active fighting continues in the border areas of East Pakistan. Indian officials seem increasingly open about the fact that Indian troops have gone across the border, but they continue to maintain that the crossings are to quell Pakistani shelling or in some other act of self-defense. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] the Pakistani army in East Pakistan expects to be able to defend the province for a month or more and to limit Indian penetrations to 10 or 15 miles if the Indians do not use air power.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan Sunday<sup>2</sup> sent a message to U Thant through the Pakistani ambassador at the UN asking that UN observers be stationed on the East Pakistan borders as soon as possible. He said a public announcement would be made today.

During a two-hour talk with Ambassador Farland Saturday<sup>3</sup> evening, President Yahya said in response to an indication of interest from Farland that he would arrange a meeting for Farland tomorrow with A. K. Brohi, the distinguished Pakistani lawyer who has been defending Mujibur Rahman. Yahya said the prosecution in Mujib's trial had completed its case and the trial had adjourned for a few days while Brohi prepares the defense. Farland says he had been aware from confidential sources that Brohi had been hopeful of contacting him. Several competent newsmen have reported being told that Brohi has been serving as a go-between in political negotiations between Yahya and Mujib.

Ambassador Keating's report on his meeting with Mrs. Gandhi is just coming in and will be reported in a supplementary note.<sup>4</sup>

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, November 17–30, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> November 28.

<sup>3</sup> November 27.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 5, Document 209.

209. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 29, 1971, 2:36–3:36 p.m.

SUBJECT

South Asia

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

John N. Irwin, II

Joseph Sisco

Christopher Van Hollen

Samuel DePalma

Bruce Laingen

David Schneider

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman

John Waller

AID Staff

Maurice Williams

Donald MacDonald

NSC Staff

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

Adm. Robert O. Welander

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

1. the question of the extent of the cutoff of military assistance to India (whether to suspend issuance of new licenses or to cut off provision of material in the pipeline for which licenses had already been granted) would be presented to the President for decision [*1 line of source text not declassified*];

2. we will not take the initiative or encourage others to take the initiative to call a Security Council meeting; however, if the issue moves into the SC, we will take a position along the lines of the draft resolution prepared by State and the draft speech prepared for Ambassador Bush, once it has been reviewed and amended, as required.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Codeword. 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 James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Jan–Nov) 1971.



Mr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Cushman) Bob, can you tell us where we stand?

(General Cushman briefed from the text attached at Tab A.)<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: Do you think the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad was acting on his own in his meeting with Yahya?<sup>3</sup>

Gen. Cushman: That's a very puzzling situation. In a later conversation at a party with Ambassador Farland, he didn't seem to know what messages he had sent to New Delhi or where the game stood. There were indications that he and Kaul did not see eye to eye, but he certainly wasn't transmitting the same message as New Delhi.

Mr. Kissinger: Did I understand that he didn't know the content of the messages he was *sending* to New Delhi or of the messages he was receiving from New Delhi?

Gen. Cushman: The messages he had *sent* to New Delhi.

Mr. Kissinger: Hasn't he just come from New Delhi?

Gen. Cushman: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Moorer) What are your views on the military side?

Adm. Moorer: Our intelligence is about the same. We did have a report of a remark by Yahya at a party to the effect that "You won't see me for a day or two—I am going to the border to lead war operations." The logistic situation is such that the Pakistan forces in East Pakistan will run out of supplies—mainly ammunition—in a short time, and Yahya may be forced to move in the West. Certainly the situation is more critical than it was last week.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the attached outline for his briefing, General Cushman reported that there had been no dramatic change in the military situation in East Pakistan since he had briefed the WSAG on November 24. India had seven divisions massed along the border with East Pakistan, but Cushman noted that most of the fighting within East Pakistan was being done by the Mukti Bahini supported by Indian artillery, armor, and, on occasion, troops. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971)

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 11740 from Islamabad, November 27, Ambassador Farland reported on a conversation with the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, J.K. Atal, in which Atal indicated that he intended to try to promote a rapprochement between India and Pakistan. His idea was to promote a meeting between proscribed members of the Awami League and representatives of Yahya Khan's government. He considered that Mujibur Rahman was no longer important and his release was not a necessary precondition to such a dialogue. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK) Farland passed along Atal's suggestion for a meeting with Awami League leaders to President Yahya later on November 27. Yahya observed that Atal's suggestion was so much at variance with his government's position, particularly with regard to Mujibur Rahman, that it must reflect the fact that he was inadequately briefed before taking up his new position in Pakistan. (Telegram 11759 from Islamabad, November 29, *ibid.*)

Mr. Irwin: What is your estimate of the time limit for the Pakistani supplies?

Adm. Moorer: Less than 30 days.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Sisco) Will you give us a rundown on the diplomatic moves.

Mr. Sisco: The principal move, of course, was the President's messages to Mrs. Gandhi, Kosygin and Yahya.<sup>4</sup> The focus of the message to Mrs. Gandhi was to try to get a positive response to the concrete proposals for disengagement—to try to get India and Pakistan to name representatives who could work out some form of withdrawal from the border to get them out of this eyeball-to-eyeball situation in West Pakistan. In East Pakistan, we called attention to the fact that Yahya was willing to position UN observers unilaterally. My preliminary reaction, based on Ambassador Keating's reporting telegram,<sup>5</sup> is to doubt that there will be any positive response. I believe India has every intention of continuing its present military posture to serve its political objectives.

Mr. Kissinger: Do you think this campaign was planned before the Gandhi trip?

Mr. Sisco: Militarily, yes. There had already been some deployments. But the most active military moves were made post-Washington.

Adm. Moorer: They obviously had a contingency plan.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm asking this for my own education. We have been debating all summer whether or not the Indians were being restrained. If they had been planning this all along, would this have been the earliest they could attack, given the time needed for deployment and the advent of the rainy season? If the decision had been made last June, what would have been the earliest time they could have attacked?

Adm. Moorer: Four or five weeks.

Mr. Williams: It was timed to the requirement for the training of the Bengalis.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm not trying to put words in people's mouths. But one could argue that everything the Indians have done since June has been designed to prepare for this, and that the trips by Foreign Secretary Singh and Mrs. Gandhi were smoke-screens. Or, one could say that the Indians have been making a serious effort to solve the problem and that they finally moved out of desperation.

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<sup>4</sup> See Documents 205, 207, and 206, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Ambassador Keating called on Prime Minister Gandhi on November 29 to deliver President Nixon's letter. Gandhi's response to the letter is summarized in Document 211.

Adm. Moorer: I think the readiness of the Bengalis dictated the timing. The Indians could have moved earlier with their regular forces. What is happening is that guerrillas are backing up against the Indians, who then are giving them artillery and other support. The Indian objective is to change the relative strength of the Pakistanis and the guerrillas.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Williams) What do you think?

Mr. Williams: I think the Indians might have moved two or three weeks earlier, allowing for time to train the Bengalis and for the monsoon. They did have a margin of about three weeks before they invaded, which coincided with Mrs. Gandhi's trip. I think they waited for her to return.

Adm. Moorer: They have obviously been training and supplying the guerrillas.

Mr. Williams: I think they had hoped the guerrillas would be more effective in their internal operations than they were. They found, however, that the guerrillas were only effective when stiffened by the Indians, which was their second strategy. They would have preferred that it be done internally, strictly by the Mukti Bahini.

Mr. Kissinger: Does this put an end to relief operations? Will there be famine?

Mr. Williams: Relief operations are at an end. The UN personnel have been withdrawn and the situation is deteriorating. The crops are in and a good deal of the supplies are there, but the imports are not moving, the things aren't being distributed, and there will be pockets of famine.

Mr. Irwin: There will also be some hoarding.

Adm. Moorer: And the guerrillas are destroying the boats.

Mr. Williams: Yes. They have dismantled in a few days what it took weeks to put together. There are twenty-two people left in Chittagong, but all ships have been withdrawn and the trucks are immobilized.

Mr. Kissinger: Dave (Packard), what do you think?

Mr. Packard: I don't have much to add. India has done nothing that could be considered constructive. There's been no evidence that they had any intention of going anywhere except where we [*they?*] are.

Mr. Kissinger: In her talks with the President, Mrs. Gandhi wrote off East Pakistan altogether. Her complaints were about Baluchistan and the northwest frontier.

Mr. Packard: Yahya has indicated his flexibility. We have transmitted his willingness to withdraw to the Indians with no response. It looks as though India has been moving right ahead, taking advantage of the situation as it develops.

Mr. Kissinger: India didn't exploit the possible opening of talks between Yahya and the Bangla Desh which Joe Sisco worked on last summer. That could have been the beginning. If the Bangla Desh had asked for the release of Mujib in those talks there might have been some movement and the situation might have been stabilized.

We have three problems we need to discuss: (1) military assistance; (2) an approach to the UN; and (3) a cutoff in economic assistance. All of you have seen the State and Defense papers<sup>6</sup> on a military aid cutoff, haven't you? The President and the Secretary decided last Wednesday<sup>7</sup> that the military aid suspension would be announced on Friday.<sup>8</sup> State suggested we await a reply to our overtures to Yahya, Kosygin and Mrs. Gandhi before the announcement, and that was accepted. We now have the replies, and the President wants to go ahead. I have talked to the Secretary and he agrees. So, unless someone makes a strong reclama, the question of the suspension of military assistance is pretty well decided. There remains the question of what should be cut off. There are two ways to do it: (1) to suspend the issuance of new licenses, or (2) to suspend new licenses and revoke all existing licenses.

Mr. Irwin: You have the questions of the timing of going to the cutoff and the amount of the cutoff.

Mr. Kissinger: What is the difference between the two choices in terms of amounts?

Mr. Irwin: I'm not sure of the totals.

Mr. Schneider: Licensed items, for which there are contracts, total \$5.3 million. Additional licensed terms without contracts total \$8.2 million.

Adm. Moorer: Are there any contracts without licenses?

Mr. Schneider: Yes, over \$16 million.

Mr. Irwin: Where are the spare parts for the C-119 aircraft?

Mr. Schneider: There are contracts for \$4 million for C-119 spares, but no licenses have been granted.

Mr. Irwin: They are without licenses but are under contract. I understand they are pretty far advanced on the manufacturing—the manufacturers just haven't asked for the licenses.

Mr. Noyes: That's correct.

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<sup>6</sup> See footnotes 5 and 6, Document 198.

<sup>7</sup> November 24.

<sup>8</sup> November 26.

Mr. Packard: This creates problems. We have firm contracts on some of these things. If they are cut off, we'll have some liability.

Adm. Moorer: Of course other people are using C-119s. We might buy them and slip them into some other program.

Mr. Irwin: We have two categories: items licensed for export and those licensed and under contract. Those licensed and under contract total \$5 million and those licensed, \$8 million. We also have unlicensed contracts for C-119 spares—\$4 million; radar communications equipment from the FMS \$17 million line of credit—\$12.8 million; and FMS cash sales—\$70,000. The total of it all is about \$30 million.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the definition of "unlicensed"? Do you mean a contract which requires a license but the license has not been requested, or are there contracts which don't require licenses?

Mr. Irwin: We mean a contract which requires a license but the license has not yet been obtained.

Dr. Kissinger: If we cut off future licenses, we will hit the full amount.

Mr. Irwin: If you cut off the \$4 million for C-119 spares you will ground the C-119s. I understand India needs those spares fairly quickly and they are almost available.

Dr. Kissinger: If we grant no new licenses, with a possible exception for the C-119 spares, we will hit \$16 million. If we dry up the pipeline, we will hit \$30 million.

Mr. Irwin: Sometimes manufacturers get a license before a sale, and then use the license to help make the sale. Sometimes they get an order and sign a contract before they have the license. This accounts for some of the unknowns.

Dr. Kissinger: So we have contracts without licenses and licenses without contracts. The choice we have to put to the President is whether to stop only items which have not been licensed or to stop both licensed and unlicensed items. The argument for stopping only unlicensed items is to hold something in reserve for future pressure. The argument for cutting off both licensed and unlicensed items is that we would have to take the heat for a first step and would have twice as much heat if we did it in two steps. We don't reduce the heat by reducing the amount of the cut-off.

Mr. Sisco: Also, from a domestic point of view, the question will be why we left the pipeline untouched. On the other hand, if we act on only new licenses it could be equated with what we did with regard to Pakistan where we moved on a step by step basis.

Mr. Packard: There are some special problems here. For example, there is the \$17 million line of credit to buy communications equipment to make our radar in Nepal more effective.

Mr. Irwin: Is this our radar or theirs? I thought it was their radar screen, to which we tie in.

Mr. Packard: It's theirs but we get a potential take from it.

Mr. Irwin: Our take is just warning, though, isn't it?

Mr. Waller: I'm not aware of any take as far as CIA is concerned.

Adm. Moorer: We get an indication of the level of activity of Chinese forces.

Mr. Noyes: The Air Force gets a take on Chinese Air Force movements.

Mr. Irwin: But it's primarily to warn India of attack.

Mr. Packard: I think we should get a decision either to stop everything not licensed or to stop everything in the pipeline, and then we can work out the details.

Dr. Kissinger: That's right. We can't ask the President to decide each little detail.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, but we need to be as clear as possible as to exactly what the action applies to and what are the implications. I learned my lesson from the Pakistan pipeline exercise, where it developed we just couldn't be sure where the stuff was.

Mr. Packard: If we stop everything in the pipeline, there are significant items—the C-119s spares, the radar equipment, the road work in Nepal. If we just stop all new licenses it will be less significant.

Dr. Kissinger: But all the key items are in the new category, aren't they?

Mr. Irwin: The more important ones.

Mr. Van Hollen: The \$4 million for C-119 spares is in the new license category.

Dr. Kissinger: What is in the licensed category?

Mr. Sisco: About \$5 million in aircraft spares, radar jamming equipment, cartridge cases and cartridge case manufacturing equipment.

Mr. Packard: \$22 million worth of licenses were issued in the last year. That's an awful lot of stuff.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think the President can get into all this. Would it be proper to use the State Department paper<sup>9</sup> as the basis for putting the question to the President. [*1 line of source text not declassified*]

Gen. Cushman: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]

Dr. Kissinger: We'll put this in a memo to the President and get a decision tomorrow. My understanding from Secretary Rogers is

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<sup>9</sup> Summarized in footnote 6, Document 198.

that he has agreed to the cut-off but would like to wait a day or two. The present idea is that State would make the announcement on Wednesday.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Irwin: The Secretary thinks we should cut off military assistance—he thinks we should cut off both new licenses and the pipeline. But he wants to wait until we see Kosygin's reply and also what, if anything, happens at the UN. Yahya has asked his UN Ambassador to ask for UN observers on his side of the border and this might lead to a Security Council meeting.

Dr. Kissinger: Does he think we should not cut off military assistance if the matter goes to the Security Council?

Mr. Irwin: Not necessarily. He thinks we should go ahead, subject to a last look.

Dr. Kissinger: We'll take another look at the situation tomorrow and will plan to go ahead on Wednesday. We'll give the President the choice between the two options for a cut-off, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]. I'm sure the President and the Secretary will be talking on the phone about it over the next day or two.

Mr. Sisco: We have given you a draft press statement<sup>11</sup> on the limited option of new licenses. We will prepare another draft press statement on an across-the-board cut.

Dr. Kissinger: I thought the papers<sup>12</sup> we got over the weekend were damned good.

Adm. Moorer: Timing is important. India has invaded Pakistan, which gives you a good basis for a cut-off of military assistance. If we wait until the Pakistanis retaliate, we'll hear the same argument for a cut-off to them.

Dr. Kissinger: We're planning for a release Wednesday<sup>13</sup> noon. Let's defer the discussion of an economic aid cut-off for the moment. That's further down the line. Can we talk about the UN? Joe (Sisco), would you like to summarize the State paper?<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> December 1.

<sup>11</sup> Sent to the White House as an attachment to the memorandum summarized in footnote 6, Document 198.

<sup>12</sup> Not further identified. Papers received by the White House over the weekend of November 27–28 apparently included the memorandum referenced in footnote 14 below, as well as a November 27 memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger that refined the licensed and unlicensed military supplies scheduled to go to India. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, Senior WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/29/71)

<sup>13</sup> December 1.

<sup>14</sup> Reference is to a November 27 memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger that dealt with the possibility of recourse to the UN Security Council on the confrontation between

Mr. Sisco: The paper is self-explanatory. We understand that the Paks by the end of the day will have told U Thant that they are willing to accept UN observers on their side of the border. They have done this on their own. I don't know to what degree they have thought this through. They probably think they can achieve their purpose by informal means without a Security Council meeting. I personally think the Secretary General will say he wants to refer the matter to the Security Council, but this will be clearer tomorrow. Recourse to the Security Council has one great advantage for the Paks and one great risk. The advantage is that the Security Council will focus on some provisions to deter broader military action. However, Indian strategy will be to block those elements which undermine their policy of military pressure and try to move the SC to express itself on political accommodation. Our draft resolution has four elements: 1) withdrawal of foreign forces; 2) a ceasefire; 3) a call on both sides to do everything possible to get the refugees back; and 4) a call on the parties to avail themselves of the good offices of the Secretary General. We think we can probably get the required nine votes for such a resolution. However, all the SC members, including our friends, will be under great pressure to support a concrete provision in the direction of political accommodation. That would be part of the quid pro quo. I have one modification of our paper. We say on page 3 (reading): "In our judgment, there will be strong efforts by the Soviets to delete the withdrawal paragraph, soften the ceasefire paragraph, and to call upon Pakistan to take concrete steps for a political solution. India, with as much support as she can get will go further: she will seek as a quid pro quo for withdrawal and a ceasefire as categorical a Security Council provision as possible calling for negotiations between Yahya and Mujib. Such a paragraph could get majority support in the Council since even some of our closest friends . . . would be very sympathetic to it. In short, the thrust of the Council will be a cool-off of the military activity in exchange for getting Yahya-Mujib negotiations started."

On reflection, I think that with a maximum U.S. effort we can influence the provision on political accommodation to be less precise than an out-right call on Yahya and Mujib to negotiate. It's hard to say how much less we could get, but I think we could get a provision that didn't go that far.

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India and Pakistan. Attached to the memorandum was the draft resolution summarized by Sisco. The memorandum weighed the prospects that such a resolution would be adopted, noting that the Soviet Union might veto it on India's behalf. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)



Mr. Kissinger: Who will sit in for Russia? For China?

Mr. Sisco: Malik for Russia and Huang-Hua, the Chinese Permanent Representative.

Mr. Kissinger: So it's round two. The Chinese have a real ability to get under the Russians' skin.

Mr. Sisco: Yes and in acrimonious terms. Malik has a shorter fuse than most Russians.

(Mr. Kissinger was called from the room.)

Mr. Sisco: We have a very preliminary draft of a speech that Ambassador Bush might make which we will circulate for comment. (Handed copies of the speech attached at Tab B<sup>15</sup> around the table.)

(Mr. Kissinger returned.)

Mr. Kissinger: On the UN, we will look over the speech. We will not take the initiative for a meeting or encourage anyone else to take the initiative. If it goes into the Security Council, we will move in the direction of the draft resolution and of the draft speech, as commented on.

Mr. Sisco: If the Pakistani Ambassador raises the issue of going into the SC with me when I see him this afternoon, I will say that this is a decision for them to make. I will take no initiative, but if he asks me a question I will try to answer.

Mr. Irwin: The Paks may have already started the process by their request for observers.

Mr. Kissinger: We will meet within the next forty-eight hours to tie up the military assistance question. Then we should have a session on economic assistance.

Mr. Irwin: One argument for delaying a decision on the timing of the cutoff until we know about the UN is that a bilateral U.S. cutoff might not be necessary if an adequate solution can be worked out in the Security Council.

Mr. Kissinger: If the issue goes to the Security Council before Wednesday noon, this would certainly be considered.

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<sup>15</sup> Attached but not printed.

**210. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, November 30, 1971, 1838Z.

[*number not declassified*] We have no information here to suggest that a Pakistani attack on Kashmir is imminent or under active consideration,<sup>2</sup> although some contingency plan to that effect surely exists. Yahya continues to assure me that he does not wish war, nor does he intend to start it here. He has so far held sway over his hawks, although how much longer he can do so in the face of continued Indian incursions into East Pakistan is most uncertain. Pakistanis are in a state of readiness and if they do finally conclude they must fight in the West as well as in the East, Kashmir is an emotionally attractive target, although we have generally thought that they would go for the more easily penetrated areas further south. Will advise you immediately if anything changes this view. Best regards.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Secret. Received at 2028Z.

<sup>2</sup> Farland was responding to a backchannel message sent to him by Kissinger at 1649Z on November 30 in which Kissinger asked him to comment on reports that Pakistan might be considering an attack on Indian forces in Kashmir in order to relieve pressure upon East Pakistan. (White House telegram WH 11052; *ibid.*)

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**211. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 1, 1971.

SUBJECT

Your Message to Mrs. Gandhi<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Geopolitical File, Box CL 210, South Asia, Chron File, Nov–Dec 1971. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 205.

Ambassador Keating called on Mrs. Gandhi this morning to deliver your message. She read the letter rapidly and said she would reply promptly although she indicated that she had already discussed some of the points with you.<sup>3</sup>

In the ensuing discussion, Mrs. Gandhi made the following major points leaving the impression that she was weighing her remarks carefully and knew precisely what she wanted to say:

—India has great admiration for the US but every country must first look to its national interest. It was her duty to see what was in the interests of her country.

—Pakistan had been the first to move its troops to the border and no one had asked them to withdraw. It was only after India moved its troops to the border that proposals were made for withdrawals.

—Yahya's problems had been self-created and "we are not in a position to make this easier for him." That was one of the reasons why India could not withdraw its troops. India was being asked to allow the misdeeds of Yahya to stand and "we are not going to allow that."

—No one in all of India was more opposed to war than she was. "I wouldn't like to take this country to war", but, added, "this war and this situation are<sup>4</sup> not of our making."

—Many countries said they were exerting pressure on Yahya but, she asked, "what has it yielded?" Nothing, she answered, "except that President Yahya has his back to the wall" and wants "to be bailed out." Then she commented, "We have to take steps which will make us stronger to deal with this situation."

—What Yahya had done to start a political process, especially the "farical" elections, had moved the situation in the wrong direction. These so-called elections<sup>5</sup> are "not going to make any difference whatsoever." (She enumerated [*enunciated*] each syllable of "what-so-ever.")

—When Keating observed that her position was very firm, Mrs. Gandhi replied that it was "a little harder" than it had been and went on to say that her patience had worn thin. She did not know how she could tell India that it must continue to wait and added, "I can't hold it."

—When Keating started to comment about the recent Indian military incursions, she cut him off by saying, "We can't afford to listen to advice which weakens us."

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<sup>3</sup> Kissinger's summary of the exchange between Prime Minister Gandhi and Ambassador Keating was derived from Keating's report on the meeting in telegram 18383 from New Delhi, November 29. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-US) The meeting took place on November 29.

<sup>4</sup> The verb is rendered as "is" in telegram 18383.

<sup>5</sup> The elections were characterized as such by Gandhi.

Ambassador Keating comments that Mrs. Gandhi spoke with clarity and more grimness than he had ever seen her display. He concludes that, in the absence of some major development toward a meaningful political accommodation, India will assure that the efforts of the Mukti Bahini to liberate East Pakistan do not fail.

There seems to be no give in this position and probably little bluff. There is no evidence that she is wavering from pursuit of India's interests as she sees them.

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## 212. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 1, 1971, 0519Z.

216629. Subject: US Military Sales to India.

1. As Indian forces have become progressively involved in conflict with Pakistan on Pakistani territory we have for some time been concerned about US military sales policy in regard to India. When East Pakistan problem first developed we focused on issue of military sales to Pakistan and finally dried up military sales pipeline. In view of current Indian involvement we have come to conclusion that we must now take action in regard to US sales to India.

2. Accordingly, decision has been made within USG to suspend issuance of new Munitions List export licenses and renewal of existing Munitions List licenses for military sales to India and to cancel existing licenses for approximately \$2 million worth of components and machinery for manufacture of ammunition. Remaining licenses covering items worth in neighborhood \$11.5 million will remain valid. Decision will be announced December 1 and be effective as at that date.

3. Text of proposed announcement by Department and supplemental background press guidance being transmitted septel.<sup>2</sup>

4. We recognize that this decision will cause strong reaction in India. We have decided to take action both to make clear to GOI seriousness with which we view present situation in which Indian and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 12-5 INDIA. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on November 30. Cleared by Van Hollen, Irwin, Haig, and Pickering in PM, and in substance by Sisco and Colonel Gross in DOD/ISA. Approved by Secretary Rogers. Repeated to Islamabad.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 216630 to New Delhi, December 1. (Ibid., FT 18-1 INDIA-US)

Pakistani forces have met on Pakistan territory and to forestall domestic criticism of USG for continued licensing of military equipment, despite India-Pak situation.<sup>3</sup>

5. You should inform GOI at appropriate level of USG decision. In addition to using text of announcement, you may at your discretion make following points:

a. In view of strong feelings on part of USG and American people that war can provide no solution to East Pakistan problem and in view of hostilities which have already taken place between Indian and Pakistani forces, USG has decided to take action outlined in public announcement (septel).

b. With regard to items in pipeline already licensed GOI will note that we are canceling licenses only for those items related to manufacture of ammunition and small quantities ammunition. This is being done because of direct use to which ammunition can be put in any India-Pak conflict.

c. We are not now canceling other outstanding licenses. They will remain under review.<sup>4</sup>

d. US will continue its effort to contribute to easing of tensions and is taking this action as result of its view that military conflict can only stand in way of political solution. American people will not understand provision of new military supplies in the light of the present military situation.

e. USG continues to believe political settlement is necessary if there is to be solution to East Pakistan problem. We are continuing to

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<sup>3</sup> On December 2 Schneider wrote to Ambassador Keating to further explain the background to the decision. He noted that the President was exercised by what he viewed as Prime Minister Gandhi's unresponsiveness during her recent visit to Washington and by her failure to respond to the withdrawal proposal put to her at the time. Schneider added that Kissinger was also discussing suspending economic assistance to India and that Rogers was concerned. The Secretary felt that such a move could lead to a lasting rupture in relations between the U.S. and India and he had had a long, private talk with the President on the issue. (Department of State, NEA/INC Files: Lot 77 D 51, 1971 New Delhi Eyes Only Correspondence)

<sup>4</sup> Ambassador Raza wrote to Sisco on December 1 to applaud what Pakistan viewed as a "friendly and timely gesture" by the United States. He noted, however, that the decision did not affect some of the existing licenses for military sales to India, and asked, in light of the closure of the military pipeline to Pakistan, that those licenses be reviewed as well. (Ibid., NEA Files: Lot 73 D 69, Pakistan) Kissinger and Nixon had discussed the decision to suspend military sales to India on November 29 at which time Kissinger said that he and Rogers recommended that the United States should "cut off everything." Nixon agreed. (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) President Nixon clarified his intention on December 2 in a handwritten note he sent to Kissinger instructing him to "Cancel all old licenses as well as new immediately for India." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 341, Subject Files, President/Kissinger Memos, 1971)

pursue with GOP various avenues through which negotiations toward a political settlement might be initiated. We continue to urge India to do all possible to facilitate such negotiations.

f. If the issue of equating India and Pakistan is raised, the point should be made that this is not an issue. We are now dealing with a situation in India in which active warfare involves Indian forces.

6. In order minimize time between notification of GOI and Washington announcement, Embassy should not inform GOI of US decision prior to 9:00 p.m. Delhi time December 1. Embassy may use its discretion re how GOI informed and content of message. We plan inform Indian Chargé here at approximately 10 a.m. Washington time December 1.<sup>5</sup>

**Rogers**

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<sup>5</sup> Sisco informed Chargé Rasgotra on December 1 of the decision to suspend the licenses. Rasgotra regretted the decision and said that the Indian Government would note the alacrity with which the United States instituted a cut-off of military sales to India compared to the delays involved in the similar cut-off to Pakistan. (Telegram 216918 to New Delhi, December 1; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 12-5 INDIA) Keating reported that when he informed Foreign Secretary Kaul of the new U.S. military supply policy toward India, Kaul took the news well but said that pressure tactics would not succeed in dissuading India from the path on which it was embarked. (Telegram 18595 from New Delhi, December 2; *ibid.*; Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/1/71-12/4/71)

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### 213. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 1, 1971, 4:17-4:50 p.m.

SUBJECT

South Asia

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. A briefer version of the meeting, prepared by James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Dec) 1971.

State	CIA
John N. Irwin, II	Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman
Joseph Sisco	John Waller
Christopher Van Hollen	AID
Samuel DePalma	Donald MacDonald
Bruce Laingen	NSC Staff
David Schneider	Harold H. Saunders
Defense	Samuel Hoskinson
David Packard	Col. Richard T. Kennedy
Armistead Selden	R/Adm. Robert O. Welander
James H. Noyes	Jeanne W. Davis
JCS	
Admiral Thomas H. Moorer	
Capt. Howard N. Kay	

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

- 1) State would prepare a scenario for the next step in a cut-off of military assistance.
- 2) We will delay the PL-480 money and the next tranche of the development loan money by administrative means.
- 3) Ambassador Bush would explore with the Pak UN Representative the pros and cons of an approach to the UN, but will not urge them in either direction.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Cushman) Bob, where do we stand?  
(General Cushman briefed from the attached text.)<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: Will Mrs. Gandhi allow the Pakistanis to stay in West Pakistan for the time being?

(Dr. Kissinger was called from the room.)

Mr. Irwin: (to Cushman) If there is an attack on the western front, what is your judgement as to the outcome?

Gen. Cushman: The Indians have superiority in everything and will win. The Paks have the bulk of their armor and most of their divisions there, but they won't prevail.

Adm. Moorer: They may have some initial success but they will poop out on logistics.

Mr. Irwin: How long?

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed. Cushman's briefing notes focused on the guerrilla offensive in East Pakistan that was gaining momentum. The border between India and West Pakistan remained quiet, but Pakistani officers indicated that in the event of war Pakistan's posture in the west would be offensive, not defensive.

Adm. Moorer: Thirty days. The Indians have superiority by four-to-one.

Mr. Irwin: Supplies, too?

Adm. Moorer: Yes.

Mr. Packard: What kind of country is it?

Gen. Cushman: Pretty dry; some actual desert.

Mr. Packard: Are there any natural boundaries—any mountains?

Mr. Waller: Some mountains in the northeast, but the rest is desert.

Mr. Irwin: What is the initial capacity of the Paks?

Gen. Cushman: I don't know.

Mr. Waller: In 1965, Sialkot was a natural division.

Mr. Irwin: Isn't there some Indian armor near there?

Mr. Waller: No one knows. There is probably some in Ambala.

Gen. Cushman: The Paks might make some initial penetration in the north. One big worry is that, if India recognizes Bangla Desh, Yahya might react by moving where the Indian aircraft and troops are, even though he knew he couldn't win.

Mr. Irwin: So you think it would be over in a month?

General Cushman and Adm. Moorer: Yes.

Gen. Cushman: One question is how much the Russians could reinforce India and whether they could do it faster than the Chinese could reinforce Pakistan.

Adm. Moorer: There are some reports that China had promised armor to Pakistan.

Gen. Cushman: There are also reports that the guerrillas are mining the approaches to the ports and that Indian sailors in civilian clothes are operating gun-boats at night against East Pakistan.

Adm. Moorer: The army in East Pakistan is beginning to ration their ammunition—ten rounds per tube unless they have special permission. They're beginning to feel the squeeze.

Mr. Irwin: (to Sisco) If fighting develops in the West and the issue moves into the UN, wouldn't a positive reaction from the UN on either side draw a veto?

Mr. Sisco: We would probably be confronted with a veto. The people who are winning on the ground always play a delaying game in the UN. In the Middle East, the Arabs should have gone for an immediate cease-fire, but they didn't know they were getting licked.

(Dr. Kissinger returned.)

Dr. Kissinger: Some of the papers are saying we're not doing our arithmetic—that we're losing 500 million Indians for 150 million Pakistanis. I don't know what we're losing in India and, in any event, that's



not the purpose of our policy. If there is a chance of getting this thing stopped, we should move confidently and not be too apologetic. In matters of refugee and humanitarian relief, we have done more than all the other countries put together. We should respond to questions that way and stick to it.

Mr. Sisco: The Secretary has instructed Charley Bray (State Department spokesman) to do some backgrounding.

Dr. Kissinger: We need a specific scenario for the next step in a cut-off of military assistance. We won't necessarily do it immediately. How long do you think Pakistan can hold out?

Adm. Moorer: Two or three weeks. India is putting pressure on the border and forcing the Paks to defend there. This leaves the guerrillas free in the interior of the country. The Pakistanis are getting low on artillery ammo and are attempting to replenish their forces—4,000 replacements are en route. The Paks are just running out of steam. The loss of Jessore could be seriously crippling.

Gen. Cushman: One can speculate that the Indians may be trying to take Jessore and set it up as the capital of Bangla Desh.

Dr. Kissinger: Do I understand now that we will not proceed in the UN unless the Paks take it there?

Mr. DePalma: The Pakistan Ambassador has told us that he is not approaching anyone but the US at this time. He is not asking for a Security Council meeting, but he assumes his Government will. He has been asked to draft a speech for Bhutto. He speculates that they will call for a meeting on Friday<sup>3</sup> or Monday. Any resolution should call for a withdrawal of forces, a cease-fire, and observers, possibly on both sides. The Paks have talked with the Chinese who have indicated they will veto any resolution unacceptable to Pakistan. He thinks the Soviets will veto any resolution unacceptable to India.

Dr. Kissinger: It hardly strengthens one's faith in the UN when the Security Council is afraid to meet in an obvious military situation.

Mr. DePalma: It has to be done by the big boys.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's turn to economic assistance. There is no present plan to cut off economic assistance. The President has instructed, however, that we not go ahead with the PL-480 money or the next tranche of the loan. We can delay it by administrative means and blame the delay on bureaucratic incompetence. In other words, it will require some affirmative action before anything more is done. What if he wanted to go further?

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<sup>3</sup> December 3.

Mr. McDonald: There are three categories: 1) fresh aid amounting to about \$150–\$200 million in development loans and \$72 million in PL–480.

Dr. Kissinger: \$100 million of which is coming due now?

Mr. McDonald: There's no set time—it is flexible in relation to other considerations.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the \$100 million we're holding up?

Mr. McDonald: The first tranche against the \$200 million. The Indians know the reasons we're not moving; they don't really expect us to move on this. The Indian Embassy has asked us if aid has been suspended since they were told by the Eximbank that they couldn't move yet.

Dr. Kissinger: So they have noticed?

Mr. McDonald: They are assuming that we will not provide fresh aid.

Mr. Sisco: What will we tell them? Will we hide behind the fact that Congress has not yet acted?

Mr. McDonald: If asked, we will hide behind Congress on the question of development loans, but it's harder to do on PL–480. We can say we have technical problems, though. The second category are prior-year funds, where we have binding agreements, with escape clauses, but are not yet tied into irrevocable commitments. As of November 29, these totaled \$99 million. These can easily be covered by telephoning the banks and telling them to hold up issuance of Letters of Credit.

Dr. Kissinger: If we hold up on issuance of irrevocable letters of credit, will this prevent their turning letters of commitment into Letters of Credit?

Mr. McDonald: Yes. It is easily done by contacting the banks. The third category is where Letters of Credit have already been issued. We can't stop credit to the buyers but we could take legal title to the goods purchased under these letters. This would be very difficult and far-reaching, though.

Dr. Kissinger: If we instructed the banks and prevented converting letters of commitment into Letters of Credit, would it dry up the \$99 million?

Mr. McDonald: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: We have \$123 million in irrevocable Letters of Credit now. What about goods in transit?

Mr. McDonald: About half of these goods are moving in American ships. We could stop them.

Mr. Packard: We have enough here to get the idea across.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree. I have no reason to think the President wants to do this quickly. He may want to move on the \$99 million. However, if we take drastic action when the Indians are in Dacca, it will be a contest of will. If we want to give them signals, we should do it now. But we're under no great time pressure. How about PL-480?

Mr. McDonald: We have a binding agreement, but we can sit on it. We have one special problem. We have about \$18 million worth of vegetable oil which Agriculture is anxious to move to India to help stabilize the US market. This is a domestic issue. Also, we have about \$12 million in 50,000 bales of cotton for India.

Dr. Kissinger: We have no answer from Mrs. Gandhi yet?<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Sisco: No, and nothing from Kosygin. We have raised it with the head of the American Desk in the Soviet Foreign Office who said he thought we would have a reply shortly, which isn't much solace.

Dr. Kissinger: We will get together, at least by phone, if any of these additional steps are to be taken.

Mr. Irwin: What would be the purpose of the additional steps?

Dr. Kissinger: We would be less eager to do things after the situation had collapsed. It would be better to do them early and in the open to show that they didn't work. Most of these things are not irrevocable.

Mr. Sisco: We will do a scenario on the military side.

Mr. Packard: None of these things will have an impact on their military capability.

Mr. Irwin: There is a question of how many of these steps we should take if they have no effect.

Mr. Packard: But if we want to send a message, we should make it a good message.

Mr. Sisco: Do you think it would be worthwhile for (Ambassador) Bush to have another talk with (Pak UN Representative) Shahi. It's a touchy situation and I'm of two minds about it. I do think we need to tell the Paks there are advantages and disadvantages in going to the UN.

Dr. Kissinger: I have no objection as long as we don't urge them to go either way.

Mr. Sisco: Fair enough. I'll call Bush and have him weigh the pluses and minuses with the Paks.

Dr. Kissinger: Okay.

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 211.

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**214. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 2, 1971.

## SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* The latest reports seem to indicate that the Indian and guerrilla offensive along the East Pakistan border is gaining some momentum. The disparity in manpower and supplies apparently is taking its toll on the Pak forces and they reportedly have abandoned a number of contested locations in the face of relentless pressure in the direction of several major provincial cities. Meanwhile, there are indications that the situation is starting to deteriorate in the interior where the guerrilla forces are operating more freely now that most of the Pak forces have been drawn off to defend the frontiers. Some towns as close as 17 miles from Dacca reportedly have been abandoned to the guerrillas and there are reports of the Bangla Desh flag flying in a number of towns elsewhere in the interior. The Indians have also set up a "Mukti Bahini navy" with their own forces with the priority objective of blocking shipping into East Pakistan.

At the UN the situation is relatively static for the moment. The Japanese and Belgians are standing down their efforts to create interest in a Security Council meeting after having received no encouragement from the permanent representatives. For the moment the Soviets and Indians are getting their way—inaction—but the Pak ambassador at the UN thinks that it is possible that he could have instructions to move for a Security Council meeting as early as Friday.<sup>2</sup> He also reports that the Chinese have promised to use their veto if the Paks ask them. It is assumed that the Soviets are prepared to do the same for India.

Our China watchers in Hong Kong report that the attention of Chinese media to the Indo-Pak crisis has risen sharply in the last ten days. The coverage has featured descriptions of India's actions as an "invasion" and as military "provocations" and there has been one high level reference to "armed aggression." Direct charges of Soviet involvement have also rather abruptly become a significant feature. At the same time

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates that the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> December 3.

the Chinese have not tried to play up any threat to their own security. Chinese public pledges of support to the Pakistanis have remained generalized and at least once they have indirectly implied that the Paks do not need assistance. They have also continued to call for peaceful “consultations” between India and Pakistan.

We have an initial reaction from the Indian Government on our cutoff of military supplies. Foreign Secretary Kaul took the announcement of our new military supply policy toward India in reasonably good grace, indicating that the U.S. had the right to do whatever it thought best. In a friendly and earnest way he warned Ambassador Keating that no country should think they could persuade India to alter the path on which it was embarked through pressure tactics. Kaul urged that the U.S. not forget the common values and common ideals we both share.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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## 215. Editorial Note

In a speech to the nation on December 3, 1971, Prime Minister Gandhi charged that Pakistan had launched a full-scale attack against India earlier in the day, shortly after 5:30 p.m. She said that Pakistan’s Air Force had struck at six Indian airfields in Kashmir and the Punjab and that Pakistani artillery was shelling Indian positions at several locations along the border between India and West Pakistan. India, Gandhi said, had no option but to adopt a war footing. (Situation Report #18 prepared by the Department of State India–Pakistan Working Group, December 3; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/1/71–12/4/71)

Pakistan responded to the Indian charges in a note conveyed to the United States Embassy in Islamabad on December 3. Pakistan alleged that the Indian Air Force had been carrying out aggressive reconnaissance over the territory of West Pakistan for 3 or 4 days as a prelude to attacks launched by the Indian army between 3:30 and 4 p.m. on December 3 at several points on a front that stretched from Kashmir in the north to Rahim Yar Kham in the south. Pakistan represented the attacks on Indian airfields as necessary countermeasures. (Ibid.)

In Washington the question of responsibility for the initiation of warfare along the front between India and West Pakistan bore on pol-

icy considerations. The Central Intelligence Agency weighed the evidence on December 4 and concluded that it was not possible to determine with certainty which side had initiated hostilities on December 3. (Memorandum from [*name not declassified*] to Kissinger, December 4; *ibid.*, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan Situation)

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**216. Transcript of a Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 3, 1971, 10:45 a.m.

K: Two matters I want to raise. It appears that West Pakistan has attacked because situation in East collapsing. State wants to use it as a pretext not to put out statement<sup>2</sup> at noon. I think it's more reason to cancel programs. State believes and I agree that we should take it to the Security Council once actions are confirmed. If a major war [develops] without going to the Security Council it would be a confession of poverty.

P: Who will object?

K: India and the Soviet Union.

P: So we have to.

K: Apparently no one else will. Even the liberal papers are supporting that.

P: I am for that. We have to cut off arms aid to India. We should have done it earlier. Allow India bias.

K: Yes.

P: Sisco's part? He isn't pro-Indian. It's what they want below.

K: Sisco has no convictions. Liberal, [omission in the source text], socialist syndrome. The Indians will just add—

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President vacated in Key Biscayne, Florida, December 3–5; Kissinger was in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a statement announcing the cut-off of military assistance to India.

P: I have decided it and there is no appeal.

K: I also think—

P: I wrote it independently of anyone and I am surprised it hasn't been done.

K: It won't reach the UN tomorrow or late today. We shouldn't make a catastrophe of everything we have done and why Indian actions unjustified.

P: So West Pakistan giving trouble there.

K: If they lose half of their country without fighting they will be destroyed. They may also be destroyed this way but they will go down fighting.

P: They will have enough for a few days. It puts the Soviets on the spot.

K: I think I should give a brief note to the Russians so that they don't jump around about conversation yesterday and say we are going on your conversation with Gromyko.<sup>3</sup> A strong blast at their Vietnam friends and behavior on India. We are moving on our side but they are not doing enough on theirs.

P: On India certainly but on VN I wonder if it sounds hollow.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

P: Pakistan thing makes your heart sick. For them to be done so by the Indians and after we have warned the bitch. Their [omission in the source text] and that but they have brought it on. We have to cut off arms. Why not? Because attacked by W. Pakistan. Tell them that when India talked about W. Pakistan attacking them it's like Russian claiming to be attacked by Finland.

K: They will do it or we will do it from Key Biscayne. It's a hell of a way but we can do it and I will get that message to the Soviets.

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 153.

217. **Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Rogers and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 3, 1971, 10:55 a.m.

R: Hello.

K: Hello, Bill. I just talked to the President. He is agreeable to the Security Council thing as soon as we get all the facts in. He is absolutely adamant about getting a statement<sup>2</sup> out at noon. He is raising Cain again. I am getting the hell. He wants it to tilt towards Pakistan. He doesn't want it to be [omission in the source text] (Laughter). I agree with you, and I told the President that, that we should not go into the long history. We should save that for the UN, but I think we should put out the statement at noon.

R: I am in favor of that. I just hesitate putting out a statement condemning India.

K: No, no. I agree with you that we should not put out the long statement at noon, but I think we should put out some of these facts in the background pages.

R: The facts we are speaking about are old hat as far as the news is concerned so a review statement to the press is like water off a duck's back.

K: I told the President that the argument the people will give is it's like Finland attacking Russia; that they were provoked into it and didn't have any choice.

R: The question is: Should we take a judicial role ourselves and decide who is guilty? I think it would be better placed in the Security Council.

K: What I recommend, Bill, if you agree, is that the gist of what we had in that statement be used.

R: I would say something like this: In view of the deteriorating situation in the area, we are cutting off all military shipments to India now. If this develops any interest on the part of the press then when Bush goes to the Security Council he can outline the steps about Pakistan.

K: That is correct. We should do it on that basis. Another thing the President said is that we are considering cutting off economic aid.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a statement announcing the cut-off of military assistance to India.



R: Well, we said we are considering other steps; that is just one of them.

K: Well, I think it is beyond the point where we can mention that. Let's just put out the military statement.

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## 218. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 3, 1971, 11:19–11:55 a.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State	CIA
John N. Irwin, II	Richard Helms
Joseph Sisco	John Waller
Christopher Van Hollen	AID
Samuel DePalma	Donald MacDonald
Bruce Laingen	Maurice Williams
David Schneider	NSC Staff
Defense	Harold H. Saunders
David Packard	Samuel Hoskinson
Armistead Selden	B/Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
G. Warren Nutter	Col. Richard T. Kennedy
James H. Noyes	R/Adm. Robert O. Welander
JCS	Jeanne W. Davis
Adm. Thomas H. Moorer	
Capt. Howard N. Kay	

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. No drafting information appears on the minutes. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. A briefer version of the meeting, prepared by James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Dec) 1971.

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

(1) following Secretary Rogers' conversation with the Pak Ambassador, State will recommend as to the timing of a call for a Security Council meeting;

(2) State will draft a speech for Ambassador Bush, including the text of our proposed resolution;

(3) AID would ask the banks to hold issuance of any additional Letters of Credit for India until Monday, when they will hear further from us;

(4) meanwhile, Mr. Kissinger will check with the President about suspension of the \$22 million for Pakistan which is in the same category;

(5) State will redraft the reply to President Yahya's letter<sup>2</sup> to take account of current developments.

Dr. Kissinger: I've been catching unshirted hell every half-hour from the President who says we're not tough enough. He believes State is pressing us to be tough and I'm resisting. He really doesn't believe we're carrying out his wishes. He wants to tilt toward Pakistan, and he believes that every briefing or statement is going the other way.

Mr. Irwin: (to Kissinger) In connection with your conversation with the Secretary, Charley Bray (State Department spokesman) will say at the noon briefing today that we don't know what is going on in West Pakistan, then he will go to the second paragraph of the draft press statement that we have prepared (attached at Tab A).<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: (Looking at draft statement) That's good—saying the United States *yesterday* took the decision to cancel the remaining munitions list licenses for India. On the West Pakistan situation, the President thinks this may have been provoked—that it's not on the same basis as East Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: To the degree to which we want to address ourselves to the incursions of yesterday, this statement is okay. I would expect we might have another public statement later this afternoon when we know a little more about what's happening.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Helms) What is happening?

Mr. Helms: We know that the Pakistanis did attack the three airfields at Srinagar, Amritsar and Pathankot this morning. It was first re-

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 219.

<sup>3</sup> Not attached. A copy is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 12/3/71.

ported on the Indian radio, and now the Pak radio has reported it. The Pak radio also says India is attacking all along the border. Indian Foreign Secretary Kaul has told Ambassador Keating that is a "bloody lie." [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] Pakistan telling their Navy that hostilities have commenced on all fronts. The Paks have also told Ambassador Farland that the Indians are attacking. In East Pakistan also the attacks are getting larger. The Indians are moving on seven fronts now, instead of three or four as formerly.

Adm. Moorer: What about the attack on the airfield at Agartala?

Mr. Helms: It appears there was a ground attack, but the air attack is questionable.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the Indians seizing territory in the East or merely attacking along the frontier?

Mr. Helms: There's no question that they are seizing and occupying territory, although only in small bits.

Mr. Waller: (using map) Around Bollonia, Jessore, Agartala and Hilli the Indians have moved in and are staying on Pakistani territory, but not too deep.

Mr. Sisco: Could you prepare a small map shaded to show occupied territory?

Mr. Helms: We'll have it for you next time.

Adm. Moorer: As I've said before, I think in East Pakistan the Indians are trying to keep the Pak troops occupied to give the guerrillas more latitude. It's just a matter of time until the Indians believe the guerrillas are strong enough, at which point they will recognize a Bangla Desh Government.

Dr. Kissinger: You think it's just a question of time until the Paks are exhausted?

Adm. Moorer: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: How about in the West? Whoever attacked, there will be full-scale fighting.

Adm. Moorer: I'm surprised that the Paks attacked at such a low level. In 1965 they moved much more strongly. One of the airfields was a little Army field and the other two had practically no aircraft on them. The major fields are further south.

Mr. Helms: I think Mrs. Gandhi in her speech at 1:30 today will recognize Bangla Desh.

Adm. Moorer: I have some questions about the Pakistani attack. It's not the kind you would think they would make.

Mr. Irwin: Do you think it was symbolic? Or were they trying to provoke India?

Adm. Moorer: I'm not sure they attacked.

Dr. Kissinger: But they have admitted it.

Adm. Moorer: Of course, there may be other attacks we don't know about.

Dr. Kissinger: Do you think it's possible the Indians attacked first?

Adm. Moorer: I think it's possible.

Mr. Irwin: If India attacked, would the Paks have hit only those airfields?

Adm. Moorer: It was late in the afternoon. It may have been all they could do before dark.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Paks were attacking, they wouldn't have chosen that time.

Mr. Packard: Do we have any reports of Indians across the border in West Pakistan?

Adm. Moorer: No, they say fighting is along the whole border.

Dr. Kissinger: So one hypothesis is that the Indians attacked and the Paks did what they could before dark. Dick (Helms), what do you think?

Mr. Helms: I have no better explanation.

Dr. Kissinger: These aren't significant fields. That's a helluva way to start a war.

Adm. Moorer: One field had only 12 helos and 16 Gnats.

Mr. Packard: They had no fighter aircraft.

Mr. Irwin: Would these aircraft be important if the Pakistanis were planning to attack in the morning?

Adm. Moorer: If they were going to attack in the morning, they would have hit the airfields in the morning. There was a field not too far away with 82 aircraft on it including 42 MIG-21s. They didn't go for them.

Dr. Kissinger: That's a good point.

Mr. Packard: They might have been heavily defended.

Adm. Moorer: I just don't think we have the information.

Mr. Helms: I don't either. I think reports will be rolling in all day.

Dr. Kissinger: On the matter of economic assistance, the President doesn't want any more irrevocable Letters of Credit issued for India.

Mr. Williams: That will get around fairly quickly.

Dr. Kissinger: How quickly?

Mr. Williams: A couple of days.

Adm. Moorer: The Indians will know and they will spread the word.

Mr. Williams: We can just hold up as we are on the \$72 million.

Dr. Kissinger: This is the present order. I'll point out to the President that this will get around. If it does, so what?

Mr. Williams: I'm not saying we shouldn't do it.

Dr. Kissinger: What would we say—that we were reviewing our entire economic assistance program?

Mr. Williams: Yes—in the light of existing conditions. With regard to the draft public statement, we must be very careful of any statement that implies that economic assistance has been used for war purposes.

Dr. Kissinger: That's a good point. (to Williams) Give the right phrase to Joe Sisco. Let's talk about the UN now.

Mr. Irwin: The Secretary is calling in the Pak Ambassador today for an exploratory talk. The Secretary is leaning in the direction of the US taking the issue into the UN.

Dr. Kissinger: The President is in favor of that as soon as we have some confirmation of substantial activity—probably in any event. He believes that if the UN can't operate in this case, the UN doesn't exist. Any other declaration, say on the Middle East, would be totally hollow if we can't get the SC called for this.

Mr. Sisco: We'll have no difficulty getting the SC called.

Dr. Kissinger: If we decide to do it, would it be tonight or tomorrow?

Mr. Sisco: Either way—we'll get you a recommendation by mid-afternoon. I would assume we would try for tomorrow to give the Paks a chance to digest what the Secretary will say.

Dr. Kissinger: The grounds on which the President agreed not to issue the longer statement at noon were so that Ambassador Bush could make the same points in a Security Council speech. He doesn't want us to be even-handed in the Security Council.

Mr. Irwin: If we go to the UN, of course, it will move quickly to political accommodation.

Dr. Kissinger: You had a phrase about political accommodation in the statement you were going to issue today. It gave us no problem.

Mr. Irwin: The question will arise if India and her friends push for specific talks with Mujib.

Dr. Kissinger: The President won't go along with anything that specific. He agrees with your draft resolution<sup>4</sup> and has approved going with that.

Mr. DePalma: The question is what resolution is likely to command a majority. There may be great pressure to skew it toward a stronger political accommodation statement.

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<sup>4</sup> See footnote 14, Document 209.

Dr. Kissinger: The success of that would depend on the forcefulness of our behavior.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, and on the Chinese Communists.

Dr. Kissinger: Let the Paks talk to them.

Mr. Sisco: I'm sure they will put the pressure on the Chinese. The Secretary will call in the Pak Ambassador.<sup>5</sup> After that conversation, we will ask the Secretary to report to you (Mr. Kissinger) and we will get you a recommendation on the timing of going to the SC.

Dr. Kissinger: Also could we have a draft speech for Ambassador Bush incorporating the statement we had originally planned to make today, taking account of current developments, and containing the text of our proposed resolution? The President isn't prepared to make that specific a recommendation on political accommodation.

Mr. Irwin: But others may, and get significant support for it.

Dr. Kissinger: We can say we favor political accommodation, but the job of the Security Council is to prevent military force from being used to bring it about.

Mr. Irwin: I'm not arguing with you. I'm just pointing out where others may take it.

Mr. Sisco: There's no argument, but we want to be sure you and the President understand the degree of our control over the outcome.

Mr. Helms: (reading from report<sup>6</sup> handed him from SitRoom) Kosygin cancelled an extra round of talks he had scheduled with the Norwegians when he heard of the fighting.

Dr. Kissinger: That took courage. We've still had no reply from Kosygin?<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Sisco: No, nor from Mrs. Gandhi.

Mr. Helms: I think her speech at 1:30 will be significant.

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<sup>5</sup> Secretary Rogers met with Ambassador Raza subsequent to the WSAG meeting on December 3. The two agreed that it was necessary to convene the Security Council promptly to deal with the deteriorating situation. Rogers showed Raza the U.S. draft resolution, and Raza agreed to recommend it to his government for approval. (Telegram 218538 to Islamabad, December 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>6</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>7</sup> Premier Kosygin's reply to President Nixon's letter of November 27 (Document 207) was delivered to the U.S. Embassy on December 3 and transmitted to the Department in telegram 9040 from Moscow, December 3. In his reply, Kosygin took the position that the withdrawal from the border of troops involved in the burgeoning crisis was "scarcely feasible." He argued the importance of pursuing a political solution and put the onus for such a solution on Pakistan. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

Mr. Williams: If I may return to the economic assistance item for a moment, as soon as our action on the Letters of Credit becomes known, we will be asked if we are doing the same thing to Pakistan. There's \$22 million for Pakistan. Will there be parallel action or will we tilt it?

Dr. Kissinger: I'll check. Just hold up for India today and I will check with the President. He hasn't addressed the problem of Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: If we act on India and are asked about Pakistan, we could say that we have been saying for some time that we were keeping matters under review but are not necessarily acting on them now.

Dr. Kissinger: It's hard to tilt toward Pakistan, as the President wishes, if every time we take some action in relation to India we have to do the same thing for Pakistan. Just hold this informally until I get to the President.

Mr. Saunders: (to Williams) Is it physically possible to do it informally? Don't you have to go to the New York banks?

Mr. McDonald: We can do it informally by getting in touch with the banks.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the \$22 million for Pakistan? I thought we weren't doing anything for Pakistan.

Mr. Williams: That's old money which has not yet been put in irrevocable letters of commitment.

Mr. Packard: Can't we get the banks informally to hold everything until Monday?<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Williams: Yes, the timing is good.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Williams) You're quite right to raise the point—it is crucial. The President will have to decide what to do about the \$22 million for Pakistan.

Mr. Irwin: (to Williams) So you are going to call the banks and ask them to hold up any new Letters of Credit informally until they hear from you on Monday.

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: I'll get to the President. Tell them to hold informally and we will take the next step Monday. I expect we will need to have another WSAG meeting tomorrow morning. (to Irwin) Will you be available? When is the Secretary leaving?

Mr. Irwin: He had planned to leave tomorrow morning, but he is reconsidering and may not leave.

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<sup>8</sup> December 6.

Mr. Sisco: (to Kissinger) We're redrafting the reply to the letter from Yahya. The Secretary made some changes.

Dr. Kissinger: Good. Also, we need more facts about the current situation.

Mr. Sisco: (Referring to President Yahya's letter) We haven't found any secret agreements about military assistance to Pakistan—just Article I of the Bilateral Agreement of 1959.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't there some secret protocol or something? I remember when I was there for a previous Administration I was briefed about some protocol or some special understanding.

Mr. Irwin: So far we haven't found anything.

Mr. Van Hollen: We had a secret air agreement with India in 1963.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: No, I was in Pakistan in January 1962. They claimed there was a secret protocol applying to other than Communist countries. I never saw it, though. I thought it was a part of the agreement and I referred to it in conversation with some newsmen. I was told I shouldn't have said anything about it and not one reference appeared in any newspaper to that portion of my remarks—in that free, uncontrolled press. There was either some exchange of letters, or some explanation of the meaning of the agreement. I think it was done in the Eisenhower Administration—some intimidation that the agreement was intended to apply more broadly than just to Communist countries.

Mr. Irwin: I would be amazed if this were done in the Eisenhower years. It would have been contrary to the whole philosophy—particularly with regard to India.

Dr. Kissinger: It might have been President Kennedy. I am sure that some secret document existed in January 1962. The Pakistanis claimed it did and our Embassy there didn't deny it. It applied to something other than SEATO. Ask Bill Rountree—he was Ambassador there. It could be a Presidential letter. Also, I got a letter<sup>11</sup> from (former Ambassador) Oehlert yesterday—he mentioned something about it.

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<sup>9</sup> Article 1 of the Agreement of Cooperation signed by the United States and Pakistan on March 5, 1959, stipulated that in case of aggression against Pakistan the United States would "take such appropriate action, including the use of armed forces, as may be mutually agreed upon" in order to assist Pakistan at its request. (10 UST 317)

<sup>10</sup> This agreement was signed in New Delhi on July 9, 1963 by Prime Minister Nehru and Ambassador Galbraith and transmitted to the Department on July 10 in telegram 143 from New Delhi. (*Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XIX, Document 307)

<sup>11</sup> Not found.



Mr. Sisco: We'll call him, although I'd rather find it first ourselves.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: It was a letter or an exchange of letters, or a protocol, or some interpretation of the agreement.

Mr. Irwin: I have difficulty believing it. Why would the US Government have been making any declaration to Pakistan at that time that could be used against India?

Mr. Williams: It might have referred to aggression against Pakistan from any quarter.

Dr. Kissinger: It wouldn't have said that it was against India. We might have wanted to try to cut down on the sending of military equipment. We might have wanted to give them some assurance that we would take care of them.

Mr. Van Hollen: It might have been done in the context of our supply of military assistance to India after the Chinese Communist attack. We might have wanted to give some assurances to Pakistan about our military assistance to India.

Dr. Kissinger: I never attached any importance to it until now, but I do have a recollection of some interpretation of the bilateral agreement of March of '59. Maybe we wrote them saying the treaty means *this* to us. There was no denial in 1962 that it existed, but I don't know why we did it.

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<sup>12</sup> On December 5 Executive Secretary Eliot sent a memorandum to Kissinger attaching excerpts from security assurances provided to Pakistan by the United States. One such excerpt was from a January 26, 1962, letter from President Kennedy to President Ayub, which reads as follows: "As a firm ally, Pakistan is entitled to the re-affirmation you have requested of the prior assurances given by the United States to Pakistan on the subject of aggression against Pakistan. My Government certainly stands by these assurances." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 12/3/71) The full text of the letter is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XIX, Document 100. On November 5, 1962, Ambassador McConaughy gave President Ayub an aide-mémoire which offered the more explicit assurance that the United States would "come to Pakistan's assistance in the event of aggression from India against Pakistan." (The text of the aide-mémoire is quoted *ibid.*, Document 191, footnote 6. It was transmitted to the Department as an enclosure to airgram A-883 from Karachi, February 23, 1963; Washington National Records Center, RG 84, Karachi Embassy Files, FRC 67 F 74, 320 Pak/US Assurances)

## 219. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 3, 1971, 1513Z.

218346. Subject: Letter from President Yahya.

Following is text of letter to President from President Yahya delivered to White House December 2:<sup>2</sup>

"Dear Mr. President,

I write to thank you most sincerely for your letter of November 27<sup>3</sup> which was delivered to me by Ambassador Farland. I deeply appreciate the measures taken by you to counsel restraint and to promote a withdrawal of forces. I especially take note of your kind offer to consider suggestions from my government and to discuss with you measures that will help reduce the risk of further conflict in South Asia. It is in this spirit that I address these few lines to you now.

As you are aware, I have done my utmost to resolve the problem with India peacefully. I have gone more than half way. I have done my best to keep the clashes localised and confined to East Pakistan. Ambassador Farland and Raza are being kept informed of developments and the evolving military situation. Unfortunately India has chosen the path of war, aided and abetted by Soviet Union, in a bid to break up my country. Time is fast running out and the choice before me has, indeed, become very limited.

I have, therefore, been seriously considering to make an approach to you for a final attempt to avert the impending catastrophe. I do so now.

The advice given to the Indian Prime Minister and indications of the U.S. opposition to any rash actions by India have apparently proved futile. Gesture such as the stoppage of two million dollars worth of arms supplies to India or delay in the signing of PL-480 and development loans are unlikely to change the Indian attitude at this stage. Therefore, I request for urgent consideration, Mr. President, the following measures:

a) issuance of a personal statement by you, condemning India's aggression, aided and abetted by the Soviet Union, and calling for an

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Top Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Laingen on December 2, cleared by Saunders, and approved by Van Hollen. Repeated to New Delhi and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the letter was conveyed to the Department of State on December 2 under a covering letter from Kissinger to Rogers requesting that a draft reply be prepared on an urgent basis. (Ibid., POL PAK-US)

<sup>3</sup> See Document 206.

immediate end to hostilities and withdrawal of opposing forces to safe distance behind their respective borders;

b) issuance of a statement by you strongly advising Soviet Union to desist from militarily supporting India in its aggression against Pakistan;

c) your agreement to my invoking Article I of the Pakistan–United States Bilateral Agreement of Co-operation signed on 5th March 1959<sup>4</sup> and meeting my request for military assistance in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. President, Pakistan is determined to resist aggression launched by India which has enormous superiority of arms and equipment over us. The Russian involvement consisting of massive supplies of sophisticated arms to India has made our task much more difficult. Pakistan must, therefore, enlist powerful and tangible support of its friends in keeping with the solemn agreements signed with them, to meet this formidable challenge.

I shall be most anxiously awaiting your reply.

With warm personal regards, Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan."

**Rogers**

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<sup>4</sup> See footnote 9, Document 218.

<sup>5</sup> Kissinger discussed Yahya's request to invoke the terms of the 1959 treaty in a telephone conversation with Nixon on December 2. Nixon said: "We have a treaty and we have to keep it. That makes it imperative to cut off aid to India." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

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## **220. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 3, 1971, 1500Z.

12007. Subj: Indo-Pak Relations: Fighting in West. Ref: Islamabad 12001.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Flash. Repeated to DIA, New Delhi, Dacca, Karachi, Lahore, London, Moscow, USUN, and CINCPAC for POLAD. Received at 2022Z.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 12001 from Islamabad, December 3, Ambassador Farland reported that the Foreign Ministry had requested that he meet that day with President Yahya. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/1/71–12/4/74)

1. In company with additional FonSec Alvie,<sup>3</sup> I arrived at President Yahya's residence at about 2000 hours local time Dec. 3. Met with President Yahya 10 minutes thereafter. In addition to President Yahya, there was in attendance Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan and Chief of Staff General Abdul Hamid Khan. President informed me that, beginning about 1500 hours local time Dec. 3, a series of Indian army incursions supported by air cover had occurred at a number of points as far north as Kashmir and as far south as Rahim Yar Kham. He said further that as a result of this activity, four Pak air force strikes had taken place upon airfields in the general area north and south of Lahore. He indicated that he was hopeful that Pak planes had returned safely but as yet he had not had a complete report from Air Marshal Rahim Khan. Furthermore, he asked me to convey to President Nixon his personal message to the effect that his restraint had been exercised to the utmost, and that the action which his government had taken today to interdict the military aggression of GOI was among the most difficult decisions that he had ever made.

2. The President then began to spell out in precise detail the areas in which Indian incursions had transpired. I told him that I would appreciate it very much if the FonSec or the additional FonSec, who is taking extensive notes, could give me a copy setting forth these specific areas for the purpose of absolute clarity. This was immediately agreed to and the FonSec said that he would see that this information was delivered to the chancery shortly. I am awaiting this information at this time and will forward same upon receipt.<sup>4</sup>

**Farland**

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<sup>3</sup> Momtaz A. Alvie.

<sup>4</sup> Farland received the Foreign Ministry report by the end of the day. It described simultaneous attacks by the Indian Army between 3:30 and 4 p.m. at Sialkot, Chumb, in an area between the Jessar bridge and Lahore, and on the Rajasthan front opposite Rahim Yar Kham. Pakistan responded, according to the report, with air strikes at Srinagar, Avantipura, Pathankot, and Amritsar. (Telegram 12008 from Islamabad, December 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

**221. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 3, 1971.

P: Any late developments?

K: It's more and more certain it's India attacking and not Pakistan. We cut off other military supplies. Secy. wants to go to Security Council and go on TV. I say we can go just as soon as Pakistan says it's all right with them. We are sending a message<sup>2</sup> through our channels to speed it up. I don't think we should rush until we see what they want. And tell the Chinese it's done with Pakistan's concurrence.

P: Why stick our nose in unless they want us.

K: The right way to do it is low key way and call a Security Council meeting.

P: If Rogers goes on TV it's not going to be a plague on both your houses. He understands?

K: I hope so.

P: He knows. They have the same facts we have. Don't they know India—Everyone knows Pakistan not attacking India.

K: Attacks took place at 5:45 when dusk falling. Three commercial airfields. The other attack at [omission in the source text]. Pakistan could not do it in 15 minutes. Pakistan must be [have] jumped off and India pursued. [omission in the source text] You can't follow us and other side has 5 hours on alert. That's what Moorer said.

P: They would do it at dawn to surprise them.

K: And keep up attacks.

P: It's a tragedy the Indians are so treacherous. Her attitude—not that it is [omission in the source text] our attitude but to put it on an anti-colored attitude. How much help is she getting from colored people?

K: We should stop [*start?*] cutting economic aid now. \$90 million of letters of credit unsigned.

P: Put a stop order on them. They must be signed by me. I think we should go slow on giving visas to Americans going there. American businessmen and others.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington. According to a note on the transcript, the call was placed late in the afternoon.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a telegram sent by Ambassador Raza to his government through U.S. communication channels.

K: Right.

P: Tell them to slow down. We don't want to have to evacuate some jerks and businessmen trying to make investments. What else?

K: Administratively the [omission in the source text] is cut aid next year.

P: That would have to be done in Congress.

K: [omission in the source text]

P: I see. Get Hannah busy and let it leak. We told her if they went in it would be tough.

K: Scott made a speech and Morse and Frelinghuysen<sup>3</sup> already said something.

P: He<sup>4</sup> was pro-Indian but an honest man.

K: He turned around.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

[P:] On India/Pakistan we are not doing this out of peak [*pique*] or mad at India. They may react like Nasser did.

K: It's not in their interest.

P: It puts them fully in hands of Russians.

K: It will drive Chinese to us.

P: Can Russians feed 400 million Indians?

K: And Egypt and Cuba? They are getting overextended.

P: You give figure of 6 million dollars worth of aid.<sup>5</sup>

K: It turns out to be 10.

P: Multilateral also?

K: Yes. But 10 is quite a slug.

P: I bet Passman's figure is bigger. Give Passman a call.<sup>6</sup> Say President says 10 billion to India and ask what his figures show. He would appreciate being asked. Going to Gridiron tomorrow?

K: No.

P: Lucky.

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<sup>3</sup> William Scott, F. Bradford Morse, and Peter Frelinghuysen were Republican Representatives from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, respectively.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to Frelinghuysen.

<sup>5</sup> The question involved the amount of economic assistance provided by the United States to India since 1947, either directly or through multilateral organizations. The dollar amounts involved were billions rather than millions.

<sup>6</sup> After talking with the President, Kissinger called Representative Otto Passman, who served as Chairman of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. Passman provided a figure of \$8.3 billion in U.S. economic assistance to India. (Transcript of a telephone conversation, December 3; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

**222. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 4, 1971, 0650Z.

[*number not declassified*] In conversation with me at 2000 hrs. local December 3, (Islamabad 12007)<sup>2</sup> Yahya said that, with India having precipitated an all-out war, his military forces were in desperate need of U.S. military supplies and earnestly sought my government's assistance in obtaining same.<sup>3</sup> He added that, assuming the Nixon administration found this to be an impossibility, "for God's sake don't hinder or impede the delivery of equipment from friendly third countries."<sup>4</sup> I told Yahya that I would pass the message to you. However, I admonished him that the requests carried with them difficulties of which he should be all too well aware given the history of U.S. military supplies to Pakistan.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret. Received at 8:22 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Document 220.

<sup>3</sup> In a telephone conversation with President Nixon at 10:50 a.m. on December 4, Kissinger reported this request as follows: "We have had an urgent appeal from Yahya. Says his military supplies have been cut off—in very bad shape. Would we help through Iran." Nixon asked: "Can we help?" Kissinger replied: "I think if we tell the Iranians we will make it up to them we can do it." Nixon concurred: "If it is leaking we can have it denied. Have it done one step away." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) Nixon confirmed this decision in a conversation with Kissinger on December 6. He authorized Kissinger to proceed on the understanding that any "back channel" military assistance provided to Pakistan by Iran would be offset by comparable assistance provided to Iran by the United States. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 6, 1971, 12:02–12:06 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 630–2)

<sup>4</sup> On instructions from Washington, [*text not declassified*] in Tehran met with the Shah on December 5 and encouraged Iran to transfer military equipment and munitions to Pakistan. The Shah indicated that he would be glad to help but stipulated that the U.S. replace what was transferred as quickly as possible. ([*telegram number not declassified*], December 5; *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan) On the same day in Amman, King Hussein showed Ambassador Dean Brown a telegram from Pakistani President Yahya Khan asking for military assistance. Hussein said that what Pakistan wanted was 8–10 Jordanian F–104 fighters. Since the United States had provided the aircraft, Hussein turned to the Embassy for advice. (Telegram 5439 from Amman, December 5; *ibid.*, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H–083, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 12/6/71)

**223. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 4, 1971.

K: Mr. President.

P: Yes, Henry.

K: I just wanted to bring you up to date on what happened. First, we positioned Ziegler with a pretty tough statement for his press briefing to make clear where you stood and on that basis . . .

P: They are all aware of the fact that I am in complete touch with it all the time.

K: Well, that's what I . . . Frankly, State had put out a story this morning that you were just being kept generally aware so we had Ziegler say that you ordered the thing.<sup>2</sup>

P: Which is true.

K: Which is exactly true. You talked to me 6 times yesterday.

P: And a half a dozen times today.

K: That's right.

P: And ordered what? You mean on the cut-off of arms?

K: Oh, no the move to the Security Council.

P: Right, yes.

K: I mean that you gave the go-ahead.

P: Right.

K: And then on the basis of that Sisco gave a backgrounder which I understand is playing very well positioning the thing. We've drafted a very tough speech for Bush.

P: Good.

K: And he's on the floor now. He tells me that at the Preparatory Meeting the Chinese jumped all over the Russians and Indians and apparently the Indians wanted to put on the agenda only the item of problems of East Pakistan and the Chinese said "No, let's call it

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 397, Telephone Conversations, Home File, Dec 1971. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington. The conversation was tape-recorded at Kissinger's residence in Washington and subsequently transcribed at the White House. No time of the conversation appears on the transcript.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the decision to instruct Ambassador Bush to introduce a resolution in the UN Security Council calling, inter alia, for a mutual withdrawal of ground forces on the subcontinent; see footnote 5, Document 224.



problems of India.” And that’s all right if they all brawl with each other.

P: Good. Let the liberals choose now between China and India. That’ll be very good.

K: Exactly.

P: Very good. Boy, this really . . . you know, we don’t like this but you realize this is causing our liberal friends untold anguish, Henry.

K: And, Mr. President, actually in terms of the political situation, first of all we won’t take any much [more] immediate flak, but in six months the liberals are going to look like jerks because the Indian occupation of East Pakistan is going to make the Pakistani one look like child’s play.

P: Yes. Well, the main thing we’re not going to do is be suckered by the Indians into a huge aid program. Now that I want clearly understood. You know after they have screwed this thing up, by God, I can’t emphasize too strongly how I feel. We told Mrs. Gandhi we’re going to cut off that aid and we’re going to do it. Has the word gone out?

K: The word has gone out, Mr. President, and on Monday<sup>3</sup> morning—We’ve already told the banks to hold it and on Monday morning it’s going to be effective. I mean nothing can happen before Monday.

P: I see. And you’re examining every other possibility of how we can squeeze India right now.

K: That is right, Mr. President.

P: It’s to be done. Everything is to be held up. Everything is to be dragged. Everything else. They cannot get away with this and . . . well, they will get away with it, but we can’t allow them to without knowing our displeasure.

K: But what we have to reconsider now is whether it is in our interest to be the chief development—source of development capital—of a country that has performed such actions.

P: That’s right. Oh, you mean next year’s aid program?

K: That’s right.

P: That’s what I want now, though. The way I want that handled is for people like Passman and some of our friends in the House and the Senate, even the more liberal types, to come out and say cut aid to India. Get my point.

K: Absolutely.

P: Let them take the lead rather than have us take the lead.

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<sup>3</sup> December 6.

K: Right.

P: Can we do that?

K: Certainly.

P: Well, can we put somebody to work on it so that it'll be discreetly done. I just want . . .

K: I've already talked to Passman in that sense.

P: Well, Passman, but there are others—there's got to be a whole plan.

K: Well, Passman thought we should go easy until we've got the present aid program through the budget.

P: Yes.

K: Through the Congress.

P: Yes. And then what would he do? Then he would go after . . .

K: Next year's appropriation.

P: Is that what you're talking about—next year's?

K: I'm talking about what we put into the budget for '73.

P: Well, it's going to be goddamn little that's for sure.

K: Well, that's what we should do, Mr. President. And this year's we can also cut.

P: I want it cut what we are doing now in fact. And as far as next year's is concerned we just cut that, but I don't want to cut Pakistan's. We're going to play this fair now. I just hope we can get someone on the story now. Did you get Scali turned loose so that he has a . . .

K: We gave Scali the facts yesterday, but we couldn't locate him today. But we've been thumping out the facts all day and I think you will find that the combination of the statement we got Ziegler to make, the Sisco backgrounder and what Bush is going to say tonight is going to be quite a massive dose.

P: It will put us on the side of trying to restrain India.

K: That's right.

P: That's what I really feel we've got to get across. Now I haven't been following the editorial comments, what are the *Times* and *Post* and those jackasses saying?

K: Well, the *Times* hasn't said anything yet. The *Post* is bleeding about it's going to the Security Council which we've done.

P: Well, of course, but are they blaming India or Pakistan, or both, or neither?

K: Well, they are trying to be pretty even-handed. They're blaming India. They are blaming India for the military actions and then, of course, they are bleeding about the refugees. But it's beginning to tilt against India.

P: We've got to make it tilt more because we know they are totally to blame. We know that. We know the Paks don't want this.

K: That's right. Well, the Paks don't want it. The Paks accepted every proposal of ours. I told the Indian Ambassador before he left that we would work out a complete program with them for political autonomy within a year if they . . .

P: You've gotten out the fact that, for example, it may be that you ought to have a backgrounder tomorrow. Are you in New York?

K: No, I'm in Washington.

P: A backgrounder tomorrow where you can point out that we told Mrs. Gandhi that the Paks were prepared to withdraw from the border. And that we [*she?*] said we would be willing to look at this and that, in spite of this they haven't done it. I think it's very important to put the burden on India on this, Henry. I just don't feel that we can . . . now the other side of it that you can say, well, there's 400 million people who have their . . .

K: Well, but we haven't got them anyway, Mr. President.

P: We've got their enmity anyway. That's what she's shown in this goddamn thing, hasn't she?

K: I mean it isn't that we are losing an ally. They were the ones that made a treaty with the Russians. They are the ones that are now establishing the principle that force is the only method—the principal method for settling disputes, and it isn't that we're losing anything. In fact, if we do it the right way, we can still get them to come back to us, to get back in our good graces. The Russians aren't going to give them \$700 million in development money.

P: The only thing, it is very important to get the P.R. thing across. I do want you to try to find Scali and get him to work on the thing.

K: Right, Mr. President.

P: But he's not in town, you say?

K: Well, I don't know. We've been trying all day. And we are continuing to try.

P: All right. But what do you think about your doing a backgrounder, or is that overkill?

K: I think it'd be overkill tomorrow, but what I might do, if you agree, Mr. President, and we think it's necessary. I worked out with Ziegler a procedure which we've always wanted to try where I step into his briefing. I mean, he calls me in when questions start falling and says,—why don't we get Henry on background on this—and I just step into his briefing.

P: Why don't you do that?

K: Monday morning. By that time . . .

P: I'm having that day with NBC that day. You could pop in and I could say Ziegler could come in and approve it and so forth, I guess.

K: I thought one of the things I might do, Mr. President, I've got ten minutes with you in the morning, to brief you on the India situation.

P: Sure, sure. Or anything you want, I mean . . .

K: I know, but . . .

P: We're going to play that by ear. It may be 30 minutes, if I decide it. I'm not saying to play it by the goddamn television. But, you know what I mean. We'll talk about India and several other things.

K: That's right.

P: Let me ask you about a couple other things. Of course, they can only use a couple minutes in the program but we have got to give them enough, then they'll pick the good things. What is the situation now with Rogers? He's perfectly content to stay out of it, I suppose, because he sees it's a loser. Is that right?

K: Well, he's content not to be—not to have gone on television announcing the thing.<sup>4</sup>

P: That wouldn't have been any good at all because we're not sure it's going to work.

K: No, but it would [not] have been good for him to set up a command post in New York conducting this operation.

P: And working with the Chinese because they wouldn't understand him at all.

K: That's right and that's what the . . . oh, not at all . . . and the Chinese are in any case programmed. They don't want to be involved in our . . . They want to be able to say that they are not colluding with us.

P: I see.

K: So Rogers is happy with this and he did give the backgrounder under great protest. He wouldn't have given it if we hadn't got . . .

P: You mean Sisco did.

K: Sisco did. Rogers didn't want it until we put out that statement at Key Biscayne and then he figured he better get State into the act.

P: Oh, that's what did it?

K: Yes.

P: Now Ziegler made a very good public statement, huh? What was Ziegler's statement?

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<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the initiative Bush was instructed to take cited in footnote 2 above.

K: Well, Ziegler's statement said the President has been following this hourly. At 10:30 this morning after receiving the latest report he gave the go-ahead to the State Department to take the case to the Security Council. The President is dismayed by the use of Indian troops in Pakistan and then he was asked, "Does that mean you are giving up your neutral role in this conflict?" And he said it means that the Indians have said they are now on an all out invasion of East Pakistan and this we have always said that the American people would not understand. And that played very well, very strong and Sisco is playing off that.

P: Now how did Sisco handle it? Did he do what you told him that I told him he was to do this?

K: Exactly. Well, at first he didn't want to do it and Rogers didn't want him to do it, but then when they saw the Ziegler thing which featured your role then they decided they better get some State Department line out too.

P: Is that what did it?

K: Yes. Which is OK. We don't want them to . . .

P: Of course, you got the Ziegler played, that was very good.

K: Right.

P: And then Sisco did give a good backgrounder?

K: He did give a good backgrounder citing chapter and verse of all the things the Indians have refused to do: no UN observers, no acceptance of the . . .

P: Did he also cite what we have done—that we have given \$250 million in aid and all that.

K: Oh yes, oh yes.

P: We're getting all that across, are we?

K: Yes, and anything that needs to be done I can do Monday morning.

P: I think what probably needs to be done, that Monday you may have to give—basically, rather than having a white paper put out; that what you ought to do is look over the facts very, very carefully and then go out and give a hard hitting briefing.

K: Yes, but I ought to do that on background.

P: Oh absolutely, on background. On the thing that we've just talked to the President, we've examined the whole thing, now here are the facts. I think that could have an enormous effect.

K: Right. I think that's right.

P: It would pit world opinion against these people.

K: Right.

P: Is that the way you feel about it?

K: That's exactly the way I feel about it. Because that puts us—then we have to have a basis for the actions in the economic field we are taking.

P: Now insofar as those actions are concerned, we haven't had any squeals from the Indians, have we?

K: No, no. See that's again where State was wrong. The Indians have no interest in escalating this with us. Not a squeal. They will start squealing next week when the economic aid is cut off.

P: Now understand, I don't want any nonsense about this. I really want it cut down to—anything that can be cut is got to be cut next week. *Anything* that can be cut and I want Hannah brought on the carpet. And I want Currans and everybody—so that everything is cut, Henry. That's the only way the Indians are going to understand this—if it all is cut and they know it. Don't announce a thing. Just do it.

K: Exactly.

P: Now is that all understood.

K: That's all understood, Mr. President.

P: And Connally understands it, of course.

K: Connally has played beautiful ball. He knows how to do these things without the knife showing.

P: Incidentally, tell him, if you will—now he's at the gridiron tonight—but in the morning, if he has an opportunity to stick the knife in India in any public statement that he makes, to do it.

K: OK.

P: That would be a good thing to have done.

K: Because he could do it from a development point of view.

P: That's right. That's right. That we are going to have to reexamine our aid. I mean I think we should play a very tough game. I don't think the American people want to aid a country that is an aggressor.

K: Well, and as consistently. It was bad enough when, with our money, they dragged us around in the UN, when have these bastards ever supported us?

P: Never.

K: What can they do to us that they aren't doing now? I mean if they want to be Russian stooges and have the Russians spend a billion dollars there a year, we can't prevent it.

P: Right. Ok. Well, this is the way to play it. We'll take a look Monday to see whether we want to have you go.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

P: Well, I wish there was some more we could do here but . . . They'll run out of gas—both sides—won't they in about two weeks.

K: Yes, but of course, another thing we have done is to send a backchannel to the Shah from you saying that, trying to find out whether he wanted to give some support to Pakistan and saying if he did we would look to see whether we could find a way of letting, of replacing his . . .

P: Are you sure that backchannel is safe?

K: Yes.

P: I wouldn't do it through MacArthur.<sup>5</sup>

K: No, no, that's why I didn't do it that way and we didn't put it as a message. We put it as talking points so it can be disallowed.

P: Good, well we'll have some fun with this yet. God, you know what would really be poetic justice here is if some way the Paks could really give the Indians a bloody nose for a couple of days. The fighting, any report on that?

K: Well, the fighting—we got reports in East Pakistan that the Indians are surprised at the intensity of the Pakistan resistance. But of course they outnumber them there eight to one.

P: How about West Pakistan?

K: In West Pakistan the Indians don't seem to have gotten very far. And there I think they're not going to be able to win except by wearing them down. They outnumber them there five to one. They've been bombing Karachi and burning the oil installations.

P: Isn't that awful. That [is] terrible. The Indians are bombing Karachi?

K: Yes.

P: Oh, for Christ's sake, isn't that . . . and Rawalpindi I notice is on the list, too.

K: Yes. Well, of course, they've been playing a terrific game these last years. Every time one tank was shipped to Pakistan the Indians would carry on like maniacs, but they've been getting big shipments from India [*the Soviet Union?*], they've been getting big shipments from India [*the Soviet Union?*], rather [than] their own armaments industry.

P: Well, we've got to get across the point that as far as our aid to Pakistan is concerned that first it was minimal. Second, that our mistake was, and I think that's the thing you want to make in your backgrounder, was that we didn't give more.

K: That's right. Oh, the military aid thing, Mr. President, is so absurd. We gave \$3.8 million dollars worth of spare parts.

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<sup>5</sup> Ambassador to Iran Douglas MacArthur II.

P: As I look at this thing for the future, Henry, I have the feeling that they're going to try to build it up—again we've got to think of what the media will try to do.

P: Let the Indians squeal. Let the liberals squeal. What's wrong with that?

K: Well, uh . . .

P: I'm not sure, you know, that we may not be playing it boldly enough.

K: Well, we can look at that. On Monday morning we can . . .

P: I want to see that kind of a suggestion because I would be prepared to go out and say in view of this action that we regretfully cut off. Until this action desists all economic aid to India stops, period. They're in the business of being the aggressors—course they are the aggressors. I really feel—oh, I know all the arguments that well then we're choosing up sides, we're not neutral. Of course, we're not neutral. Neither are the Indians. They're always neutral against us.

K: That's right and you said that's what you'd do.

P: I think we ought to do it.

K: Well, we can certainly, Mr. President, on Monday morning cut off this \$100 million dollar slice.

P: Well, but you see all this is salami stuff. I think that what is really needed is a jolt. We have given \$10 billion worth of aid to India. So you tell the American people that I'm cutting off all aid to India. Make a bold play. You talk to Connally about that tomorrow.

K: OK.

P: All right, we've got \$10 billion and we're cutting off all aid to India until this war stops. That might have some effect.

K: Right.

P: Don't you agree?

K: I think that . . . no, I'm very—I find it very attractive. Our experience has been . . .

P: It'll be very attractive also to the American people.

K: That's right.

P: They would like it. You say, "Look, we've given \$10 billion in aid. Now they are going forward with this aggression, we're cutting off all aid to them until they stop."

K: And evacuate any territory they have occupied.

P: That's right. Well, get me a plan like that and I'll go for it, okay?

K: Right, Mr. President.

P: All right.



## 224. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 4, 1971, 11:13–11:41 a.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. Joseph Sisco

Mr. Christopher Van Hollen

Mr. Bruce Laingen

Mr. David Schneider

Mr. Samuel DePalma

Defense

Mr. Warren Nutter

Mr. Armistead Selden

Mr. James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, Jr.

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Mr. Richard Helms

Mr. John Waller

AID

Dr. John Hannah

Mr. Maurice Williams

Mr. Donald MacDonald

NSC Staff

B/Gen. Alexander Haig

Col. Richard Kennedy

Mr. Harold Saunders

Mr. Samuel Hoskinson

Adm. Robert Welander

Mrs. Jeanne W. Davis

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

1) The official Indian statement on the “no-holds-barred” offensive<sup>2</sup> and the comparable Pak statements, should be reflected in our statement at the UN today;

2) CIA will prepare by Monday morning, December 6, an hour-by-hour account of events, along with whatever conclusions they can draw;

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. 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 James Noyes (OASD/ISA) is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Dec) 1971.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a statement made by Defense Secretary K.B. Lall on December 4 that India had launched a “no holds are barred” offensive in East Pakistan. (Intelligence memorandum prepared in the CIA Directorate of Intelligence, December 4; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, South Asia, Nov–Dec 1971)

3) The bland letter calling for the Security Council meeting, proposed by the Japanese and others, is satisfactory as long as the points in our original version of the letter are covered in our announcement of the meeting call.

4) We should seek to speak first at the SC meeting, after India and Pakistan;

5) We will introduce our resolution at the time we make our statement, without co-sponsors if necessary.

6) We will go along with general language on political accommodation but will not accept specific language concerning Mujib's release.

7) AID will prepare a paper on exactly what we have done in cutting off economic assistance to India and what we will say publicly when our action becomes known; the paper should include the reason why we have not taken the same action for Pakistan although this will not be made public now.

8) Agriculture's desire to ship 50,000 tons of vegetable oil to India will be raised with the President;

Dr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), what's going on?

(Mr. Helms briefed from the attached text.)<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Helms: We sent you a copy of a study yesterday on *Moscow and the Indo-Pakistani Crisis*.<sup>4</sup> It's pretty good and you should take a look at it. It discusses the switch in the Soviet attitude in some detail. With regard to the attacks, Indian aircraft have hit two oil company dumps in Karachi and they have a nasty fire going which the Paks apparently can't put out. It will provide a fine target for Indian planes as long as they want to use it. We also have a report from a British businessman in Lahore that Pakistan troops have crossed the border there. As you know, we're getting dependents out of Lahore via the road to Islamabad.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Indians have announced a full-scale invasion, this will have to be reflected in the statement we're making this afternoon at the UN.

Mr. Van Hollen: I'll check on it.

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<sup>3</sup> Attached but not printed. Helms briefed from notes that described a combined Indian-Mukti Bahini offensive in East Pakistan and the beginning stages of the fighting along the border between India and West Pakistan. Pakistani troops were being hard pressed in the east, but there was little beyond artillery exchanges in the west. The notes analyzed the movement of the Soviet Union away from opposing war on the subcontinent and pointed to the conclusion that Moscow would not do much to try to halt hostilities.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

Dr. Kissinger: It's not in the statement<sup>5</sup> now and it should be.

Mr. Helms: So far as who started it is concerned, we're no better off than we were yesterday. Nor do we have any explanation as to why Pakistan struck those insignificant airfields.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Helms) Could we have by Monday morning an hour-by-hour account of who did what when?

Mr. Helms: Sure. Have you seen our latest paper?<sup>6</sup> That covers most of it, although it isn't listed by hours. Should we convert that into an hourly chronology?

Dr. Kissinger: It would help—and also what conclusions you can draw.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. DePalma: If you're going to include what India has been saying in our statement this afternoon, Yahya has been saying some things too—the “final war” statement,<sup>8</sup> for example. Should we include references to one side's statements and not the other.

Dr. Kissinger: I'm under instruction from the President to tilt our statements toward Pakistan. Now, either the bureaucracy will put out the kind of statements the President wants or they will be issued from the White House.

Mr. DePalma: I'm just asking how you want it handled. We can use only the Indian statement or both statements.

Dr. Kissinger: Is this an official Indian statement?

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Mr. Van Hollen: Is there an official statement on the Pak side?

Mr. Helms: By Yahya himself.

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<sup>5</sup> In his statement to the United Nations Security Council on December 4, Ambassador Bush introduced a resolution that called for the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of armed forces by India and Pakistan from each other's territory, and encouraged both countries to avail themselves of the Secretary-General's offer to use his good offices to promote a settlement. (UN doc. S/PV.1606)

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to the memorandum cited in footnote 2 above.

<sup>7</sup> The CIA prepared a chronology and covering memorandum entitled, “India–Pakistan: Responsibility for Initiating Hostilities on 3 December 1971” in response to this request. The documents are undated, but the chronology runs through December 4, suggesting that they were prepared and submitted on December 5. The covering memorandum concluded that it was difficult to determine conclusively which country initiated hostilities, but the weight of evidence tended to support Indian claims that Pakistan struck first in the west with air strikes. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan Situation)

<sup>8</sup> President Yahya's speech to the nation is summarized in the memorandum cited in footnote 2 above.

Dr. Kissinger: Have the Indians said they are launching an all-out attack?

Mr. Helms: They've said they have launched a "no holds barred" offensive on East Pakistan.

Dr. Kissinger: Has Yahya said anything of a comparable nature?

Mr. Helms: He has said his army would push the invader back into his own territory and destroy him.

Dr. Kissinger: Is that objectionable? Can the UN object to someone driving an enemy back? The Pak Ambassador called me the other day to say he had been told by someone in the State Department to exercise restraint and wanted to know how he should do it. I told him to go back and ask the person who told him.

Mr. DePalma: If the statements track that way, both of them can be mentioned in our statement.

Dr. Kissinger: Can someone brief on what happened on the approach to the UN?

Mr. DePalma: The UK, Belgium, Japan and Italy are all set. Also probably France. We have had a little problem with the letter calling for the Security Council meeting. Japan and some of the others have detected the tilt in our draft and would prefer an absolutely bland letter. They have given us a substitute draft. (Handed both drafts<sup>9</sup> to Mr. Kissinger)

Dr. Kissinger: I thought we were going to make an announcement.

Mr. DePalma: We are. We can make the announcement in our own terms.

Dr. Kissinger: I have no strong views on what the letter should say as long as we can get our version out through the announcement. Our letter is the same as our press statement. Is that what they object to?

Mr. DePalma: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: (Reading the text of the proposed substitute letter)<sup>10</sup> I don't care how the request for the meeting is made as long as George Bush understands what he is to say. Are there any views on this? Does it make any difference?

Mr. Helms: I don't think it makes any difference.

Mr. Van Hollen: We do need a letter, though—it shouldn't just be done orally.

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<sup>9</sup> Copies are in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-082, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 11/24/71.

<sup>10</sup> The letter submitted to the Security Council President on December 4 requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the deteriorating situation on the sub-continent and was signed by the representatives of Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Somalia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (UN doc. S/10411)

Dr. Kissinger: Go ahead with the bland letter. We will put out our statement. Incidentally, whoever is backgrounding for the State Department has invoked the President's wrath. He referred to UPI-5, saying he would like us to give the impression of a unified, coordinated government. The President believes he has been issuing some instructions in this matter, not just being kept "appraised."

What will happen at the UN?

Mr. DePalma: We don't know the hour of the meeting yet—it will either be this afternoon or this evening. The opening statements will be made by India and Pakistan, and we should try to speak first immediately after they do. We should make our statement before the others speak and start to muck it up.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we have to take account of what anyone else says?

Mr. DePalma: The impact of our statement would be cleaner if it were not treated in the press as one of several lines being taken.

Dr. Kissinger: I have no objection to our speaking first after India and Pakistan.

Mr. DePalma: On the resolution, there is a question as to whether we can get things lined up in time to introduce it at the time we make our statement. We think it would be better to have our co-sponsors lined up. If they begin to quibble with the text, however, we will have to decide whether we want to take the time to work out an agreed text.

Dr. Kissinger: But we have told the Paks we are going to put in this resolution.

Mr. DePalma: It's the one they expect.

Dr. Kissinger: Then we have to put it in.

Mr. DePalma: Alone?

Mr. Helms: What's the matter with being for peace?

Dr. Kissinger: Is our resolution so daring?

Mr. Helms: Why shouldn't we hand the text out to the press before we make our statement?

Mr. DePalma: We can't do that if we want co-sponsors.

Dr. Kissinger: It's a question of whether we want a fan-dance or want to position ourselves. We want the resolution tabled. We know it won't come out as it goes in. Having bitched around for the last two weeks, the only thing we want now is to make our position clear. Everyone knows we will end up with Indian occupation of East Pakistan. It will be interesting to see how all those people who were so horrified at what the Paks were doing in East Pakistan react when the Indians take over there. The only thing we want to achieve is to make our position clear. We want that resolution tabled.

Mr. DePalma: All right. We will make a minimum effort for co-sponsors. We will tell them we will table our resolution at the time we make our statement. If they want to co-sponsor, fine. If not, we will table it and the others can come in if they like.

Dr. Kissinger: They'll play with the language anyway. The possibility of their accepting it as is is zero.

Mr. DePalma: They'll quibble with it.

Dr. Kissinger: Their quibbles added together could be significant. If there is virtue in our speaking first, after the Indians and Pakistanis, there is virtue in positioning ourselves and getting our resolution in. We know nothing is going to happen at the UN. Anything will be vetoed.

Mr. Van Hollen: Both the Soviets and Indians will try to delay.

Mr. Helms: The headlines of the past week all take the line that the U.S. is vacillating—can't make up its mind about going to the UN.

Dr. Kissinger: We will hit hard on cease-fire and withdrawal of forces before political settlement. I've talked to Secretary Rogers and that is his view too. I now assume that the resolution will be introduced by us at the time of Bush's statement. If anyone else wants to join us, fine. But there will be no hold-up.

Mr. DePalma: Okay.

Dr. Kissinger: And we understand that we will not go along with any specifics on political accommodation. We will accept general political settlement language, but not specifically related to Mujib's release. Is that understood?

Mr. DePalma: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: How long can India delay the proceedings?

Mr. DePalma: India will make a long speech. The Soviets will make a long speech. They will ask what the purpose of the exercise is, and take the position that a political settlement is the only important thing.

Mr. Van Hollen: They will spin it out as long as possible while they are moving militarily.

Mr. DePalma: They can do it for three or four days, then something has to happen.

Mr. Helms: Just about long enough to occupy East Pakistan.

Mr. DePalma: We can try to force a vote—to force them to veto, if there is any virtue in that. It should be weighed against the remote possibility of getting something useful.

Dr. Kissinger: It's inconceivable that we will get anything useful out of this. The Soviets won't tolerate it—the Indians won't have it.

Mr. DePalma: One guy or the other will veto.<sup>11</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: There will definitely be a Security Council session today?

Mr. DePalma: Yes.

Mr. Helms: That 11 o'clock meeting this morning just went by the board?

Dr. Kissinger: What was that?

Mr. DePalma: The President of the Council was shilly-shallying around about calling a meeting.

Dr. Kissinger: When are we making our announcement about the meeting?

Mr. DePalma: I'm not sure.

Dr. Kissinger: On the question of economic assistance, the President wants to go ahead on India only. We can't do anything until Monday anyway. (to Williams) Will you get over here a paper indicating what we will say when our action becomes public and exactly what we have done. I will read it to the President so he knows exactly what he's getting into.

Mr. Williams: Should our statement also cover why we are not taking the same action for Pakistan?

Dr. Kissinger: No, let's keep that back. We should have a reason, though.

Mr. Williams: Agriculture wants us to point out that the price of vegetable oil in the U.S. is very weak and they want to substitute 50,000 tons of vegetable oil for part of the 400,000 tons of wheat remaining to be delivered from the FY 71 PL-480 agreement.

Dr. Kissinger: I know their problem. Let me raise it with the President. I'll get you an answer by opening of business Monday morning. (to Adm. Zumwalt) What's the military situation? How long can the Paks hold out in East Pakistan?

Adm. Zumwalt: Not long. Their logistics will grind to a halt—in one or two weeks if they're not overrun sooner. The Indians may occupy some essential parts but stop short of total occupation and let the guerrillas take the parts that the Indians don't want to hold. The Soviets will probably convert the aid they had proposed for India to permanent use of the naval base at Visak.

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<sup>11</sup> The U.S. draft resolution (UN doc. S/10416) was vetoed by the Soviet Union; the vote was 11 to 2 (Poland, U.S.S.R.), with 2 abstentions.

Dr. Kissinger: We'll meet again Monday<sup>12</sup> morning, unless something happens to require a meeting sooner. We have the draft reply to Yahya, but we don't need to do that now.

Mr. Nutter: It goes without saying that anyone relying on the newspapers for his information is convinced that this is entirely the fault of the Pakistanis. They failed to come to some political accommodation then they attacked India.

Dr. Kissinger: It's a well done political campaign. We'll be paying for it for a long time. You'll look at UPI-5, won't you?

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<sup>12</sup> December 6.

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## 225. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>

December 4, 1971, 12:15 p.m.

RN: Upon studying these reports<sup>2</sup> on Pakistan—the main thing that needs to be done is the public relations side of it. As far as the White House, we are weaker than we should be. I want it to be a necessity to get Scali turned loose on what we are doing—what we have done and blame India. The “Libs” can say we brought this on by the arms support to Pakistan. That will be their argument. India will be doing “PR” to make Pakistan look like it caused it. Get the point?

HAK: Yes.

RN: Be sure to give Scali free rein. He must understand it.

HAK: I am setting out to do some background.

RN: Let him be responsible about [*for?*] it. State should be pitching it.

HAK: They are being very even handed—they are more interested in how they look.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.



RN: Well, I understand. When [omission in the source text] thought the Russians were responsible they were loving it. The Indians are picking up on China's faults.

HAK: This is the worse setback for two weeks. We have known what is needed and couldn't get it down [*done?*] We should have [omission in the source text] when they started two weeks ago.

RN: Going from here, this couldn't or can't go on long.

HAK: India is now waging a full-scale war on East Pakistan. India will be then moving in on West Pakistan.

RN: What other lines can we go—what about the Security Council.

HAK: At the Security Council, the Indians and Soviets are going to delay long enough so a resolution cannot be passed. If it was, the Soviets would veto. UN will be impotent. So the Security Council is just a paper exercise—it will get the *Post* and *Times* off our backs. And the Libs will be happy that we turned it over to the UN. The damage won't show up for a few years. At the moment we retrench around the world, this proves that countries can get away with brutality.

RN: Now, what else?

HAK: I think we should get [*hold?*] off [*on?*] letters of credit worth 99M—that is underway. We should not be giving any economic aid in India. We gave 60% to [*of*] economic development to India.

RN: Say I want Scali to blame India.

HAK: I'll get Scali.

RN: Let's get some PR out on them—put the blame on India. It will also take some blame off us. Our story about getting off militarily didn't get much play. They will feel the economic one. We have got to help rebuild Pakistan.

RN: [*HAK?*] Sure—major economic development for Pakistan in a month when the smoke clears.

RN: The U.S. cannot be responsible for maintaining peace every place in the world. We can use our influence, but may not always be successful. American public will welcome that.

HAK: We won't get blamed. Walters (Barbara) was in the other day and she asked about India/Pakistan and I gave her some facts. She said why not put it out, for god's sake. I couldn't get any of the bureaucrats to do it. We will put out the facts, Mr. President.

RN: Meantime, we assure that things will continue. . . .

HAK: If war does continue, give aid via Iran.

RN: Good, at least Pakistan will be kept from being paralyzed.

HAK: It is the PR that is the important thing—Scali, Bush. We will put in a resolution asking for withdrawal and ceasefire.

RN: How about sanctioning.

HAK: No before we get it—we won't get it thru at all—the Soviets will veto if it gets a majority. Now that India will occupy all of Pakistan we will see their real motives. If the East Bengalis get [omission in the source text], if they think Pakistan is brutal, wait till India gets them. India will push the Moslems into a much narrower area than they already have. For all those reasons, the Indians will not run like injured victims in six months.

RN: Will the press get [*the?*] point—to talk as though the Indians are the aggressors? Call Sisco and tell him to do the background and I expect to see it in the news summaries this evening.

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## 226. Letter From Indian Prime Minister Gandhi to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi, December 5, 1971.

Excellency,

The Government of India has kept your Government and people informed of the tragic and intolerable ramifications of the events inside East Bengal or India since March 25 last. From time to time, we have been explaining the developing situation to you through our diplomatic representatives. The repressive, brutal and colonial policy followed by the Government of Pakistan in East Bengal culminated in genocide and massive violence since March 25, 1971. This, as you know, has resulted in an exodus of 10 million East Bengali nationals into India whose number is still increasing.

2. We have borne the burden of these events and have withstood the greatest pressure that any country could face in such circumstances. We have also acted with great restraint in face of continuous provocations from Pakistan.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India, (1971). No classification marking. Sent to the White House on December 6 under cover of a letter of transmittal from Ambassador Jha, who noted that the message "originated from New Delhi in the forenoon of December 5, 1971, Indian time." (Ibid.)

3. Our informing the international community of the realities of the situation, our attempts in this regard at the U.N. and the visits undertaken by my colleagues and me have not produced any results. Our hope that counsels of reason from the statesmen of the world might persuade President Yahya Khan to deal with the elected leaders of the people of East Bengal directly to achieve a political solution of the problem has been belied.

4. We have now received incontrovertible evidence of Pakistan's war-like intentions. On the afternoon of 3rd December 1971, the Government of Pakistan led by President Yahya Khan ordered a massive attack on India across its western frontiers. This has been followed by a gazette extraordinary published by the Government of Pakistan on the forenoon of the 4th December 1971, declaring that it is a state of war against India.

5. I regret to inform Your Excellency that around 1730 hours (Indian Standard Time) on the 3rd of December, Pakistan launched a massive air and ground attack on our country all along the western border. Their aircraft bombed Srinagar, Amritsar, Pathankot, Uttarali, Ambala, Agra, Jodhpur and Avantipur. There has also been heavy shelling of the border cities and townships of Ambala, Ferozepur, Sulaimanki, Khemkaran, Poonch, Mehdipur and Jaiselmer. The attack against India was carefully organized and premeditated as is proved by the fact that the Pakistan army struck across the western borders of India stretching from Jaiselmer to Kashmir between 1500 hours and 1800 (I.S.T.).

6. That this aggression is premeditated and planned is evident from the fact that President Yahya Khan had declared on November 25 that he would be "off to fighting in ten days' time". Pakistan chose to launch the attack when I myself was away at Calcutta, addressing a public meeting and most senior colleagues in the Cabinet were in different parts of the country. It is also significant that within minutes of the launching of the attack the Pakistani publicity media launched a malicious propaganda offensive accusing India of having attacked West Pakistan earlier in the afternoon.

7. I should like to emphasize that this is the fourth time since India and Pakistan achieved independence that Pakistan has attacked India. Our bitter experiences of 1947 and 1948 and 1965 have taught us that Pakistan is determined to threaten our territorial integrity and security by all means available—this time specially to divert attention from its colonial and repressive policies inside East Bengal and to internationalise the issue.

8. I am writing to you at a moment of grave peril and danger to my country and my people. The success of the freedom movement in Bangla Desh has now become a war on India due to the adventurism

of the Pakistan military machine. It has imposed upon my people and my Government the imperative responsibility of safeguarding our security and territorial integrity. We are left with no other option but to put our country on a war footing. We have therefore declared an emergency for the defence of India. The grave consequences that should follow Pakistan's unprovoked attack on us all shall be the sole responsibility of the Government of Pakistan. We are a peace-loving people but we know that peace cannot last if we do not guard our democracy and our way of life. We are not fighting merely for our territorial integrity but for the basic ideals which have given strength to my country and on which India's entire future depends. I should stress to Your Excellency that the people and the Government of India are determined that this wanton and unprovoked aggression should be decisively and finally repelled once and for all; the whole of India stands united in this resolve and expects that the international community will appreciate our predicament and acknowledge the righteousness of our cause.

9. In this hour of danger the Government and the people of India seek your understanding and urge you to persuade Pakistan to desist forthwith from the policy of wanton aggression and military adventurism which it has unfortunately embarked upon. May I request Your Excellency to exercise your undoubted influence with the Government of Pakistan to stop their aggressive activities against India and to deal immediately with the genesis of the problem of East Bengal which has caused so much trial and tribulations to the people not only of Pakistan but of the entire sub-continent.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration,

**Indira Gandhi**<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typewritten signature.

227. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Rogers and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 5, 1971.

R: Hello.

K: Bill.

R: Yeah, Henry.

K: How are you?

R: Fine, thank you.

K: I wanted to bring you up-to-date on just one item that happened late yesterday afternoon, and I called you earlier. We had suggested to the Chinese a while ago that maybe we should establish direct contact in New York.

R: U-humm.

K: They have now come back and said they don't want that.

R: U-humm.

K: And that anything can be done through the Pakistanis or other friends.

R: That's the way George [H.W. Bush] has been working.

K: Right. It's nothing, I just wanted you to be aware of that.

R: U-humm.

K: Otherwise, I don't have anything. I called you earlier just to find out how things—

R: Yeah. I think the fighting is exaggerated in the press. Cause there seems to be a lot less in the—

K: In the West.

R: No, in the press I say there is—

K: No, no, I think—but you mean in the West or in the East?

R: Well, both. In other words, although I am not talking about the movement of forces now but I am talking about casualties and losses and so forth. My military people say that plane losses, for example, so far we haven't had too many confirmations. We are inclined to think it is roughly 15 on either side in that area. The Indians have admitted 11 [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*].

K: Yeah.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 397, Telephone Conversations, Home File, Dec 1971. No classification marking. The conversation was tape-recorded at Kissinger's residence and subsequently transcribed at the White House. No time appears on the transcript.

R: Well, I'll be in touch with you in a little while. We're going over the fix now as we see it and then we will want to talk a little later about the Security Council. I thought it went very well yesterday.

K: I think actually it's come out—well, I think the backgrounder played very well.

R: Yeah, it did. You know, it's just really a question in the long run. We didn't accomplish really what we wanted to do and that is to convince everybody that we have taken all the right moves. But we performed the other task the President wanted performed, that is to condemn India.

K: No, and I think it lays the basis for establishing the fact that we have taken the right moves. You know, you don't expect the *New York Times* ever to like anything we did.

R: Yeah. Well, I think we have got a major decision if this thing continues to grow and that is whether we want to burn our bridges behind us or not with India.

K: Well, the other question is what do we gain by tacking towards them now?

R: Well, it isn't really tacking towards them now. It's just a question of how much do we want to get involved in the public mind with the war itself and it's something we want to ask ourselves thoughtfully it seems to me now.

K: Well, no one is against discussing anything thoughtful.

R: That's all I am saying. In the long run do we want to go all out and take the exact Chinese position or do we want to be somewhere in between. At the moment we are somewhere in between—between the Soviet Union and China.

K: Well, our present position is to try to be say two-thirds of the way towards China but not all the way but above all what we have here is a Soviet-Indian naked power play to dismember a country.

R: Yeah.

K: Which must have profound consequences in other parts of international areas.

R: I'm not challenging that. I'm just saying that I think the President should think through very carefully each step from now on; particularly because it is the kind of thing that if it continues to grow sort of shadows our position of a more peaceful world and maybe that's the only course. Maybe there is nothing we can do about it.

K: Well, what do you think we can do about it?

R: At least we can talk about it. In other words, I think the President should get involved now. I think we should have the Security Council discuss it and I think he should—

K: There is no question about that.

R: Yeah, that's all I'm saying. It has, as you said, it has profound repercussions and it may blow over or it may be that—

K: It won't blow over.

R: I don't think so, I never have thought so. As you know, I—

K: There's no conceivable way it can blow over.

R: I don't think so. Well, it's conceivable, it can blow over the way it did the last time although, even the last time it lasted quite a while.

K: Well, there's no way it can blow over without East Pakistan being separated from Pakistan.

R: No, I don't think so either.

K: I mean that's going to be the outcome and the question is in part, what we have here is an Indian-Soviet—I mean however this issue started and whatever the pros and cons of the local situation were, it's gone far beyond that.

R: I see. Which is what we thought all along and I think we have to ask ourselves where we want to be a year from now, at least at the time of the election and two years from now, three years from now and whether there is much we can do to affect the course of events.

K: Yeah, but there are always two problems, one is do we affect the immediate course of events and secondly, how do we position ourselves even if we can't affect the course of events.

R: I agree.

K: Because if you say we affect—that anybody who can create a *fait accompli*, we then say we can't affect the course of events and we'll not challenge it.

R: Oh, I don't . . . [you?] seem to be suggesting, Henry, that I am drawing a conclusion from my questions. I'm asking the same questions you are asking—

K: No, I think there should be a National Security—I don't know whether it should be a whole National Security Council meeting or a meeting of some of the close advisors.

R: Well, I think that maybe that's better but I think we should and as I say, because I asked the questions I'm not drawing the conclusions, I'm asking the questions and I think the President should ask the questions.

K: Absolutely.

R: I think we shouldn't act just in petulance. Christ, obviously it's annoying and obviously she's been a bitch.

K: Well, so far he hasn't acted in petulance.

R: No, no; but I say it's one of those things where we ought to think about it and talk about it and get the other fellow's point of view. My own view would be that we ought [to meet] tomorrow.

K: Yeah, the trouble tomorrow is that he's got that whole goddamn day scheduled with that television thing.<sup>2</sup>

R: Well, I think we ought to be careful about that. In other words, I think that's one of the reasons I think we ought to have a meeting. If major war is broken out and he spends the whole day taping a television show, I'm not sure that's the best posture for him.

K: No, I think we have to have a meeting tomorrow.

R: Yeah, I think so. Okay, Henry, I'll be back in touch.

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<sup>2</sup> The American Broadcasting Company was scheduled to film "A Day in the Life of the President" on December 6.

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**228. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 5, 1971.

K: Mr. President.

P: Well, what's the news today on our various adventures.

K: Right, Mr. President. Well, that backgrounder of Sisco's which we finally beat out of them.

P: Yeah.

K: Played very well. I don't know whether you have seen it.

P: No, I didn't look at the stuff; you see, I don't have a news summary down here.

K: It was one of the key items on every television program.

P: Maybe Sisco and Rogers—Rogers probably wished he had done it, didn't he?

K: Well—

P: Tell me this, are they pleased now they did it?

K: Oh, yeah.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 397, Telephone Conversations, Home File, Dec 1971. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington. The conversation was tape-recorded at Kissinger's residence and subsequently transcribed at the White House. No time appears on the transcript.



P: State is, good.

K: Oh, yes.

P: And how does it play, it plays good?

K: On front page in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

P: And what line did they take it?

K: That India is largely to blame for the outbreak of hostilities and it lists all the things the Indians have rejected.

P: Good.

K: And it's just what you wanted.

P: It got across though that who's to blame?

K: Oh, yeah.

P: And heavily played?

K: And heavily played.

P: Ziegler got his statement out too?

K: Well, Ziegler's statement triggered this one because without— until Ziegler put out his statement—

P: They wouldn't say anything.

K: They refused to say anything.

P: Yeah, yeah. That's great, that's great.

K: Where we are now, Mr. President, we had a Security Council meeting.

P: What happened there? I heard something on the radio that the Russians want to blame the Pakistanis.

K: Well, we put in a Resolution of ceasefire and withdrawal.<sup>2</sup>

P: Right.

K: The Russians put in a Resolution<sup>3</sup> which blamed everything on Pakistan and just called for a political accommodation in East Pakistan.

P: Yeah.

K: At any rate, it wound up with an 11 to 2 vote for us with the Russians vetoing it. Only the Soviet Union and Poland voted for the Russian Resolution.

P: Right.

K: Even Syria, Somalia, and so forth.

P: Huh.

K: The Chinese voted with us, for our Resolution.

P: You know, that's pretty good, Henry, to have the Russians get that few votes.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 5, Document 224.

<sup>3</sup> UN doc. S/10418.

K: That's right. But so now, of course, there is no Resolution.

P: Right.

K: So they are going back at it again today.

P: To get a Resolution that they can all approve.

K: Right, which will be impossible unless it's anti-Pakistan because the Russians will veto it.

P: I see.

K: If it's anti-Pakistan, the Chinese will veto it.

P: (Laughter) You know, this, Oh, Boy. But anyway, you feel a little better about what our position is.

K: Right. Now, what the Russians this morning have launched is a blistering attack on Pakistan in TASS and in effect, have warned the Chinese against getting involved. What we are seeing here is a Soviet-Indian power play to humiliate the Chinese and also somewhat us.

P: Yeah, yeah.

K: I think we ought to have a meeting of some of your key advisors tomorrow. I know you've got your day pretty full with the television taping. The reason I mention it is because Rogers has been talking about how we are sacrificing; he's on this Chinese kick again.

P: Sacrificing what?

K: Well, our position to China and he wants a careful consideration; what good do all these moves do. Of course, the opposite—

P: What move would he make then himself?

K: I asked exactly this question. He says he is just raising questions, he's not giving answers; these are questions he wants to have considered.

P: Okay, I'll consider them.

K: I think if we don't, there will be leakages that we just acted impetuously.

P: Well, let's see we could do something around—

K: You've got him on the schedule at 2:30 anyway.

P: We might move it to 2:00 maybe. Well, we would have that; we wouldn't have the television in on that—we'll let them take a picture and then get out.

K: I think that's right.

P: Who would you have?

K: Connally, Rogers, Laird, if he is in town; Helms, and Mitchell if you want it.

P: I wouldn't have Mitchell on this one.

K: All right.

P: No, no. I think Connally because it involves some military—I mean economic and so forth.

K: The basic problem, Mr. President, is it's clear that we can't do anything directly to change the situation but to set it up on the ground that we are sacrificing our friendship to India; there is no friendship left. There is nothing operational we are sacrificing in India by our present course. All we are—what we are risking is to add the content of the Soviets and the Chinese to a direct challenge in which a country is being dismembered.

P: The point is that I want to see from State what their option is; if they've got a better one, I'd like to know what it is. And you know, I have [not] seen any suggestions of any different.

K: Their suggestion is always to release Mujibur; that's in effect the Russian position.

P: Yeah. Well, but Pakistan won't do that will it?

K: No. Well, now it's outdated; it's too late for that anyway. But it would have been—the Indians were determined, Mr. President, they attacked at the earliest possible moment they could. There was a rainy season from May to the end of September. Then they had to get their troops into position; then they had to train the Bengali. All this talk about Russian restraint that we heard all summer was complete poppycock.

P: Um-humm. I don't know; in everything we've done, everything we've said to the Russians and Indians had no effect, is that really what we're saying?

K: Our trouble was that we have been caught—maybe if we had been much tougher but for that we had no domestic position but certainly everything we have said has been without effect and they have geared it towards a humiliation—towards a dismemberment of Pakistan.

P: Yeah.

K: And the effect of that will be on all other countries watching it is that the friends of China and the United States have been clobbered by India and the Soviet Union. And I don't see how we escape that by tacking towards India now.

P: Nope. Well, are they now with the Mujib thing out of the way, what is State suggesting that we do?

K: They're not; they are refusing to make a suggestion.

P: What?

K: They are not making a suggestion.

P: They are just saying we ought to review our situation, huh?

K: Right. And that we shouldn't act impetuously.

P: What the Christ are we impetuous about, I don't know of anything impetuous.

K: I asked the same question.

P: Like what, cutting off the arms? A little prinking thing like that, why what about the cutting off of arms to Pakistan, that was impetu-

ous too, huh? You know, it's ridiculous; there's nothing impetuous about any of this stuff.

K: I think it's a carefully considered policy, Mr. President.

P: What we are doing?

K: If we collapse now, I admit it's not a brilliant position but if we collapse now, the Soviets won't respect us for it; the Chinese will despise us and the other countries will draw their conclusions.

P: Well, what about the British position and how they're playing it?

K: Well, they abstained.<sup>4</sup>

P: They abstained on this?

K: Yeah.

P: That sort of figures doesn't it?

K: Yeah.

P: French?

K: They abstained.

P: Humph. The French abstained too, huh?

K: Yeah.

P: What do you think the real game there on the British and the French—afraid to make Russia mad, isn't that it?

K: That's right; they are trying to position themselves between us and the Russians.

P: Um-humm.

K: No, I am beginning to think one of the worst mistakes we made was to push Britain onto the Common Market.

P: Yeah, yeah.

K: I mean that wasn't our Administration, we—

P: I know that. That decision was made long before we got here but we continued to push it, that's for sure.

K: Well, we couldn't have stopped it by then.

P: No.

K: We acquiesced in it.

P: Yeah, sure. Heath—And, of course, and that was Heath's position long before . . . became . . .

K: No, no; the mistakes of that were made in the Kennedy Administration.

P: It's done now.

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<sup>4</sup> Britain and France abstained on the vote in the Security Council on the United States draft resolution; see footnote 11, Document 224.

K: That's where it could have been stopped easily.

P: You got a little cold?

K: No, maybe I've been talking a lot on the telephone.

P: You have, huh? (laughter)

K: Yeah.

P: Well, on this thing my view is to play this—I'll get them in and have a little meeting. That's a pretty good idea. But this idea of it's the same old story, Henry, that we have such things as troop withdrawals, Cambodia, Laos or virtually everything we have done, everybody comes in and raises questions.

K: And it's this—

P: Well, goddammit; if they've got a better answer, fine but I don't see—They raise the questions and that makes a good historical record, doesn't it?

K: That's right and it's this phony wisdom; we ought to consider things carefully. Of course, we ought to consider things carefully.

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

K: What good does our action do? On that basis, we just have to roll over every time a superior country moves. What is the long-term effect? Of course, we have to consider the long-term effect.

P: Yeah.

K: The proper [omission in the source text].

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**229. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 5, 1971, 11 a.m.

K: Mr. President.

P: Hello. I have here—it just came in—a call from Rogers with regard to the Security Council meeting, he wants to talk before 2 o'clock. Now, what is the guidance on that? I thought that it was pretty well settled but what is the situation?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 397, Telephone Conversations, Home File, Dec 1971. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington. The conversation was tape-recorded at Kissinger's residence and subsequently transcribed at the White House.

K: Oh, the situation in the Security Council?

P: No, what he wants—he wants to talk to me to see what guidance I want to give before the Security Council meeting.

K: That's right, that's what I'm—

P: So I am going to call him. My point is what do we want to say?

K: Well, here is the issue. There is going to be a ceasefire and withdrawal resolution that the Argentines are putting forward.<sup>2</sup> That one we can support. Then, that will be vetoed by the Russians. Then, it will probably move towards a ceasefire resolution alone and on that one I think we should be very leery. The Chinese will be violently opposed, the Pakistanis are probably going to be opposed but we could conceivably abstain from that.

P: A ceasefire alone.

K: The trouble with a ceasefire alone is that it would leave half of East Pakistan in Indian hands.

P: Um-humm. Well, has that been discussed with Rogers and so forth as to what these issues are?

K: It has been discussed with Bush and it's been—Rogers has been—I've discussed it with Sisco, Rogers has been dancing around with me and has not been going into that much detail.

P: Um-humm.

K: I must underline, Mr. President, if we collapse now in New York, the impact on this international situation, we're going to do away with most of the gains of the last two years. The way Rogers keeps putting the issue—the Russians are playing for big stakes here. When all the baloney—all the *New York Times* editorials are said and done if the Soviets and Indians get away with this, the Chinese and the United States will be standing there with eggs on our face. And they will have made us back down and if we have ordered watered down our own Resolution<sup>3</sup> from yesterday that had an 11 to 2 majority so that it becomes a pretty insipid thing, our only hope in my judgment, we'll never get it through State, is to become very threatening to the Russians and tell them that if they are going to participate in the dismemberment of another country, that will affect their whole relationship to us.

P: Um-humm.

K: Right now they still want the Middle East from us.

P: Um-humm.

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<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the draft resolution sponsored in the UN Security Council on December 4 by Argentina, Burundi, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Somalia. The operative portion of the resolution called for a cease-fire and mutual withdrawal of forces. (UN doc. S/10419)

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 224.

K: And other things. If we just play this in this nice insipid way, we are going to get through this week all right then but we are going to pay for it—this will then be the Suez '56 episode of our Administration.

P: Um-humm.

K: That is what in my view is at stake here now and that's why the Russians are playing it so toughly and if we have made any mistake in the last two weeks it's this—if we had over-reacted in the first two or three days as we wanted to in the White House, it might at least have scared the Russians off, not the Indians, but it might have scared the Russians off. We are pretty well committed anyway, we can't take the curse off it now. The problem—I know it will always be put on the ground that we want to save the China trip but these people don't recognize that without a China trip, we wouldn't have had a Moscow trip.

P: No, that's just small stuff. I know what they have put in on that—that's just sour grapes crap.

K: If the Chinese come out of this despising us, we lose that option. If the Russians think they backed us down, we will be back to where we were in May and June.

P: Well, I'm going to call him [Rogers] right now. The main thing is all I have to know is is he pushing for us to back down from our Resolution, that's what I need to know, Henry.

K: Probably. The best would be that we should stick with our Resolution and go back no further than withdrawal and ceasefire.

P: Withdrawal and ceasefire.

K: That any ceasefire should be coupled with a withdrawal.

P: Um-humm. And they have to decide that at 2 o'clock today, huh?

K: Right.

P: Does Rogers have any regrets that he didn't go to New York to make the presentation himself?

K: I don't know; I don't think so.

P: Probably saw the point of that, huh?

K: Right.

P: Yeah. Well, we will—

K: If someone could give me some word what was decided because it is going to be hard for me to monitor Bush.

P: Oh, don't worry, I'll call you back as soon as I find out what the hell he's—what the point is, I don't know what it is even.

K: Right.

P: I just assume that they were all set in the UN thing tomorrow—I mean, today, you know. Incidentally, that wasn't discussed at your meeting, huh?

K: It wasn't—well, no. I discussed it with Bush and Sisco but he is apparently trying to run around me.

P: I see. That's all right, I'll have to find out what the score is and I'll find out.

K: Right.

P: And I'll call you back.

K: Right, Mr. President.

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**230. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 5, 1971.

K: Mr. President.

P: Hello. It's all directly on just what we discussed.

K: And what are they going to do?

P: Stick with the ceasefire and withdrawal and give nothing at all on that. That he [Rogers] says is Pakistan's position.

K: Exactly.

P: The Somalia Resolution<sup>2</sup> basically.

K: Exactly.

P: And he said that was what we would do and we would stick right with it and I said, "Absolutely . . ." He said that was what he was going to do and I said that's what I wanted done. So, that's that.

K: Terrific, Mr. President.

P: Now, I asked him what the hell we could do about the British, the French. He said nothing. So dammit, I think—well, the British I guess want to get along with India in the future. I said to him that I didn't think there was a hell of a lot that—he said that the British had to be on the winning side as you said because they figured they had to get along with India in the future. I said, "Well, maybe it means

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 397, Telephone Conversations, Home File, Dec 1971. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington. The conversation was tape-recorded at Kissinger's residence and subsequently transcribed at the White House. No time appears on the transcript.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 229.



something to them but it doesn't mean anything to us except a \$10 billion drag in foreign aid over the last 20 years." I said, "Maybe let the Russians pick up that tab." Well, that sort of shook him. He said, well, we really didn't want to get that out too much because you know it will look [omission in the source text] I said, no, I'm just referring to what we do and that's what I mean. I don't think even you, Henry, [know] how tough I feel about that aid business. We are not going to aid countries that engage in aggression and then don't do a goddamn thing when we ask them to get out.

K: Mr. President, if we don't [*do?*] act this toughly, I'm completely aboard. This is going to be a dress rehearsal for the Middle East in the spring.

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

K: And I'm much more worried about the impact on the Russians.

P: Right.

K: And in fact we ought to consider seriously getting Vorontsov in and telling him if the Russians continue this line, these talks on the Middle East and others just aren't going to be possible.

P: Yeah. Well, get him in. Why don't you send a letter from me to Brezhnev?

K: All right.

P: Why not play it a little tougher and just say that I have very good talks—I've got an idea, just let me look at it tomorrow—I had very good talks with Mrs. Meir when we were here and that we can make progress on this matter at our further discussions there possibly. However, I must tell you that in the event that this present situation goes on in Pakistan that that will seriously jeopardize those talks.

K: Excellent, I think you should.

P: And a letter from me to him. Let's see what happens.

K: Or at least a message.

P: Huh? What's that?

K: I think that's right.

P: It may or may not help but let's—but that will pass on. See, in other words, do it in a way that we are passing on to him that we have made very good progress. Now, Mr. Chairman, we would like to know what you are going to do on this, we are keeping our side but I am very distressed after the talks I've had with Mr. Gromyko and Dr. Kissinger has had with Mr. Dobrynin to see what are the developments here in India and Pakistan. Now, the point is, what do we want the Russians to do though? You know, about India and Pakistan.

K: They could get it stopped. They could at least take a more helpful line in the UN.

P: Yeah. Well, how about getting that message to him immediately. Now, that should not be public, you understand. I don't want that to be out in the public.

K: Oh, no, no. We could do that as an oral message.

P: An oral message. But to who, that stupid Dobrynin.

K: No, no; to Vorontsov here. Dobrynin's DCM.

P: Well, I want it to be from me to Brezhnev.

K: You don't want it in writing, do you?

P: It doesn't bother me, if that will help. Whatever will help the most do.

K: Well, let me draft something and show it to you first thing in the morning.

P: Why, what would be the dis—well, the main thing—rather than waiting a day, if it's going to be oral, get him in today.

K: Okay, why don't I get Vorontsov in today.

P: Get him in today and tell him I've just talked with you on the phone; that the President would send this in writing but he wants this oral message to go from him; I don't want to use the hotline; you know, give him a little of that crap and that, Mr. Chairman, we have developed this very good relationship, I'm delighted but I must be very frank with you. On [At] first in the Mid-East we made very great progress and I would be interested to discuss this—Dr. Kissinger will discuss with Dobrynin when he returns. Then, now, on India–Pakistan we find your attitude very hard to understand and what are you going to do? And we have got to play it with that with them on that and the same time, Henry, on the—it will make them realize that's where our three-day strike is also going to help.

K: Exactly.

P: You see, we have just got to—and Bill to my surprise, I didn't do any convincing so apparently whatever the WSAG meetings or something, he got . . .

K: Oh, yeah, I gave it very hard to Sisco so he got it from Sisco. . . .

P: He was totally on board.

K: Good.

P: But all he said was, he says I'm glad—I told him what a good job Sisco had done but that didn't seem to—he said, well, fine; we couldn't have done it until now though because we wouldn't have had the public opinion on our side.

K: Yeah.

P: That's wrong, of course, we should have done it earlier.

K: Right, we should have done it earlier.

P: But, nevertheless, it was well worth doing now rather than not at all.

K: Exactly.

P: But, Henry, don't feel that the whole thing is lost yet—

K: Oh, I don't think it's lost if we play it hard.

P: And incidentally, when I say play it hard, let me understand, we are not going to roll over after they have done this horrible thing. They [We] are not going to roll over and say, "Now, India, everything will be like it was and we'll come help you again." And I mean we will cut the gizzard out and let the Russians come help the Indians.

K: Right.

P: The arguments from the *New York Times* and others will be "we will buy ourselves a century or decades of hatred and suspicion from the Indian people." Bullshit! What is [has] \$10 billion of foreign aid bought us?

K: Exactly.

P: But hatred and suspicion from the Indian people.

K: Exactly.

P: Tell me one friend we've got in India, do you know any?

K: Exactly.

P: How about putting it that way? Just as cold as that. Let's start getting some top anti-Indian propaganda out.

K: And that won't be unpopular in America.

P: That's right. I want to be sure that you fill Connally in on this.

K: I'm seeing him tomorrow morning.

P: Now, I have decided that what we will do is to have a meeting. I'm going to call Haldeman, you don't do anything about it.

K: Right.

P: But I have decided to have a meeting to start at 1:30 so we will have an hour and a half meeting tomorrow on the damn thing.

K: Terrific.

P: I think we better. I think that Connally should be there due to the aid<sup>3</sup> part of it, don't you agree.

K: Absolutely.

P: I don't want Mitchell there; I don't think it's that sort of a thing. I think Laird should be there if he is around. If not,—

K: Packard would be good.

P: Packard, right, And that's it.

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<sup>3</sup> A transcript of a telephone conversation between Kissinger and Connally on December 5 in which they discussed cutting off economic assistance to India is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 159.

K: And Moorer, I guess Moorer.

P: Yes, to report on the military situation.

K: Right.

P: Um-humm.

K: The same group as which as did the Middle East thing with the addition of Connally.

P: Yeah.

K: Connally to replace Mitchell really.

P: Well, now, let's ask—maybe we shouldn't have Connally, what do you think?

K: I think Connally would be good.

P: Yeah. Well, I think he would be good for the discussion, yeah, because he will be tough as hell. Yeah. Because this will be a subject for discussion; I'm not going to have those cameras for the whole meeting, only for the first 10 minutes.

K: Right.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

P: Yeah. Well, now getting back to this thing on India, there was no question at all—I mean I didn't lean him at all, I was trying to see what the position was but Bill is completely on board.

K: Terrific.

P: No, no—he said, no give at all on this resolution; we can't do it. And that's that. He's told Bush to pass the word around that that's the line that we're going to—and he said we would veto another resolution—another ceasefire alone. I said, fine; you bet your life we will veto it.

K: Good, good. I told that to Sisco and Bush this morning and they must have brought him around. And that WSAG meeting.

P: All right.

K: Good, Mr. President.

P: Fine, bye.

### 231. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 5, 1971, 4 p.m.

#### PARTICIPANTS

Minister Counselor Yuli M. Vorontsov  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting took place at my request. I told Vorontsov that the President had instructed me to convey the following message to General Secretary Brezhnev. A letter for the General Secretary<sup>2</sup> would be delivered the next day, but in view of the urgency of the situation, the President wanted it transmitted to Moscow immediately.

—The President did not understand how the Soviet Union could believe that it was possible to work on the broad amelioration of our relationships while at the same time encouraging the Indian military aggression against Pakistan. We did not take a position on the merits of the developments inside Pakistan that triggered this sequence of events. We have, indeed, always taken the position that we would encourage a political solution. But here a member country of the United Nations was being dismembered by the military forces of another member country which had close relationships with the Soviet Union. We did not understand how the Soviet Union could take the position that this was an internal affair of another country. We did not see how the Soviet Union could take the position that it wanted to negotiate with us security guarantees for the Middle East and to speak about Security Council presence in Sharm El-Sheikh, while at the same time underlining the impotence of the Security Council in New York. We did not understand how the Soviet Union could maintain that neither power should seek special advantages and that we should take a general view of the situation, while at the same time promoting a war in the Subcontinent. We therefore wanted to appeal once more to the Soviet Union to join with us in putting an end to the fighting in the Subcontinent. The TASS statement which claimed that Soviet security interests were involved was unacceptable to us and could only lead to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. Drafted by Kissinger. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House. In his memoirs Kissinger notes that Ambassador Dobrynin was in Moscow during much of the culminating phase of the crisis, and he had to deal with Vorontsov, who had authority to receive and transmit messages, but not to negotiate. (*White House Years*, p. 900)

<sup>2</sup> Document 236.

an escalation of the crisis. We wanted to appeal to the Soviet Union to go with us on the road we had charted of submerging special interests in the general concern of maintaining the peace of the world.

—The President wanted Mr. Brezhnev to know that he was more than eager to go back to the situation as it was two weeks ago and to work for the broad improvement of our relationship. But he also had to point out to Mr. Brezhnev that we were once more at one of the watersheds in our relationship, and he did not want to have any wrong turn taken for lack of clarity.

Vorontsov said he hoped we were still at this good point in our relationship. I said I would be remiss if I did not point out that we were developing severe doubts, both because of the Subcontinent and because of developments in Vietnam.

Vorontsov asked whether he could convey something about a political solution, since this was featured so prominently in Kosygin's letter.<sup>3</sup> I replied that our attitude towards a political solution was as follows: If there were a ceasefire and a withdrawal, the United States would be prepared to work immediately with the Soviet Union on ideas of a political solution. We recognized that substantial political autonomy for East Pakistan was the probable outcome of a political evolution, and we were willing to work in that direction. I wanted him to know that I had offered the Indian Ambassador precisely that—to work out with him a concrete program over a limited period of time. I also wanted to point out to him that President Yahya was eager to turn the government over to civilians, which would in turn open entirely new prospects. Therefore the major thing was to get the military action stopped and stopped quickly.

Vorontsov asked me what was happening on my invitation to Moscow. The Soviet leaders, he said, were really looking forward to seeing me at the end of January. I said, "There are major bureaucratic obstacles, but now there are major substantive ones as well." Vorontsov said, "In a week the whole matter will be over." I said, "In a week it will not be over, depending on how it ended." He said he would transmit this immediately to Moscow.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 7, Document 218.

<sup>4</sup> Shortly after this conversation, Kissinger called Vorontsov to reiterate that President Nixon viewed the crisis in South Asia as a watershed in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Kissinger said that he had just reported to the President on his conversation with Vorontsov and the President wanted it made clear to Moscow that "in a week or so it may be ended but it won't be over as far as we are concerned if it continues to take the present trend." (Transcript of a telephone conversation, December 5, 4:55 p.m.; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) The transcript is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 160.

**232. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* The Indian forces are continuing their all-out offensive into East Pakistan and heavier fighting is developing in the West where the Paks seem to be taking the initiative. In more detail the military situation looks as follows:

—In East Pakistan the Indian forces are making gradual progress on several fronts. They are pressing the outnumbered Pak forces on several strategic fronts and the Indian gains so far may be laying the basis for more dramatic successes in the near future. The Indian objective is to force a Pak surrender in East Pakistan within the next week, if at all possible.

—Ground action on the Indian-West Pakistan front has been increasing, but it is not yet as widespread as in the East and neither side appears to be making clear-cut major gains. The Indian strategy is to maintain an essentially defensive posture in the West until the battle is won in the East, but there are indications that the Paks may be preparing a major offensive thrust in Kashmir that would undoubtedly force an Indian counter.

—In the air war, India has apparently achieved complete air superiority in the East and is using its air force to support the ground offensive. The Indians continue to bomb and strafe military targets in major cities in both East and West Pakistan. Fuel storage tanks in the Dacca and Chittagong areas of East Pakistan and in the West Pakistan part [port] of Karachi have been especially hard hit.

—The navies of both countries are also active. The Indian Navy is blockading ports in both East and West Pakistan and claim to have sunk two Pak destroyers and to have shelled the port of Karachi. India's aircraft carrier is operating against East Pakistan. The numerical superiority of India's fleet should give it a decided advantage in any future naval combat.

On the political front, Mrs. Gandhi has announced India's long-anticipated recognition of Bangla Desh as an independent nation. Even though the significance of this move has been lessened by the hostilities, the Paks responded by breaking diplomatic relations with India. The Swiss will look after Pakistan's interests in New Delhi.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

Last night's Security Council meeting on the Indo-Pak crisis underlined both the isolation of the Soviet/Indian position and the determination of the USSR to prevent any resolution not to its liking. The Soviet draft resolution (calling for an East Pakistan political settlement which would "inevitably result in a cessation of hostilities" and for Pakistan to cease acts of violence in East Pakistan which "led to the deterioration of the situation") was defeated; 2 in favor (USSR and Poland), 1 against (China) and 12 abstaining (including the U.S.). Another resolution co-sponsored by eight non-permanent members (calling for a cease-fire, withdrawal, efforts to bring about conditions necessary for the return of refugees) lost to a Soviet veto; 11 in favor (including the U.S.), 2 against (USSR, Poland) and 2 abstaining (UK, France), just as the U.S. draft had yesterday. The Pak representative had found this resolution acceptable. The Chinese resolution (condemning Indian aggression) was not put to a vote but the Chinese continued to sharply attack India. Sino-Soviet name-calling continued throughout the debate.

Most speakers deplored the inability of the Council to act, with the British and the French lamenting the Council's proceeding to vote on resolutions which would fail. Following the vote the Italian representative tabled a resolution limited to a call for an immediate cease-fire as a first step. However, he was stopped from pressing the resolution to a vote by a movement to adjourn until this afternoon supported by the USSR, U.S., UK and France which was accepted by the Council. There were suggestions during the corridor consultations that the issue be taken to the General Assembly if the Council proved unable to act. The more likely immediate pressure, however, will operate in the direction of the Italian proposal for a simple cease-fire resolution.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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### 233. Editorial Note

President Nixon and Secretary of State Rogers discussed the evolving crisis in South Asia in a telephone conversation on the morning of December 6, 1971. Nixon instructed Rogers to increase the publicity given to the amount of assistance being provided by the United States to the refugees in India. Then the conversation turned to an assessment of the conflict between India and Pakistan. Rogers described the situation in East Pakistan as "pretty bleak" for Pakistan. Nixon agreed but



added that Indian forces might face a difficult task if they tried to take West Pakistan. Rogers concurred and said: "I rather hope that the West Paks can do some good up in Kashmir, maybe they can make some off-setting gains up in there." [*text not declassified*] (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Secretary of State Rogers, December 6, 1971, 9:19–9:24 a.m., White House Telephone, Conversation No. 16–14) A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 161.

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### 234. Minutes of Secretary of Defense Laird's Armed Forces Policy Council Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 6, 1971, 9:37–10:40 a.m..

#### ATTENDEES

Mr. Laird	Dr. Nutter
Mr. Packard	Dr. Wilbur
Mr. Froehlke	Mr. Gibson (for Mr. Shillito)
Mr. BeLieu	Dr. Tucker
General Westmoreland	Mr. Buzhardt
Governor Chafee	Mr. Wallace
Mr. Warner	Mr. Baroody
Admiral Zumwalt	Mr. Johnson
Dr. McLucas (for Dr. Seamans)	Mr. Solomon
General Meyer (for General Ryan)	Dr. Walske
General Chapman	Mr. Friedheim
R/Adm Freeman (for Lt General Vogt)	B/General Pursley
Dr. Rehtin (for Dr. Foster)	R/Admiral Murphy
Dr. Hall	Colonel Furlong
Mr. Henkin	Colonel Boatner
Mr. Kelley	Mr. Livesay
Mr. Moot	

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

#### 2. *India–Pakistan*

Mr. Laird said that several meetings were held over the week-end in Washington and in the UN on the Indian-Pakistan situation. Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0028, Office Chronological Files, Aug through Dec 1971. Top Secret. The meeting was held at the Pentagon.

Packard and Dr. Nutter were involved as was General Westmoreland, who is Acting Chairman of the JCS. Mr. Laird asked Dr. Nutter to comment first. Dr. Nutter said that the U.S. took the issue to the UN Security Council on Saturday, with a resolution calling for both sides to cease-fire and withdraw to their borders. We had expected a Soviet veto of this resolution and they complied with our expectations. A modified resolution by other members was introduced which contained less stress on the actions by the Indians. The Soviets also vetoed this resolution. The primary achievement of the first 3 days then has been to build a record. In the meantime India has recognized the Bangla Desh as the Government of East Pakistan. This indicates clearly India's development of a position, attitudes, and finally an attack against East Pakistan. Although he will leave it to General Westmoreland to comment on the military situation, Dr. Nutter said the Paks may be able to hold out for about 2 weeks in East Pakistan from the standpoint of their logistics. Military action in the West Pakistan/India border area is unclear. The Paks have invaded Kashmir and their plan appears to be to take as much of Kashmir as possible. We are evacuating U.S. dependents from West Pakistan. Most dependents have already been evacuated from East Pakistan. The UN had planned evacuation of UN personnel from East Pakistan, but the plane sent in for the purpose missed the end of the cease-fire by 15 minutes. A PanAm 707 is to try again today to evacuate the UN personnel. Of these personnel, 60 are U.S. citizens.

General Westmoreland said that on 3 December, Pak planes bombed 8 Airfields in Western India, which Pak spokesmen claim was retaliation for earlier Indian ground thrusts. Indian spokesmen denied the alleged ground attacks. On 4 December, Indian planes bombed West Pakistan, particularly Islamabad and Karachi. Since then they have bombed 5 oil targets in the Karachi area. We estimate 80 percent of Pakistan's oil is stored in the Karachi area.

India has a 3 to 1 advantage over Pakistan in aircraft. The Paks are on the offensive in 4 areas. One was a brigade size attack against Kashmir, where they have made little progress. They have met stiff resistance elsewhere. The U.S. Defense Attaché in New Delhi reports that the Indians at a briefing yesterday acknowledged the Pakistan attacks. They claim the Indian Army was holding their positions. It is reported that the Indian forces have made a successful attack in the area of Hyderabad. This, however, is unconfirmed. While the Pakistanis are attacking in northern India, the Indians are mounting a diversionary effort in the south toward Karachi. If successful, the Indians could cut the supply line to the Pakistan Army by sea (which is through Karachi). Shelling continues at the borders of East Pakistan and India from both sides. Indian air attacks have been primarily against Dacca and Chittagong. The amount of damage is unclear. The Paks have used their aircraft mainly to support ground forces. The Indians have acknowledged

the loss of 17 aircraft and the Paks have admitted that 8 of their planes were lost. Other information available to us indicates possibly 11 Pakistani aircraft lost. If the latter report is correct, the Pakistanis only have 4 F-86s left in East Pakistan. In the east, the Indian Army in conjunction with the Mukti Bahini Rebels have commenced attacks all along the front. They are trying to cut the Pak lines of communications to Dacca and Chittagong. If successful, this would be critical to the Paks as it would cut off their seaports.

A U.S. Merchant Ship was attacked by 2 unidentified aircraft off the East Pakistan coast. The captain and two or three members of the crew were injured and the ship is returning to Rangoon, Burma. Indian aircraft from their one aircraft carrier have bombed the port of Chittagong. The Indians also claim one of their OSA boats sunk a Pakistani destroyer 20 miles off of Karachi. The Paks have admitted the loss, reporting a large number of survivors were rescued. With regard to naval strength, General Westmoreland said India has 1 carrier, 2 cruisers and 12 destroyers, which greatly outnumber the 1 cruiser and 6 destroyers of Pakistan.

The Indian government is trying for a rapid and successful conclusion of the fighting in East Pakistan. Indian Premier Gandhi, on 3 December, stated that Indian objective was to complete action within 10 days and redeploy Indian troops to the borders with West Pakistan. [1 line of source text not declassified] the West Pakistan objective is to overwhelm Indian forces in Kashmir. They feel Kashmir might be sufficient compensation for the loss of East Pakistan to India. If India should mount a full-scale attack, it is estimated that in conjunction with the Mukti-Bahini guerrillas they could take enough East Pakistan territory in 10 days to establish the rebel government. If their activity is no more than at present, however, it will allow the East Pakistani troops to withdraw to more easily defended positions and they might be able to hold out for at least a month. Indian aircraft strikes at West Pakistan oil targets will significantly reduce the combat ability of Pakistan forces. Pakistan strategy is to create a major diversion by attacking India from the west and taking Kashmir, which could balance off the possible loss of East Pakistan. The Indian objective is to take East Pakistan quickly and move to the defense of the western areas of India.

Mr. Froehlke<sup>2</sup> asked if Kashmir was mostly populated by Moslems. Admiral Zumwalt said yes. Annexation of Kashmir by Pakistan would make sense. However, at the time of the Partition the Maharajah was Hindu, so it went to India. General Westmoreland said evidence suggests that the Pakistanis preempted in the west to relieve pressure on

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<sup>2</sup> Robert F. Froehlke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Administration.

East Pakistan. Mr. Laird took issue with this conclusion saying it has been hard to pin this down. He had been trying to get DIA to prepare a statement on this and they have not come down hard on such a conclusion.

Admiral Zumwalt said the WSAG meetings and U.S. actions disturb him. Of course, we do not know what the Pakistan/Communist China master strategy is in this situation. Nevertheless, the U.S. will take a lot of lumps. We have come out on the side of the Pakistanis. East Pakistan will go down and it will look like we are ineffective allies. The USSR will gain with the Indians. In the short term the military balance in the Indian Ocean area will go against us. Mr. Packard commented one of the problems was what options does the U.S. have. The only way to prevent outbreak of war was to force the Pakistanis not to fight. Admiral Zumwalt said this was one case it might have been better for the United States to do nothing. Mr. Packard said we would have still come out on the short end. In the long run, we can expect the Soviets to have a larger influence in India and we can not yet assess what effect this will have on the naval situation in the Indian Ocean. Mr. Laird said in spite of what we might have done, it would have gone the way it has anyway. Mr. Packard said all of the aid we have given India over the years has not helped one bit. Maybe we should let the Soviets have this problem for awhile. Admiral Zumwalt inferred that the Washington actions had given the Pakistanis hope we would help them. Mr. Laird said we have certainly not given them any hope as far as East Pakistan. All the decisions and message traffic he has seen going back and forth certainly does not convey that we have given them such a hope. Mr. Packard said we tried to get both sides to withdraw to avoid war. The Pakistanis agreed to do so, but the Indians did not. They stated they would only consider withdrawal after the Paks had withdrawn. The only alternate course was to pressure Pakistan to accept Indian takeover of East Pakistan. Admiral Zumwalt again commented that Peking was an unknown factor in the situation. Mr. Laird said as far as the Indian government was concerned that decision was already made for us. General Westmoreland noted that in his visit to India last year, he was impressed with the Indian officers and their pro-U.S. attitude. [4 lines of source text not declassified]

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

**R. Eugene Livesay**  
*Staff Secretary*

**235. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1971, 11:07–11:56 a.m.

SUBJECT

South Asia

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

U. Alexis Johnson

Joseph Sisco

Samuel DePalma

Christopher Van Hollen

Bruce Laingen

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Gen. William C. Westmoreland

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

Donald MacDonald

Maurice Williams

Herbert Rees

NSC Staff

B/Gen. Alexander M. Haig

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

(1) we should bring public attention in the General Assembly, through speeches and resolutions, to the plight of the Urdu speaking minority in East Pakistan, calling on all parties to take steps to prevent a massacre;

(2) we should make known what political moves we made to foster discussions between the Bangla Desh and Islamabad, and how they were thwarted;

(3) we should show a certain coolness to the Indians;

(4) State will prepare a legal memorandum on the Indian blockade and a draft of a formal protest over the interference with American ships;

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. 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 James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381 (Dec) 1971.

(5) State will check the legislative prohibition against third country transfer of military equipment obtained from the U.S. to Pakistan;

(6) Defense will do a paper by Tuesday, December 7, on what emergency equipment the Paks are apt to request and our ability to supply it and get it delivered;

(7) the aid cutoff to India will be announced by State today;

(8) to commence a study of our policy in the event of expected appeals for famine relief and other assistance from Bangla Desh next spring;

(9) AID will prepare a paper by Tuesday, December 7, on ways to ensure that humanitarian aid provided India for refugee relief is in fact going for that purpose.

Mr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), where do we stand?

(Mr. Helms briefed from the text at Tab A.)<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Helms: We also have a press report that the Paks have attacked Bombay. The Chinese newspapers are strongly attacking India, and India has begun referring to East Pakistan as Bangla Desh in its newspapers. Also, as you know, Keating and Kaul have had a round.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Westmoreland) What is your military assessment? How long can the Paks hold out in the east?

Gen. Westmoreland: Up to three weeks.

Mr. Kissinger: What will India do with Bangla Desh? Will they see it as an independent state or have them negotiate with Islamabad?

Mr. Helms: Independent.

Mr. Sisco: India has already recognized Bangla Desh as an independent country.

Mr. Kissinger: And the Indians won't suggest that Bangla Desh negotiate with Islamabad?

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<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed. According to his notes, Helms reported that Pakistan had broken relations with India after India formally recognized Bangladesh. On the basis of his notes, Helms was able to provide a detailed picture of the fighting on both fronts. India was concentrating upon East Pakistan while fighting a holding action in the west. The objective of the Gandhi government was to force a surrender of the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan within 10 days. Pakistan was trying to relieve the pressure on East Pakistan by pressing an offensive into India from West Pakistan. Most of the exchanges in the west involved air strikes, but there was evidence that Pakistan was planning a major assault in Kashmir. India's recognition of Bangladesh was reported in telegram 18766 from New Delhi, December 6; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL INDIA-PAK.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 18822 from New Delhi, December 6, Ambassador Keating reported that Foreign Secretary Kaul had expressed "disappointment, shock and surprise" that the United States had tabled the resolution it did in the UN Security Council. He categorically denied that India bore the major responsibility for the conflict. (Ibid., POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

Mr. Sisco: Not now.

Mr. Kissinger: I suspect the Indians may lose interest in Mujib.

Mr. Sisco: I don't know whether they'll try to have him take over or not. They can afford it either way.

Mr. Johnson: Once the Pakistan Army runs out of supplies, all those troops in East Pakistan will be hostages.

Mr. Sisco: (to Gen. Westmoreland) Is there no means of evacuation for those troops?

Gen. Westmoreland: No.

Mr. Sisco: How effective is the Indian blockade?

Gen. Westmoreland: They have a carrier off the coast and a substantial Naval force. The Paks have only one cruiser and six destroyers.

Mr. Helms: We credited the Paks with seven destroyers, two of which were sunk, which leaves them with five.

Gen. Westmoreland: We've credited only one sinking.

Mr. Johnson: And this is to cover both east and west.

Mr. Kissinger: So the next step is to determine our attitude toward the state of Bangla Desh.

Mr. Williams: Remember you will have about a million and a half Urdu-speaking people in East Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: Are you implying there will be a massacre? Wasn't it reported to be the retreating Bangla Desh forces who were responsible for the earlier massacres?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Mr. Sisco: I see a serious blood-letting once they are satisfied the Pak Army is defeated.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we do something to prevent it?

Mr. Williams: It will probably require a major transfer of population—possibly through some international effort.

Mr. Kissinger: Can't we call attention to it now before it starts?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's do it now. Are they mainly in one area or are they scattered throughout the countryside?

Mr. Williams: They are mostly in the urban centers. They were the people who built the railroads and are usually found around rail centers. This is basically a humanitarian problem. We should start some activity through the UN.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we start it quickly? Call on all parties to prevent a massacre—we don't have to recommend an evacuation.

Mr. Sisco: The UN can't do anything on the ground, but we can put public focus on the issue through the General Assembly meeting.

Mr. Williams: And we can give them some secret assurances.

Mr. Johnson: What about the Bengalis in the West?

Mr. Williams: There are 300,000 Bengalis in West Pakistan.

Mr. Sisco: An effort in this direction will be attractive to the majority. We can focus attention on it in the speeches before the GA and in the GA resolution. It will both be popular and have some effect.

Mr. MacDonald: We don't have many precedents for a mass evacuation, but there was a large population movement from north to south in Vietnam in 1954. We might brush off our history on this.

Mr. Johnson: That population movement was agreed to in the Geneva Accords.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Sisco: (to Gen. Westmoreland) Assuming the Indians take over, how do you think it will happen? Can you project their strategy?

Gen. Westmoreland: I think their primary thrust will be to cut off the port of Chittagong. This will virtually cut off any possibility of re-supply. Then they will move to destroy the Pak regular forces, in cooperation with the Mukti Bahini. They will then be faced with the major job of restoring some order to the country. I think there will be a massacre—possibly the greatest in the twentieth century.

Mr. Kissinger: Will the Indians withdraw their army once the Paks are disarmed?

Gen. Westmoreland: No, I think they will leave three or four divisions to work with the Mukti Bahini, and pull the remainder back to the West.

Mr. Sisco: I think they will pull out as quickly as they can. Once and if the the Pak forces are disarmed, the Indians will have a basically friendly population. They can afford to move back to the border areas quickly. I say this with one caveat—this depends on what happens in the West. If the Paks can take a little piece of territory in the West as some sort of balance for East Pakistan, the Indians won't get out of Bangla Desh quite so fast. They will see it as a further balance to the West.

Gen. Westmoreland: The Indian transportation is limited. It will take time to move their divisions from east to west. They will move the infantry division out first, which will take a week. The two mountain divisions will probably be used to clean out pockets of resistance. They have seven divisions and two separate brigades, and their movement schedule will take a month.

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<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the agreements signed in Geneva on July 20 and July 21, 1954, ending hostilities in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. For texts, see *Foreign Relations, 1952-1954*, vol. XVI, pp. 1505-1542.



Mr. Kissinger: Will they permit Bangla Desh to establish itself with an army and a separate foreign policy?

Mr. Sisco: I wouldn't exclude it. There is likely to be a continued Indian presence, however.

Mr. Van Hollen: After the Indian Army has been in East Pakistan for two or three weeks, they may come to be accepted as a Hindu army of occupation.

Mr. Kissinger: Do you think they will establish Bangla Desh in its present frontiers? Or will they settle the refugees along the border and then annex some territory?

Mr. Van Hollen: They may question whether they should send the refugees back now to a Bangla Desh that is largely Muslim.

Gen. Westmoreland: India will be facing a situation in the West that is not altogether advantageous to them. They have 265,000 men there now: 12 infantry divisions, 3 armored divisions, 3 armored brigades and 6 infantry brigades. The Paks have 200,000 men in 9 infantry divisions and 2 armored divisions.

Mr. Sisco: But the Paks have a serious resupply problem.

Gen. Westmoreland: And on air power, the Indians have a three to one superiority.

Mr. Sisco: (to Gen. Westmoreland) What do you think their strategy in the West will be?

Gen. Westmoreland: In the West, I think the major Pak effort will be to the north—toward Kashmir and the Punjab. They would like to seize Kashmir; and we have a clandestine report that that is their intention. The Indian strategy will be to strike at Godra toward Hyderabad. If they can take Hyderabad, they will have cut the line of communication across the river to Karachi. I don't think the Indians plan to move to Karachi or even to Hyderabad. I think this is a diversion to try to get the Paks to bring back some of their reserves from the north.

Mr. Packard: Is there any possibility of POL resupply by sea?

Mr. Kissinger: It would be next to impossible.

Mr. Packard: How about from Iran?

Gen. Westmoreland: I'm not sure of the land lines of communication.

Mr. Helms: They're very bad. It's very rough country.

Gen. Westmoreland: Eighty percent of their POL is around Karachi—it's a prime target for the Indian Air Force.

Mr. Williams: There's a political reason for an Indian thrust in the south. The Paks want to take some ground in the north. The Indians don't want to fight there, but they will be under great pressure in their Parliament. They can satisfy this pressure by getting a little ground in

the south as a balance for the land they will be losing in the north. The question is whether the Paks can cut communication to the north. There is one road and if it is cut, the Paks could chew up more ground in Kashmir. They would love to trade Kashmir for East Pakistan.

Gen. Westmoreland: There is an unconfirmed report that the Indians have taken Godra.

Mr. Williams: That's diversionary.

Mr. Kissinger: How about the UN?

Mr. Sisco: We reviewed the situation with (Ambassador) Bush this morning. There have been two additional resolutions vetoed by the Soviets.<sup>5</sup> There's a real ground swell for a special emergency General Assembly meeting. Under the Uniting for Peace mandate, if the SC can't operate because of the veto, the issue can be moved to an emergency session of the GA, which is not vetoable. You need only a simple majority of the Security Council to convene a special emergency GA. We feel strongly, categorically, firmly and unalterably, for the present that any resolution must contain the elements of withdrawal and ceasefire. The President has told the Pak Ambassador that.

Mr. Kissinger: I have no doubt the President means it!

Mr. Sisco: If I may, I'd like to suggest some plaudits for our UN Mission. They held firm on these elements through three resolutions.

Mr. Kissinger: It was a job well done.

Mr. Sisco: Remember we will be under pressure from 136 countries—

Mr. Kissinger: It will be interesting to see how Israel votes on ceasefire and withdrawal.

Mr. Sisco: With regard to the elements of political accommodation in any resolution, the implications of these may change rapidly now.

Mr. DePalma: With an independent Bangla Desh and the Pak army defeated in the East, the question of political accommodation will be in an entirely new context. The Indians won't be terribly interested in political accommodation.

Mr. Kissinger: The President told the Pak Ambassador and Ambassador Bush on television that he wants the issue to go to the General Assembly.

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<sup>5</sup> On December 5 the Soviet representative on the Security Council vetoed an eight-power draft resolution that called for a cease-fire and mutual withdrawal of forces, as well as intensified efforts to create the conditions necessary for the return of refugees to their homes. The resolution, which was introduced by Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra-Leone, and Somalia, garnered a vote of 11 to 2 with 2 abstentions, but was not adopted because of the negative vote of the U.S.S.R. (UN doc. S/10423) The only other resolution vetoed by the Soviet representative was the U.S. draft resolution; see footnote 11, Document 224.

Mr. DePalma: There's a Security Council meeting at 3:30 at which we will try to get the Council to let go of the issue and call for an emergency GA.

Mr. Kissinger: If we stick with withdrawal and ceasefire, it will just be vetoed again.

Mr. DePalma: There's nothing to be gained by another resolution. They had already backed off to just a ceasefire.

Mr. Kissinger: Do we expect to move to the GA before the end of the day?

Mr. DePalma: We expect to get the SC to let go today,<sup>6</sup> but the GA will have to meet and put it on its agenda, which can be done tomorrow.

Mr. Kissinger: Will we stick with essentially the same speech in the GA. We should put in something on the refugees—some attempt to stop the expected massacre.

Mr. Sisco: Yes—and in the resolution too.

Mr. Kissinger: NBC is filming the President's "Day" today. He had his conversation with the Secretary on television. We have a veto over what's printed, of course. But the President is eager to get out what political moves we made to get discussions going between the Bangla Desh and Islamabad and how they were thwarted. He told the Secretary this. He also wants to show a certain coolness toward the Indians—be sure the Indian Ambassador is not received at too high a level.

Mr. Van Hollen: Jha is meeting with the Secretary now to deliver Mrs. Gandhi's reply<sup>7</sup> to the President's letter.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: That can't be helped. In general, the President wants to appear a little cool. What is the legal position on the Indian blockade? Can they blockade American ships? Shouldn't we protest?

Mr. Sisco: The Secretary called in the Indian Ambassador and protested both incidents.<sup>9</sup> Mrs. Gandhi has said there is an undeclared war. There has been no formal Parliamentary action, but Mrs. Gandhi is claiming the right to exert belligerency rights as if there were a formal declaration.

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<sup>6</sup> The UN Security Council accepted on December 6 that an impasse had been reached in its deliberations on the conflict in South Asia, and referred the issue to the General Assembly. (UN doc. S/RES/303, adopted by a vote of 11 to 0 with 4 abstentions)

<sup>7</sup> See Document 226.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 205.

<sup>9</sup> Secretary Rogers told Ambassador Jha on December 4 that the United States took strong exception to Indian interference with U.S. shipping. (Telegram 219497 to New Delhi, December 5; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–2 INDIA–PAK)

Mr. Kissinger: Do they have the right to stop American ships?

Mr. Johnson: Have they declared a blockade?

Mr. Sisco: Not formally, but de facto. We will get you a memo on the legal position.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Helms: They have no legal rights.

Mr. Johnson: Without a declaration of a blockade?

Mr. Williams: Without a declaration of war on Pakistan?

Mr. Helms: I still question it.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's get your legal memo. Also, let's get a draft of a formal protest.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, we can do it both publicly and privately.

Mr. Kissinger: Have you all seen the cable concerning Pakistan's request to Jordan for assistance.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Sisco: We also have a Pak request for a minesweeper.

Mr. Kissinger: Do we have the right to authorize such transfers?

Mr. Johnson: We have the right. It's a political decision.

Mr. Sisco: Is there no legislative inhibition?

Mr. Kissinger: It can be done only with our approval.

Mr. Van Hollen: There is a legislative inhibition. We can't permit a third country to transfer goods to Pakistan if we don't sell those same goods to Pakistan ourselves.

Mr. Johnson: Is this policy or legislation?

Mr. Van Hollen: It's legislative as of last December or January.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's check on that.

Mr. Helms: Has there been a decision on assistance from Jordan?

Mr. Sisco: We are saying the transfer is prohibited on the basis of present legal authority. Also, we are pointing out that provision of any assistance to the Paks would weaken the King's position. He really came to us for help in getting off the hook. We've also brushed them off politely on the minesweeper. I suspect that as the Paks begin to feel the heat even more, we will get a loud bleat for emergency supplies.

Mr. Kissinger: My instinct is that the President will want to do it. He is not inclined to let the Paks be defeated if he can help it.

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<sup>10</sup> After a review of the question by the Legal Adviser's Office, Eliot sent a memorandum on December 6 to Kissinger which concluded that belligerents in a conflict have the legal right to blockade and to interfere with neutral shipping, but that India may not have given adequate notice before beginning to interfere with U.S. shipping. (Ibid.)

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 4, Document 222.

Mr. Packard: Maybe we should start to take a look now and see what might be done.

Mr. Sisco: You would have to do it very quietly.

Mr. Kissinger: Can you do that and have something to us by tomorrow?

Mr. Sisco: We might ask ourselves what the Paks are apt to ask for and whether or not we would be able to supply it.

Mr. Johnson: And whether or not it can be delivered.

Mr. Saunders: You're talking mainly about the West?

Mr. Sisco: Yes. No one wants India to take over West Pakistan. It's one thing to supply equipment in the midst of a military situation in the East. But our policy is not to let India extinguish the Pakistan Government. This is an important distinction.

Mr. Kissinger: On economic assistance, the President wants formally to suspend any new irrevocable letters of credit.

Mr. Williams: We have notified all banks—indeed, we have suspended all new letters. We have now suspended the \$87.6 million non-project aid in the India pipeline which has not been firmly committed to suppliers and banks. Our reasoning will be that the development purposes for which the aid was authorized cannot be served in the circumstances. India and others will see other reasons for our action, and that's good. Using this ground—the frustration of its authorizing purpose—raises the question of the justification for continuing aid flows to Pakistan. We would have difficulty on the Hill and elsewhere in maintaining that development was inhibited in India but not in Pakistan. Happily, however, we can apply the same principle to Pakistan but with the entire burden falling on India. While \$87.6 million would be frozen to India, the comparable amount for Pakistan is only \$4.3 million, all of which is now earmarked for humanitarian relief, in the form of fertilizer, for East Pakistan. This would remain unsuspending. So in this case we are exactly where we want to be.

Mr. Kissinger: We had taken a comparable step earlier for Pakistan and there is now only \$4.3 million in that category?

Mr. Williams: And it's all humanitarian.

(Mr. Williams was called from the room.)

Mr. Kissinger: When will we announce the aid cutoff? Today?

Mr. Sisco: We're all ready.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's background on that basis then.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> According to a Reuters news agency report filed on December 7, senior White House officials, speaking with the authority of the President, justified the decision announced on December 6 to cut off \$87.6 million in developmental loans by alleging that

Mr. Sisco: We can do it at 12 noon if you like. We can call Charley Bray (State Department spokesman) and tell him to go ahead.

Mr. Kissinger: In this regard, we had a little crisis here last week. The President was eager to get the information out about the arms cut-off. The *Star* ran a story, apparently based on a State briefing, which stressed that \$11.9 million worth of aid would continue. The President wants the focus on what is being cut off, not on what is to continue. Make sure Bray understands this.

Mr. Sisco: (to Van Hollen) Go call Charley and tell him to go ahead at noon.<sup>13</sup> Ask him if he wants Don MacDonald to come over to help him. Or Herb Rees can go over.

(Mr. Williams returned.)

Mr. Williams: Secretary Rogers wants help for his television meeting with the President at 1:30, and I'll need Herb for that. Let Don go with Bray.

Mr. Kissinger: (Looking at the proposed AID announcement and questions and answers—attached at Tab B)<sup>14</sup> On the Q & A referring to the \$124.1 million in the pipeline for India which will continue to flow, tell Bray to stress *at this time*.

Mr. Sisco: (to Van Hollen) Tell Charley not to start until Don MacDonald gets there. Also tell the Secretary we're going to announce at noon. He may have been planning to discuss this in the 1:30 meeting with the President.

Dr. Kissinger: This is going to be the damndest meeting. It is a restricted NSC meeting on India-Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> But they are going to film the first five minutes of it, then we will go on with the real meeting.

Mr. Williams: The Secretary understood that. He just wanted to tell the President how much aid we had actually provided India.

Mr. Van Hollen: The Secretary has Indian Ambassador Jha with him. Shouldn't we tell Jha what we're going to do?

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India's attack on Pakistan had interrupted secret negotiations between the Government of Pakistan and Bangladesh representatives which were pointing in the direction of virtual autonomy for the Bangladesh movement in East Pakistan. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, South Asia, 12/8/71)

<sup>13</sup> Note it was decided after the meeting to make the announcement at 3:00 p.m. rather than noon. [Footnote in the source text.]

<sup>14</sup> Not attached.

<sup>15</sup> See Document 237.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, Jha should be told.<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: This announcement shouldn't appear to come out of the NSC meeting. It looks like too momentous a decision that way. We actually did it last Friday.

Mr. Sisco: Yes, this is the right low-key way to play it. It will have its effect.

Dr. Kissinger: Where do we stand on evacuation?

Mr. Johnson: As you know, the evacuation of Dacca was aborted by the Indian attack on the airfield.

Dr. Kissinger: How many do we have in Dacca?

Mr. Johnson: 93 Americans, I think.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Williams) Will there be a massive famine in East Pakistan?

Mr. Williams: They have a huge crop just coming in.

Dr. Kissinger: How about next spring?

Mr. Williams: Yes, there will be famine by next spring unless they can pull themselves together by the end of March.

Dr. Kissinger: And we will be asked to bail out the Bangla Desh from famine next spring?

Mr. Williams: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: Then we had better start thinking about what our policy will be.

Mr. Williams: By March the Bangla Desh will need all kinds of help.

Mr. Johnson: They'll be an international basket case.

Dr. Kissinger: But not necessarily our basket case.

Mr. Sisco: Wait until you hear the humanitarian bleats in this country.

Mr. Williams: They will have a tremendous problem of resettlement of the refugees.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Haig) Let's trigger a study of this. (to Williams) Is it true that the Indians have asked for the refugee aid in cash so that it couldn't be earmarked? If so, we should look carefully at this. We have to know that that money is going for refugee relief.

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<sup>16</sup> In his meeting with Jha on December 6, Rogers emphasized that the United States was unhappy with India's resort to armed force in an effort to dictate a political settlement in Pakistan. He did not make reference to the impending announcement of the cut-off of assistance to India. (Telegram 220243 to New Delhi, December 7, National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

Mr. Williams: The way India wanted the money—in cash—was, in fact, an extended form of tourism. They used it as unrestricted foreign exchange. We will look into it.

Dr. Kissinger: Can you get me something by tomorrow. We have got to put some restrictions on this. Tell them we will supply the food. If they don't want that, let them refuse. We won't cut off humanitarian relief but we must know that it is going for humanitarian purposes. Let's think of some other things we can do to make it clear that the party's over. We must make damned sure that this money is going for humanitarian purposes.

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**236. Letter From President Nixon to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1971.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I address this urgent message to you because of my profound concern about the deepening gravity of the situation in the Indian Subcontinent.

Whatever one's view of the causes of the present conflict, the objective fact now is that Indian military forces are being used in an effort to impose political demands and to dismember the sovereign state of Pakistan. It is also a fact that your Government has aligned itself with this Indian policy.

You have publicly stated that because of your geographic proximity to the Subcontinent you consider your security interests involved in the present conflict. But other countries, near and far, cannot help but see their own interests involved as well. And this is bound to result in alignments by other states who had no wish to see the problems in the Subcontinent become international in character.

It had been my understanding, from my exchanges with you and my conversation with your Foreign Minister, that we were entering a new period in our relations which would be marked by mutual restraint and in which neither you nor we would act in crises to seek

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 497, President's Trip Files, Exchange of Notes Between Dobrynin and Kissinger, Vol. 2. No classification marking.



unilateral advantages. I had understood your Foreign Minister to say that these principles would govern your policies, as they do ours, not only in such potentially dangerous areas as the Middle East but in international relations generally.

I regret to say that what is happening now in South Asia, where you are supporting the Indian Government's open use of force against the independence and integrity of Pakistan, merely serves to aggravate an already grave situation. Beyond that, however, this course of developments runs counter to the recent encouraging trend in international relations to which the mutual endeavors of our two governments have been making such a major contribution.

It is clear that the interests of all concerned states will be served if the territorial integrity of Pakistan were restored and military action were brought to an end. Urgent action is required and I believe that your great influence in New Delhi should serve these ends.

I must state frankly that it would be illusory to think that if India can somehow achieve its objectives by military action the issue will be closed. An "accomplished fact" brought about in this way would long complicate the international situation and undermine the confidence that we and you have worked so hard to establish. It could not help but have an adverse effect on a whole range of other issues.

I assure you, Mr. Secretary, that such a turn of events would be a painful disappointment at a time when we stand at the threshold of a new and more hopeful era in our relations. I am convinced that the spirit in which we agreed that the time had come for us to meet in Moscow next May requires from both of us the utmost restraint and the most urgent action to end the conflict and restore territorial integrity in the Subcontinent.<sup>2</sup>

Sincerely,

**Richard Nixon**

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<sup>2</sup> Nixon and Kissinger discussed this letter in a conversation at the White House on December 6. Nixon wondered whether "it would do any good." As he saw it, the Soviets "haven't done anything yet." Kissinger observed that "we haven't really hit them." He added: "Every time we have been tough with them they have backed off." (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 6, 1971, 12:02–12:06 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 630–2)

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**237. Minutes of National Security Council Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1971, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

## PARTICIPANTS

The President  
The Secretary of State  
Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard  
The Director of Central Intelligence  
Acting Chairman—JCS, Westmoreland  
Henry A. Kissinger  
Brigadier General A.M. Haig, Jr.

*Note:* The first ten minutes of the meeting was before microphones and cameras as a facet of the ABC film entitled, "A Day in the Life of the President."

The President: We will start out today's meeting by having Director Helms provide us with an intelligence assessment and General Westmoreland provide us with a military appraisal. We will then proceed to discuss the decisions which will face us, to include economic and military assistance. Before doing so, however, we will commence by asking the Secretary of State to give us an appraisal of where we are within the UN forum on the South Asia forum. Secretary Connally has been in Rome and has not been close to events of recent days. I would also like the Secretary of State to touch upon the issue of recent Congressional criticism which alleges that we have not done enough to achieve political accommodation.

Secretary Rogers: It is clear that the causes of the conflict in South Asia are not a U.S. responsibility. The solution to the long-standing political problems rests with the people in the area. There has been long-standing deep hostility. The U.S. for its part must concentrate on bringing about a peaceful settlement to the current dilemma. But certainly a final settlement cannot be imposed externally. Before the outbreak of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 999, Haig Chronological File, Haig Memcons To Be Done [1 of 4]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the President's office in the Executive Office Building. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary, as is the fact that Secretary of the Treasury Connally was also included among the participants. (Ibid., White House Central Files) Handwritten notes on the meeting were taken by Haig, who subsequently expanded the notes in the course of dictating the minutes for transcription although he did not complete them. The typewritten transcript runs through the first half of the meeting. Thereafter, the available record of the meeting is Haig's handwritten notes, which are cryptic and difficult to decipher. The typewritten transcript and the handwritten notes are in the same file. A brief summary of the substance of the discussion from Haig's handwritten notes follows the typewritten transcript.

hostilities the President directed that we undertake a period of intense diplomacy. The U.S. provided more humanitarian assistance than the rest of the world put together. And we have requested from the Congress another \$250 million in humanitarian aid. While the efforts we have taken to achieve a political settlement have failed, nevertheless all that could possibly have been done was done. We have prevented the movement of arms to either country. Certainly the U.S. cannot be blamed for the deterioration of the situation. It did all that could be done. Only the people of the area can solve the problem. It is essential that the U.S. stay out of the conflict and concentrate its efforts on achieving a peaceful settlement. The President recently issued a call for United Nations consideration of the problem. Eleven nations favored a U.S.-prepared resolution which provided for ceasefire and mutual withdrawal. The Soviet Union and Poland rejected it. Then smaller nations prepared a further resolution which provided for ceasefire and withdrawal and it also succumbed to a Soviet veto. There was a clear UN majority in favor of that kind of a resolution but because the Soviets have remained intransigent the U.S. is now supporting General Assembly consideration of the issue under the Uniting for Peace resolution.<sup>2</sup> It is essential that any resolution provide both for ceasefire and mutual withdrawal. Thus in summary we have done all that was possible. We have provided humanitarian aid. We have urged political efforts.

The President asked Secretary Connally to comment.

Secretary Connally: I assume that we have been dealing intensely with both Governments.

The President: That's correct.

(*Note: At this point the filming was ended.*)

The President: I have written and spoken personally to Madam Gandhi and I have written President Yahya. Yahya has been very forthcoming and I so informed Madam Gandhi during her visit here. I noted that Yahya was willing to pull back his forces from the border if he could receive some favorable response from the Indian side. Madam Gandhi showed no interest in the proposal. I also informed Madam Gandhi that President Yahya had told us that he was willing to meet with certain Bangla Desh leaders but efforts failed.

Secretary Connally asked if Pakistan had not offered to accept UN observers along the border.

Secretary Rogers confirmed that this was so but that the Indians refused. He added that President Yahya had been most forthcoming.

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<sup>2</sup> UN doc. A/RES/377(A) (V) of November 3, 1950.

Nevertheless it was clear that the U.S. is entering a phase where sniping is the popular thing. The U.S. cannot be blamed since the roots of the problem are local. Many times in the past the U.S. has become overly involved in such local problems.

The President noted that the issue was similar in Nigeria where the U.S. tried to help at that time but did not have sufficient influence to effect the outcome.<sup>3</sup> In this instance the U.S. has provided over \$10 billion in assistance to India. Despite this it has had no influence with the Indian Government. On the other hand the U.S. has limited its assistance to the Pakistan Government. And in hindsight it may be the very fact of cutting off military assistance to Pakistan which encouraged the Indians to attack since the military balance was badly out of kilter. It is clear that the U.S. has got to maintain leverage if it expects to influence the actions of foreign powers. Looking at the India/Pakistan situation the U.S. has had certain problems. It is obvious that the Indians were not looking for ways to stay out of conflict but rather to get into one. Now we see in the west Pakistanis attacking Indians. Charging the Pakistanis with this action is like accusing Finland of attacking the Soviet Union. Pakistan would have been insane to want war since it is at such a strategic disadvantage. And yet we see the Soviets providing unlimited assistance to the Government of India. There is bound to be a public relations problem. Whenever there is trouble abroad some infer that it is the United States' fault. Local hatreds have prevented a peaceful solution. The situation could be compared to that in the Middle East except there the U.S. has more stroke. Here we have none. We were forced to reduce what stroke was left.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard: Had we maintained the military balance the cause of peace might have been better served.

The President: This is the same as in the Middle East. The President noted that he had mentioned this earlier in the morning to Senator Mansfield. If the balance shifts war results. In this sense U.S. policies failed in South Asia.

Dr. Kissinger stated that the failure was the result of our policies over the past seven years.

The President noted that the alienation with Pakistan started when the U.S. broke its word to President Ayub.

Secretary Rogers said that the conflict was obviously the result of a carefully worked out plan designed by the Indians some time ago.

Dr. Kissinger noted that some had inferred that the Indians were practicing restraint but it was obvious now that they moved as early

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Biafran conflict of 1967-1970.

as they were able to. The rains were over; the passes from China were closed with snow; the Bangla Desh had now been trained and the Indians had moved their own forces. All was completed as Prime Minister Gandhi travelled abroad.

The President: The Indians had long wanted to hurt Pakistan. Their interests involved Kashmir more than East Pakistan. It is now time for the U.S. to reconsider very carefully the military assistance problem. It is a myth to assume that the elimination of military assistance will eliminate war. This is nonsense. The issue depends on the local conditions. In this instance the balance should have been retained. During the Eisenhower Administration the U.S. helped to maintain Pakistan's strength but later when the Pakistanis started to play with the Chinese we cut off our contacts with them.

Director Helms: We have a report [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*]<sup>4</sup> which covers Madam Gandhi's strategy as delivered to her Cabinet at 11:00 p.m. on December 3, 1971. The Indians planned to move in the west but to primarily adopt a defensive posture and to prevent the Pakistanis from cutting off Kashmir. The Indians had no initial objective in West Pakistan but seek a quick victory in East Pakistan which would enable them to transfer their forces to the north. India assumes that the Chinese will remain quiescent and hope to achieve the collapse of East Pakistan in one week to ten days. The objectives in the west are to destroy Pakistan's armor and in the east to totally liberate the area.

[The typewritten transcript ends here. What follows is a summary based on Haig's handwritten notes; see footnote 1 above.]

[Helms completed his briefing by noting that India's recognition of Bangladesh provided a justification for intervention in East Pakistan. He used a map to illustrate the progress of Indian and Mukti Bahini forces in East Pakistan and indicated that major efforts were being made to secure the roads and railroads leading into East Pakistan from China. Pressure on the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan was increasing from all sides, but there had not been a significant breakthrough. Nonetheless, Helms felt that 10 days was a conservative estimate of how long it would be before the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan would be forced to surrender. Pakistan's response was anticipated to be an assault upon India's positions in Kashmir. The conflict in the west was still in the opening stages with India fighting a holding action.]

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<sup>4</sup> A copy of this report was sent by the CIA to the White House on December 4 in telegram TDCS 314/12858-71. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/1/71-12/4/71)

[The remainder of the discussion focused upon attempting to define an effective U.S. response to the situation outlined by Helms. Led by President Nixon and Kissinger, the tenor of the discussion dealt heavily with how to point up and lay before the bar of international opinion what Secretary Connally referred to as India's culpability in the crisis. There was extensive discussion of how best to take advantage of the forum of the United Nations, where the issue was at the point of shifting from the Security Council to the General Assembly, which was not constrained by the threat of a Soviet veto. The United Nations had a peacemaking role to play, but Nixon expressed skepticism that an effective peacemaker could be found in light of the contending positions taken by the Soviet Union and China in support of India and Pakistan, respectively. Kissinger used the President's observation to expound upon the geopolitical implications of the crisis. Soviet support for India was intended not only to embarrass China but also the United States, which had its own security commitments to Pakistan. Kissinger observed that China would be watching closely to see what friendship with the United States really meant. Beyond that Kissinger was concerned that Soviet policy in this South Asian crisis might prove to be a dry run for subsequent troubles in the Middle East. This was not, Kissinger concluded, just any war; it had broad significance. Secretary Rogers conceded that India was the aggressor in the conflict and that the war had long-range implications, but he questioned whether the United States should become deeply involved in attempting to influence what he saw as a lost cause in East Pakistan. Connally disagreed, and the President emphasized that he intended to help West Pakistan. While continuing economic assistance to Pakistan, the United States could cut off all developmental assistance to India and limit assistance to India to aid for the refugees to be provided in goods instead of money. Speaking generally of economic assistance, Nixon said that it was important to end the concept of assistance without strings. The United States should help, he felt, only if its interests were served. With regard to military assistance, Nixon observed that if third countries wanted to help Pakistan he saw no reason to stop them. Nixon was prepared to work through the United Nations as long as there was some prospect that world opinion might influence the crisis, but if UN efforts proved ineffective, the United States would have to step forward. It could not roll over.]

**238. Editorial Note**

Department of State Spokesman Charles Bray made the following statement at a press briefing at 3 p.m. on December 6, 1971:

“General economic assistance in the pipeline for India has been suspended to the extent it is not firmly committed to suppliers and banks. General economic assistance, or non-project aid, is provided to support the general economy of an aid recipient and thus support a development effort. In the present circumstances in India this objective cannot be secured. Although the funds now frozen are included in formal agreements signed by India and the United States, we have both an obligation and a unilateral right to stop their use when the development purpose for which they were designed cannot be achieved. The amount affected by this temporary suspension is \$87.6 million.” (Quoted in Situation Report #26 prepared by the Department of State India–Pakistan Working Group on December 6 at 3 p.m.; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan Situation; quoted in part in *The New York Times*, December 7, 1971, page 1)

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**239. Editorial Note**

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger met in the Oval Office of the White House at 6:14 p.m. on December 6, 1971, for another discussion of the confrontation between India and Pakistan. Both were focused upon the Soviet Union as key to a settlement of the crisis. Nixon began by saying that he wanted to “cool it” with the Soviet Union. Kissinger agreed: “This is the sort of signal the Russians understand.” “You’ll be better off, Mr. President, 6 months from now,” he added. “If they lose respect for us now they’ll put it to us.”

Nixon was also concerned that he had not made his position clear enough when he met in November with Prime Minister Gandhi. “What I’m concerned about, I really worry about, is whether or not I was too easy on the goddamn woman when she was here.” He felt that she had determined upon a course of action before their meeting and had “suckered” him in their talks. Kissinger reminded him that the advice given Nixon in the briefing materials prepared for the visit was to deal with Gandhi in such a way that she could not complain about her reception and use it as a pretext to pursue a course of military action. Nixon said that at least he had been “tougher” on her than the brief-

ing materials had advised. In retrospect, Kissinger felt that a much tougher line had been called for. "When I look back on it now, should we have recommended to you to brutalize her privately? To say now I want you to know you do this and you will wreck your relations with us for five years, and we will look for every opportunity to damage you." Nixon agreed: "That's right." Kissinger concluded: "That's probably what we should have done." Nixon said "This woman suckered us. But let me tell you she's going to pay. She is going to pay. Now I mean on this aid side, I am not . . ." At this point Nixon and Kissinger both spoke at the same time and Nixon did not complete the thought.

Kissinger predicted that the Democratic Party would make India a campaign issue. Nixon responded: "They'll probably say we're losing India forever. All right, who is going to care about losing India forever?" Kissinger agreed that it was not something to be concerned about. "Hell, if we could reestablish relations with Communist China we can always get the Indians back whenever we want to later—a year or two from now."

Nixon saw China as offering perhaps the best prospect of putting pressure on India. "I think we've got to tell them that some movement on their part we think toward the Indian border could be very significant. And that as far as we're concerned . . . just say that we have sent a very tough note to the Russians, and that we are cooling our relations." Kissinger suggested: "The way we could put it, Mr. President, is to say we shouldn't urge them to do it because they'll get too suspicious—if we could say if you consider it necessary to take certain actions we want you to know that you should not be deterred by the fear of standing alone against the powers that may intervene." Nixon agreed: "Right, right, that's right." He went on: "Damn it, I am convinced that if the Chinese start to move the Indians will be petrified." Kissinger observed that weather conditions would make such a move difficult and Nixon rejoined that it had not prevented the Chinese army from crossing the Yalu River in the dead of winter during the Korean War.

Nixon referred to the intelligence report they had received on India's war plans (see Document 246). He said he wanted "to put it out to the press" and told Kissinger to sound out Joseph Alsop on whether he would be willing to use the report. "I want that report," the President said, "put into the hands of a columnist who will print the whole thing." He felt that the report "will make her bad." Kissinger suggested that John Scali would be the proper person to leak the report. Nixon instructed Kissinger to send a message to Ambassador Keating to be "totally cold" in his relations with the Indians.

Kissinger reviewed the recent exchanges with the Soviet Union that emphasized that the bilateral relationship was at issue. The most recent "tough" note had made it clear, he felt, that the crisis "threatens the



whole climate of confidence” which existed between the two countries. He added: “I told them yesterday . . . How can you talk to us about Security Council guarantees if you thwart the Security Council. And I threatened them that we would not carry out the Middle East negotiations.” He indicated that his instinct was to turn down the invitation he had received to visit Moscow to prepare for the summit. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 6, 1971, 6:14–6:38 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 630–20) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of the conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 162.

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## 240. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 6, 1971.

### EVENING REPORT

1. *Briefing of Senate Leadership on India–Pakistan*—I met with the Senate leadership for almost an hour this afternoon to review the events leading up to the India-Pakistan war and to further explain U.S. efforts and policies.<sup>2</sup> I first outlined the general course of events and particularly stressed the repeated efforts that the Administration had made to dissuade the Indian Government from the use of military force in East Pakistan. I also noted the suggestions which we have made to President Yahya and his receptivity on a number of them.

I then explained the reasons for the action earlier today in suspending \$87.6 million in general economic aid in the Indian pipeline. I stressed our policy of not becoming involved and noted the long his-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President’s Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Secret. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> In a telephone conversation with President Nixon the evening of December 6, Kissinger expressed concern about the tenor of the briefing Rogers gave to the Senators. He wanted a report on the briefing to make certain that Rogers had not suggested that there was “a White House–State confrontation” over the crisis. Nixon agreed that it would pose a problem if the Department of State created the impression that “we take the hard line and they take the softer line.” (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

tory of hatreds and problems in the area which were not of our doing. I reiterated the support we have had in the Security Council and noted our forthcoming efforts to take the issue to the General Assembly.

Senator Fulbright was the first to say that he thought we were doing exactly the right thing in not becoming involved and he said he had no criticism of U.S. policy. Senator Stennis said that he wanted to express very strong support for the President's policies.

Also present and in accord were Senators Mansfield, Scott, Griffin, Smith, Cotton, Aiken and Allott.

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

**Robert Miller<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup> Deputy Executive Secretary Robert Miller signed for Rogers.

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#### **241. Message From the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United States<sup>1</sup>**

Moscow, December 6, 1971.

1. The Soviet leaders, already for a prolonged time and not once, have drawn the attention of the President to a dangerous situation developing in the Hindostan peninsula as a result of the actions of the Pakistani government against the population of East Pakistan. While applying efforts to prevent an armed conflict between Pakistan and India, we at the same time were firmly convinced—and so frankly stated to the President—that of crucial importance in this matter would be a political settlement in East Pakistan on the basis of respect for the will of its population as clearly expressed in the December 1970 elections.

Although the American side did not object in principle to the approach above, we, it must be said frankly, did not receive the impression that the United States acted actively enough and precisely in the same direction that we were acting, i.e. towards removing the main source of tension in relations between Pakistan and India.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 497, President's Trip Files, Exchange of Notes Between Dobrynin and Kissinger, Vol. 2. No classification marking. A handwritten note on the message indicates it was handed to Kissinger by Soviet Chargé Vorontsov at 11 p.m. on December 6. The message is neither addressed nor signed.

2. In the situation that has now developed—and now it has flared up into the armed conflict between Pakistan and India—the Soviet Union, as was stated in the TASS statement published December 5, comes out for the speediest ending of the bloodshed and for a political settlement in East Pakistan on the basis of respect for the lawful rights and interests of its people.

In accordance with the above the Soviet representative in the Security Council has been instructed to seek such a solution that would closely combine two questions: a proposal for an immediate cease-fire between Pakistan and India and a demand that the Government of Pakistan immediately recognize the will of the East Pakistani population as expressed in the December 1970 elections. The Soviet leaders express the hope that the President will give instructions to the U.S. representative in the Security Council to act in the same direction.

In view of all the circumstances which led to the present conflict, to demand a cease-fire without demanding, as an organic connection with that question, that the people of East Pakistan in the name of its elected representatives be given an opportunity to decide its destiny for themselves,—would be both unrealistic and unjust with respect to that people, and would not eliminate the causes which led to the conflict.

3. As for your remarks, Mr. Kissinger, regarding a possible sharply negative impact that the events in the Hindostan could have on Soviet-American relations, this kind of approach is completely without motivation and, in our view, is at variance with the approach to the Soviet-American relations which has been expressed not once to us by the President himself.

Differences in the appraisal of specific events in the world as well as in the views between us regarding ways of settling corresponding questions may arise, and there is nothing unnatural in that. However, if in such cases, instead of business-like search for realistic solutions, to start talking about a “critical stage” or “watershed” in Soviet-American relations, it would hardly help finding such solutions, and would make it still harder to envisage that it will facilitate improvement of Soviet-American relations and their stability.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kissinger called President Nixon shortly after the Soviet message was received and reported that the Soviet leadership had “twitched a little bit.” He said the Soviet message proposed a Security Council resolution which called for a cease-fire and a cessation of hostilities, but made no provision for the withdrawal of troops. Kissinger viewed the references in the message to East Pakistan rather than Bangladesh as a positive sign. He characterized the proposed resolution as unacceptable but “at least a move.” Nixon said: “Just tell them, sorry, no withdrawal; no deal.” (Transcript of a telephone conversation, December 6, 10:55 p.m.; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

**242. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 7, 1971, 1257Z.

[*number not declassified*] At 1730 local 7 December Foreign Secretary handed me following text of message from President Yahya Khan for President Nixon and asked that I transmit it via the fastest possible means.

"The military situation in East Pakistan has deteriorated rapidly in the last 24 hours. Our forces there are without adequate artillery and air support. They are also cut off from being supplied and reinforced. They are resisting bravely but they are at a heavy disadvantage.

Yesterday India granted recognition to the so-called 'Government of Bangla Desh.' The Soviet Union has during the same period vetoed two resolutions in the Security Council, the Soviet Union are doing every thing by political and military means to enable India to obtain a military decision to annex East Pakistan.

If India should succeed in its objective, the loss of East Pakistan with a population of 70 million people dominated by Russia will also be a threat to the security of South Asia. It will bring under Soviet domination the region of Assam, Burma, Thailand and Malaysia.

The far-reaching consequences of such a development to the future of Asia need no comment.

In this critical hour for Pakistan I request Your Excellency to do whatever you can to relieve the pressure from our borders. There is need for urgent action to issue a stern warning to Russia and India to stop aggression against Pakistan. There is also urgent need for material assistance from the United States of America, directly or indirectly, as you may consider appropriate to meet the situation."

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1-10. Top Secret. Received at 1358Z.

**243. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 7, 1971, 8:43 p.m.

Please deliver as soon as possible to President Yahya the following message from President Nixon.

“Mr. President,

Thank you for your December 7 message<sup>2</sup> which underlines the grave situation which your nation faces. I want you to know that you have the understanding and support of the United States at this critical hour. We will continue our strong efforts to bring peace to the subcontinent, effect the withdrawal of Indian forces from your country, restore the territorial integrity of Pakistan, and see to it that political, not military, solutions are found for regional problems.

I would like to supplement the full reports I know you have been getting from Ambassador Raza in Washington and Ambassador Farland by reviewing the various steps my government has been taking to work toward our mutual objectives.

The United States has made a series of strong *démarches* to India in New Delhi and in Washington, including my recent meetings with Prime Minister Gandhi, which made clear that the American people and government would not understand a resort to war. Since India began its incursions, we have taken the actions that we warned the Indian government would occur. Thus on December 1 and 3 we cut off all arms shipments to India. Since late November we have used administrative techniques to delay economic assistance to New Delhi. On December 6 we suspended certain categories of economic assistance to India totaling \$87.6 million. We are now reviewing all our remaining economic assistance programs for India.

Since the outbreak of full hostilities, the White House and the State Department have issued a series of statements deploring Indian actions and fixing major responsibility on New Delhi for the present crisis. Today Dr. Kissinger is holding a background session with the press at which he will make clear our concerns and policies in South Asia and will point out the dangerous implications of Indian and Soviet actions.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> Document 242.

In the United Nations, the United States, in close consultation with your country and other interested parties, worked for passage of Security Council resolutions that would call for withdrawal of forces in addition to a ceasefire in the subcontinent. We are now making efforts to have the UN General Assembly take action on the subcontinent situation and will continue to insist that any resolution must include a call for withdrawal of outside forces.

With respect to the Soviet Union, the United States has repeatedly underlined the dangerous implications of the Indian resort to war and the Soviet responsibility to exercise restraint. The latest U.S. representation is an urgent personal letter<sup>3</sup> which I sent to Secretary Brezhnev on December 6, 1971, which makes unequivocally clear that India's aggression, with Soviet support, is unacceptable to the United States. I pointed out that the Indian forces, with Soviet backing, are attempting to impose political demands and dismember Pakistan, and that such actions run counter to the recent trend in Moscow-Washington relations. I called on the Soviet Union to use its influence in New Delhi to restore the territorial integrity of Pakistan and to halt military action. I stated that 'it would be illusory to think that if India can somehow achieve its objectives by military action the issue will be closed.' I said that, on the contrary, this 'would long complicate the international situation and undermine the confidence' of US-Soviet relations, having 'an adverse effect on a whole range of other issues.' I declared that such a turn of events would be a 'painful disappointment' and that the spirit in which the May meeting in Moscow was arranged requires 'the utmost restraint and the most urgent action to end the conflict and restore territorial integrity in the Subcontinent.'

We shall continue to underline to both New Delhi and Moscow that their current actions cannot but have a seriously harmful impact on our relations with them.

We are keeping the People's Republic of China fully informed about the various measures we are taking in your support and have made clear that we welcome the strong efforts it is making in your behalf.

In my December 6 meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau I emphasized the grave implications of Indian actions and the need for peace, withdrawal of forces, territorial integrity, and political solutions in the subcontinent. I shall make equally strong representations in my upcoming meetings with the leaders of France, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Japan.

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<sup>3</sup> Document 236.

Mr. President, I, of course, recognize that all these steps and those taken by your other friends have to date failed to deter India or the Soviet Union. I want you to be assured that we shall continue to make our own efforts, to encourage the efforts of others, and to search for new means to make clear that aggression across international borders cannot be allowed to go unpunished.

My thoughts are with you in this difficult hour for your nation."<sup>4</sup>

Sincerely,

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<sup>4</sup> Farland sent a backchannel message to Kissinger on December 8 in which he reported that President Yahya was visibly touched by President Nixon's letter and expressed his appreciation. In the course of their conversation, Yahya described the situation in East Pakistan as "beyond hope," and told Farland that he anticipated that the death total among Biharis and supporters of his government in East Pakistan could run into the millions. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 134, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Middle East, India-Pakistan)

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#### 244. Editorial Note

On December 7, 1971, Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans reported to President Nixon at the White House on his 11-day trip to the Soviet Union. He was upbeat about the prospects for improved relations. Premier Kosygin had told him: "Mr. Secretary, we have high hopes for your mission." Stans and his party had been feted in such a way as to reinforce that impression. Stans left after 20 minutes.

After Stans left the conversation turned to the situation on the subcontinent. Nixon and Kissinger began by discussing the background. Kissinger intended to provide for the press on the crisis. Framed in general statements about United States concern for the success of India's democracy and Nixon's long-standing interest in the country, Kissinger said he could "make in a very low key way an enormously damning case against the Indians." In sketching his indictment of India, Kissinger said: "I can show a real pattern of Indian deceit. For example on November 19 I saw the Indian Ambassador. On November 15 I saw the Pakistan Foreign Secretary. And I told him we needed a maximum program because it would be very difficult to prevent hostilities from breaking out. He said he would let me know after he came back on the 22nd. And on the 19th I told this to the Indian Ambassador. He said let me know as soon as you know when that will be. I said around the 28th. On the 22nd they attacked."

Nixon outlined the case he wanted to see made to the press: "The purpose is to show that we've done the best we can. And incidentally, I would also—I think you should also get across [that] we have no influence, we have no responsibility for either. It's not our job. The Russians have an interest in India. The Chinese have a hell of an interest in Pakistan. We only have an interest in peace. We're not anti-Indian, we're not anti-Pakistan. We are anti-aggression." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among President Nixon, Secretary Stans, Kissinger, Haig, and Ziegler, December 7, 1971, 3:55–4:29 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 631–4) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 163.

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#### 245. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 7, 1971, 0250Z.

220243. Subj: Secretary's Meeting With Jha. Following based on uncleared memcon:

1. Indian Ambassador Jha called on Secretary December 6 to present copy of letter from Prime Minister Gandhi to President<sup>2</sup> (text being transmitted septel).<sup>3</sup> Jha accompanied by Rasgotra and Verma. Schneider and Quainton also present from NEA.

2. Jha began by saying that GOI was "greatly shocked and surprised" at USG reaction in last few days. Jha added that he was personally shocked since from conversations which he and Minister Rasgotra have had with USG officials GOI had been given no reason to expect strong US reaction blaming India which he read about in Sunday's<sup>4</sup> paper. He said he would have expected to have been sent for before press talked to. His mind went back to conversation he had had

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by Quainton, cleared by Schneider, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to Islamabad, London, Tehran, Calcutta, Dacca, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> Document 226.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 220388 to New Delhi, December 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

<sup>4</sup> December 5.



with Secretary before Mrs. Gandhi's visit in which he had referred to earlier Keating and Swaran Singh conversation. In that conversation Keating had suggested if Pakistan had attacked India in the West India would be to blame. Jha said Secretary had said USG had not prejudged issue in that way.

3. Jha said that when PM was here and subsequently USG had indicated it attached importance to Indian withdrawal from western border. GOI had not been able to accept this. Pakistan had moved first and neither UN nor US had told it to move back. It had been India's assessment of Pakistan strategy based on previous experience that Pakistan might use irregular troops to infiltrate into Kashmir and to follow this with attacks by regular forces. From GOI point of view presence of Indian troops on border was better safeguard of Indian position than withdrawal which would have exposed India to this risk. Jha said that one week ago just before he left New Delhi a high level decision was taken instructing Indian armed forces not to do anything on western border, not even to respond to minor acts of irritation. Although in substance GOI had not agreed with US withdrawal proposal, it was in general harmony with US thinking that it important western areas not be embroiled. Jha noted that PM's letter described Pakistani attack on Indian airstrips. For GOI to be blamed for having precipitated conflict was very unfair.

4. Secretary responded by saying that USG position was as set out by Ambassador Bush in speech to Security Council.<sup>5</sup> In backgrounders what press selects is not always balanced and India should accept that US position is as Bush has stated it. There would be no useful purpose in rehashing the past. However, he wished to say that when Mrs. Gandhi was here President had tried as much as he could to make clear that use of force in these circumstances was unacceptable and would lead to tragic results. While we sympathize with India's position and understood its plight, war was least desirable of all possibilities. We had tried to find an alternative. Rightly or wrongly we felt that India desired an independent Bangla Desh and believed that only solution was dismemberment of Pakistan. We could not subscribe to that in terms of use of force. We think events have justified our assessment. It is now important that there be a ceasefire and withdrawal and that then we work out a political solution. We recognize a political solution is essential but India seems to be saying that only armed force can bring it about. We are very unhappy about this; President is personally unhappy. We feel very strongly about it. We had wanted to be good friends with both India and Pakistan and help create two strong and economically viable nations. We had succeeded to very great extent. How-

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote 5, Document 224.

ever, our economic assistance is wasted if war breaks out and everything is destroyed. Secretary noted that we had decided today to suspend economic assistance in pipeline of \$87 million that was not firmly committed. There was now no Congressional support for any kind of economic assistance since Congressional leadership thinks everything is going down drain.

5. Secretary asked whether there had been any change in GOI position with regard to UN resolution. Jha said there was not and now that GOI had recognized Bangla Desh government it should be made party to discussions. It is up to them whether they are willing for cease-fire. Secretary asked whether Indian troops would stay in Pakistan. Jha again replied in negative. Rasgotra noted that UN resolutions so far did not touch on basic issues at all. Secretary said we recognized there must be political solution. GOI position seems to be that there must first be a political solution and then a ceasefire. Our position is the reverse. First step is to stop fighting and then to have political solution. Jha noted that India had waited for 8 months but there had been no encouraging progress toward political settlement. India only wanted conditions in which refugees could return.

6. Secretary noted that Yahya had political proposals which he thought would work. Perhaps they would not have worked, but they were not given a chance. Only acceptable position to India seemed to be independent Bangla Desh. India seemed to set a precondition of beginning dialogue with Mujib, whereas Yahya had indicated he would talk with designee. From Yahya's point of view, however, Mujib not acceptable. Secretary said we have taken position that this was internal affair of Pakistan. We had tried to be helpful. He accepted several of our ideas such as mutual withdrawal and then unilateral withdrawal if India would respond. He indicated he would negotiate with Bangla Desh representatives from Calcutta or consider doing so through Mujib's designated representative. Jha noted that India's response had not been negative, but there were problems in finding out who was designee and what were his bona fides. Secretary asked hypothetically whether, if this problem could be overcome now, there could be a beginning to negotiations. Schneider noted that we had put forward range of possibilities with regard to negotiations. Some Yahya had said he would accept, others he would consider. The progressive increase in use of force had, however, preempted dialogue. Rasgotra asked that we keep in mind other side of case: that Pakistan military had been moving forward in East Pakistan and that there were threats and provocations.

7. Secretary said US had had serious difficulty with idea that Pakistan is threatening India in east. We want to do everything we can to bring war to conclusion. We are greatly distressed at events. We have

legitimate interest in area where we have tried to be of assistance. The President is very disappointed since as a result of his conference with Mrs. Gandhi he thought that resort to force could be avoided. In our judgment even if India succeeded in getting what it wanted situation would be worse than before.

Rogers

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## 246. Central Intelligence Agency Intelligence Information Cable<sup>1</sup>

TDCS-314/12990-71

Washington, December 7, 1971.

### COUNTRY

India/Pakistan

### DOI

6 December 1971

### SUBJECT

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Briefing [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] on the IndoPakistani War

### ACQ

[*1 line of source text not declassified*]

### SOURCE

[*5 lines of source text not declassified*]

1. On 6 December 1971 Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi [*1 line of source text not declassified*] told [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] that India is doing quite well on the diplomatic front. The Soviet Union's support in the United Nations, while expected, shows the value of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty. Mrs. Gandhi also commented that she is pleased with the stand taken by France and Great Britain in the Security Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan Situation. Secret; Priority; No Foreign Dissem. Circulated in Washington to the White House, the Departments of State and Defense, DIA, the JCS, within Defense to the Departments of Army, Navy, and Air Force, to NIC, NSA, and the Office of Current Intelligence.

2. As far as China is concerned, said the Prime Minister, she had expected it to take a more balanced view, even though Chinese support to Pakistan in the United Nations was a foregone conclusion. The Prime Minister stated that she hopes the Chinese do not intervene physically in the North; she noted, however, that the Soviets have warned her that the Chinese are still able to “rattle the sword” in Ladakh and Chumbi areas. If they should do so, she said, the Soviets have promised to counter-balance any such action.

3. The Prime Minister said that the United States might attempt to bring the cease-fire issue before the General Assembly after another Soviet veto. She stated that India would not accept the advice of the General Assembly, however, until:

- A. Bangladesh is liberated;
- B. The southern area of Azad Kashmir is liberated; (*[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* comment: This encompasses the area west of the 1965 cease-fire line between Chhamb and Punch.);
- C. Pakistani armored and air force strength are destroyed so that Pakistan will never again be in a position to plan another invasion of India.

4. The Prime Minister continued by saying that it is a pity that, in spite of India’s efforts, the United States has not changed its policy toward the sub-continent. The new nation of Bangladesh is emerging; West Pakistan will be reduced to the size of other small West Asian countries. This balance of forces will be favorable to India, she said, but the United States is unable to appreciate the changes which are taking place; however, the Prime Minister added that there is still time for the United States to alter its policy toward the sub-continent.

5. The Prime Minister stated that she expects other socialist countries to recognize Bangladesh after some time has elapsed. The immediate concern of India, however, is to finish the war quickly.

6. Mrs. Gandhi concluded her briefing by reiterating India’s war objectives:

- A. The quick liberation of Bangladesh,
- B. The incorporation into India of the southern part of Azad Kashmir for strategic rather than territorial reasons, (because India has no desire to occupy any West Pakistan territory); and, finally,
- C. To destroy Pakistani military striking power so that it never attempts to challenge India in the future.

247. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 8, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India–Pakistan:* At the end of a long session last night, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution on the Indo-Pak war essentially the same as that vetoed in the Security Council by the Soviets. The vote was 104 in favor (including the U.S.), 11 against (Soviet bloc minus Romania, plus Bhutan and India) and 10 abstentions, most notable of which were the UK, France and Denmark. The resolution specifically calls for a ceasefire, withdrawal of troops, creation of necessary conditions for a voluntary return of refugees and urges protection of civilians in the area.

Despite the impressive margin of the UN vote, it is unlikely to deter the Indians who had already indicated that they would ignore this kind of resolution. In fact, according to a CIA report,<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gandhi told her cabinet on December 6 that India would not accept such a resolution until Bangla Desh is "liberated," the southern part of Pak-held Kashmir is incorporated into India and Pakistan's military striking power is destroyed.

The Paks continue to bitterly contest Indian gains in East Pakistan, but the consensus among veteran military observers and reporters is that the end of the Pak Army's effective resistance may come sooner than expected. CIA estimates that the Indians and guerrillas now probably control about half of the province and are progressively isolating the Pak Army as they gain control of strategic points. Our Consul General in Dacca comments that the "noose is obviously getting tighter."

Fighting in the West has also reportedly intensified, although the Indians still seem to be essentially on the defensive and have not yet launched a major counter-offensive. The Paks have mounted two substantial drives into Kashmir and seem to have made some progress. There is fighting also to the south on the Punjab plain, but the results so far are inconclusive. The Indians have, however, penetrated at least 15 miles into West Pakistan in the direction of Karachi. Both sides con-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> Document 246.

tinue to make air strikes on the western front, but neither has yet gained the upper hand.

CIA has reviewed China's military position along the Indian border and concludes that the Chinese are not militarily prepared for major and sustained involvement in the Indo-Pak war. It seems clear that involvement on the scale of the 1962 invasion of India is probably beyond China's present capabilities. China does, however, retain the option of a smaller scale effort, ranging from overt troop movements and publicized preparations to aggressive patrolling and harassment of Indian border outposts on a limited diversionary attack. In this connection, it is also worth noting that Mrs. Gandhi recently told her cabinet that if the Chinese "rattled the sword" the Soviets have promised to "counter-balance" any such action.

On the political front, Yahya moved ahead yesterday with his plan to establish a civilian coalition government. It was announced that Nurul Amin, a Bengali friendly to Yahya, will be Prime Minister and that Z.A. Bhutto has been appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

The major evacuation problem at the moment is Dacca. As you know, the UN has been attempting for several days to make arrangements for the evacuation of foreign nationals in Dacca, but has failed because of Indian military operations in the area. At this point the Dacca airfield is "unusable" and will probably require repairs during a cease-fire period before it can handle evacuation flights. The UN is gearing up for another airlift attempt, which would include some 100 Americans, but it may well turn out that evacuation by helicopters operating off an aircraft carrier is the only answer.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

## 248. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 8, 1971, 11:13 a.m.–12:02 p.m.

### SUBJECT

South Asia

### PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

U. Alexis Johnson

Joseph Sisco

Samuel DePalma

Christopher Van Hollen

David Schneider

Bruce Laingen

Defense

David Packard

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Gen. John D. Ryan

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

Donald MacDonald

Maurice Williams

C. Herbert Rees

NSC Staff

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Mrs. Jeanne W. Davis

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

- (1) CIA would assess the international implications of the situation;
- (2) Defense would assess Pakistan's military prospects in Kashmir;
- (3) State would prepare a paper on our military supply options;
- (4) State would revise the cable to King Hussein,<sup>2</sup> telling him we are reviewing the matter of his providing aircraft obtained from the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. 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 James Noyes (OASD/ISA), is in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330 76 0197, Box 74, Pakistan 381, (Dec) 1971.

<sup>2</sup> On December 7 Executive Secretary Theodore Eliot sent a memorandum to Kissinger addressing the question raised at the December 6 WSAG meeting concerning the legal and policy problems involved in responding to the Jordanian request for U.S. consent to the transfer of F-104 fighters to Pakistan. The Department concluded that the President could not under law approve such a transfer unless he was willing to make a policy decision that the United States was willing to supply F-104s to Pakistan directly. Attached to Eliot's memorandum was a draft cable to Amman instructing the Ambassador to explain the prohibition to King Hussein. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 574, Indo-Pak War, South Asia Military Supply, 11/23/71-12/ 31/71)

U.S. to Pakistan and giving him the reasons why we want to hold up for the time being.

Dr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), where do we stand?

(Mr. Helms briefed from the text at Tab A.)<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: What records are the Paks destroying?<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Helms: Military records—not intelligence records.

Dr. Kissinger: The southern part of Azad Kashmir—is that the part the Paks took in 1947?

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Mr. Sisco: (to Helms) How long do you think the Paks can hold out in the East?

Mr. Helms: Forty-eight hours—if it were not for the rivers, it would be over by now.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Ryan) What is your assessment of the military situation in the West?

Gen. Ryan: We still think the Indians plan a holding action—we don't think they will push very hard.

Dr. Kissinger: How long would it take them to transfer their troops from East to West?

Gen. Ryan: It would take a long time for a transfer of all their divisions, but their airborne division could be transferred in five or six days.

Mr. Williams: It is 28 hours by train from Calcutta to New Delhi, to give you some idea of time. This would mean, of course, clearing the rail line and using it exclusively for troop transport.

Gen. Ryan: How much they would want to transfer to the West is debatable. The Indians already have superiority in the West.

Dr. Kissinger: We have one major problem—what stance should we take toward a possible debacle in West Pakistan as well as in the East? Before we get to that, Maury (Williams), what is the situation on refugee aid?

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed. According to his notes, Helms reported that Indian forces had broken through Pakistani lines in the Comilla area of East Pakistan, and the situation was deteriorating for Pakistani forces throughout East Pakistan. In the west Pakistan claimed to have captured Poonch on the Kashmir cease-fire line, but admitted to sustaining heavy casualties in Kashmir and in a tank battle on the Sind-Rajasthan frontier. According to a CIA report (Document 246) Prime Minister Gandhi told her Cabinet on December 6 that before accepting a UN call for a cease-fire there were three objectives that would have to be achieved: to guarantee the establishment of Bangladesh; to liberate the southern part of Azad Kashmir; and to destroy Pakistan's armor and air forces.

<sup>4</sup> Helms had noted in his briefing that Pakistani forces in East Pakistan were under such heavy pressure from the Indian offensive that they had begun to destroy their records.



Mr. Williams: The recommendation of the World Bank was that the total cost of the refugee relief should be compensated to India to protect the Indian development program. The total was \$700 million, of which the US quota would have been \$250 million. This was not done, however. Instead, we made \$90 million in direct commodity contributions—PL-480 food, other commodities, and some to U.S. voluntary agencies. It was agreed to provide \$22.8 million in cash to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and to UNICEF, but 3/4 of that turned out to be in terms of commodities. The Indians have complained bitterly about this, claiming that this did not compensate them for their costs, which was the purpose of the exercise.

Mr. Johnson: A very small amount of U.S. dollars have flowed to the Indian economy—about \$5 or \$6 million.

Mr. Williams: The net result is that the Indians have lost foreign exchange. We still have \$1.8 million unallocated which we were holding for the U.S. voluntary agencies, but the whole relief effort has now been suspended.

Dr. Kissinger: For both India and Pakistan?

Mr. Williams: Both.

Dr. Kissinger: I want to make it clear that the President wants all relief to be made available in kind—no cash! I also want to be sure that nothing is done in the future—the next tranche of the development loan, PL-480, etc.—without approval here. He doesn't want anything to slide through.

Mr. Williams: There is no next tranche—I can assure you nothing can slide through.

Dr. Kissinger: If the situation in the West worsens, what would be the next turn of the screw?

Mr. Williams: The only thing left to do in this area is to take possession of the goods already under contract. We have done everything short of that.

Mr. Sisco: In the post-war context, these other issues—PL-480, loans, etc.,—will be very important.

Mr. Williams: I want to be sure everyone understands that the free foreign exchange proposal made by the World Bank for India was not acted on by any of the donors. India has gained no net foreign exchange.

Mr. Packard: On the contracts, do we commit funds to India in advance or at the time of the contract?

Mr. Williams: These goods go under loan agreements, and the money is paid to U.S. banks. We have to stop payment and take possession of the goods. We would have to pay the suppliers and would have to settle the claims that would arise. It would be messy.

Mr. Packard: It could be done, but it would be quite a job.

Mr. Kissinger: Why do you say it would be messy?

Mr. Williams: The U.S. Government would have to take possession of the goods and would have to settle all the claims of the companies.

Mr. Packard: First we would have to locate all the stuff.

Mr. Williams: We would have to make arrangements for storage, pay warehousing charges.

Mr. Packard: We can do it, but it would be difficult.

Mr. Johnson: Have we any precedents?

Mr. Williams: Only small amounts in cases where diplomatic relations had been broken. Even those claims took years to settle.

Mr. Kissinger: How is India handling next year's development program? Are they negotiating with you (AID) now?

Mr. Williams: No, nothing is under negotiation with India.

Mr. Kissinger: What about your budget for next year?

Mr. Williams: We'll have to look at that. It's a question whether AID will survive next year. There's an important vote on the future of AID in the House at 11:00 this morning. We're a hostage to the Mansfield Amendment.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: You'll survive.

Mr. Williams: Of course, what goes into the budget does not constitute a commitment to a country.

Mr. Sisco: But it has an important psychological effect.

Mr. Williams: We can mention it as a contingency.

Mr. Kissinger: We have orders to put nothing in the budget for India. (to Williams) I'll have to discuss this with you. A \$10 or \$20 million cut won't satisfy the President. Nor does he want any stories that AID recommended a big budget and the wicked White House cut it out. You should put your minds to work on a much smaller budget for next year, no matter what eventually happens in the present situation.

Let's now turn to the key issue. If India turns on West Pakistan, takes Azad Kashmir and smashes the Pak air and tank forces, a number

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to an amendment to the foreign assistance bill first offered in June 1971 by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Montana), which set a date for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Indochina. The amendment was debated repeatedly during the course of the year and a variation was adopted in September as part of a defense authorization bill. President Nixon said in signing the bill that he would ignore the amendment. The original amendment was attached in November to the Senate foreign aid bill. The inclusion of the amendment led to a deadlock in conference from November 18 to December 16 when the House voted 130-101 against instructing its conferees to agree to the amendment. (*Congress and the Nation*, Vol. III, 1969-1972, Washington: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1973, p. 13)

of things seems inevitable. Should we, in full conscience, allow the liberation of the same disintegrating forces in West Pakistan as in the East? Baluchistan and other comparable issues are bound to come to the fore, as Mrs. Gandhi indicated to the President and as she told a Columbia University seminar in New York, I understand. Pakistan would be left defenseless and West Pakistan would be turned into a vassal state. We have to decide some questions—the military supply question, for example. I have reviewed the cables to Jordan which enthusiastically tell Hussein he can't furnish planes to the Paks. We shouldn't decide this on such doctrinaire grounds. The question is, when an American ally is being raped, whether or not the U.S. should participate in enforcing a blockade of our ally, when the other side is getting Soviet aid. I don't know what the decision will be, but we have to consider this in broader terms. That's why I'm holding up your cables. In any event, they should be toned down.

Mr. Sisco: We should tell Hussein to keep his options open. The question of military supply in the context of East Pakistan is one thing. If the situation evolves in the West as Henry describes, and there is a serious risk to West Pakistan, that's something else. Personally, I doubt that that is the Indian objective, but it may be.

Mr. Johnson: (Foreign Minister) Singh told (Ambassador) Keating that India had no intention of taking "any" territory. He was presumably referring to Kashmir.

Mr. Sisco: I wonder if they're not making a distinction here—Kashmir is a disputed area. I suspect they're really talking about something other than that strip of Azad Kashmir that Dick (Helms) referred to.

Mr. Helms: In this connection, Mrs. Gandhi told her cabinet that she had expected a more balanced view from the Chinese. She expressed the hope that the Chinese would not intervene physically in the north, but said that the Soviets had said the Chinese would be able to "rattle the sword." She also said that the Soviets have promised to counterbalance any such action.

Mr. Johnson: (to Helms) Your briefing this morning said there was no Chinese buildup in the area.

Mr. Helms: They already have enough forces there to rattle the sword. They have the people there to make some motions.

(Mr. Sisco left the meeting.)

Dr. Kissinger: We have two military supply questions: 1) to get King Hussein into a holding pattern on provision of aircraft to Pakistan, while the President considers the issue; and 2) how to convey to the Indians and possibly the Soviet Union that a turn of their attention to West Pakistan would present some problems.

Mr. Packard: The basic problem is that we can't authorize Jordan to do anything we can't do ourselves. If a third country has some planes that we don't have, we could authorize them to supply them to Paki-

stan. In these circumstances, it might be better for us to supply the planes directly, but we can't authorize Jordan to do it unless we are authorized to do it ourselves.

Mr. Johnson: We would have to make a judgment that Pakistan is eligible to make such purchases and then notify the Congress.

Dr. Kissinger: If we hadn't cut off arms to Pakistan, this problem wouldn't exist.

Mr. Packard: That's right.

Dr. Kissinger: We didn't analyze what the real danger was at the time we took that step—we all failed there. If we had understood the implications—I was wrong too—we were all wrong.

Mr. Packard: There's another issue on Jordan—if they deliver the planes to Pakistan, we will have to replace them, since we can't afford to let Jordan weaken itself.

Mr. Johnson: And we don't have the MAP to do that.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the judgment of this group? We have a country, supported and equipped by the Soviet Union, turning one-half of another country into a satellite state and the other half into an impotent vassal. Leaving aside any American interest in the sub-continent, what conclusions will other countries draw from this in their dealings with the Soviets? Dick (Helms), would you do an analysis of this?

Mr. Helms: Don't we have some obligation under CENTO?

Mr. Johnson: No legal obligation.

Dr. Kissinger: We had no legal obligation to India in 1962, but we came to the conclusion that if China should overrun India, it would present us with great problems. I've read the bilateral treaty,<sup>6</sup> and it's not easy to escape the conclusion that some conditions which would warrant some involvement of the constitutional process are close by. If India succeeds, what would be the impact in the larger theatre of world affairs?

Mr. Packard: It would negate SEATO.

Mr. Johnson: An India attack against Pakistan is excluded from SEATO.

Mr. Packard: But as a practical matter, SEATO would be down the drain.

Dr. Kissinger: We have been talking for two years about a Security Council guarantee for the Middle East. What is the impact of the recent chain of events on other areas and expectations in other areas?

Let's look at the military supply question. We could say that we have done everything two weeks too late. If we wait until India takes Azad Kashmir, then take action on military supplies for Pakistan, we

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<sup>6</sup> See footnote 9, Document 218.

would merely infuriate the Indians and demonstrate our impotence. If we had cut off aid two weeks ago, it might have had some influence on the situation in the East, instead of being a grandstand play. Let's look at this whole picture.

Mr. Packard: We should consider some way that would help West Pakistan hold its own.

Dr. Kissinger: How?

Mr. Johnson: I agree this should be examined. We should consider exactly what effect military supplies could have.

Dr. Kissinger: There are two separate problems: the threat of military supply and the fact of such supply. Once a war in West Pakistan is engaged, provision of planes by Jordan might combine all the disadvantages. I'm more interested in the deterrent effect. If it were done as a token before the war, it would be an indication that, while we don't accept what has happened in East Pakistan, we can't do anything about it, but if they move in West Pakistan, it would be a whole new ball game.

Mr. Johnson: We might introduce this element in our comeback to (Ambassador) Keating replying to his report of his conversation with Foreign Minister Singh.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Van Hollen: Singh said the Indians had no territorial ambitions—we could pick him up on that.

Dr. Kissinger: If they succeed in destroying the Pakistan Army, they don't need any territorial ambitions.

Mr. Van Hollen: We could pick up both elements—ask for specific Indian assurances on Azad Kashmir and that they do not seek to destroy Pak forces in the West.

Dr. Kissinger: We should also make it clear that if they do, they will face a new situation.

Mr. Johnson: Of course, the Paks are trying to bite off Kashmir.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think they have the punch.

Mr. Helms: I agree.

Mr. Selden: We have a new report<sup>8</sup> indicating that the Paks may have knocked out as many as 120 Indian planes on their first attacks on those four airfields.

Mr. Helms: Our 1962 assurances to Ayub made it clear that we would come to Pakistan's assistance in the face of aggression against Pakistan from India.

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<sup>7</sup> Keating met with Singh on December 7 at Singh's request to review the crisis. Keating reported on the extensive conversation in telegram 1877 from New Delhi, December 7. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 572, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/7/71–12/9/71)

<sup>8</sup> Not found.

Mr. Van Hollen: That was in the context of our assurances to India when China moved in. This was overtaken by the events of 1965, and our legal people don't think the Paks have a binding case in international law.

Mr. Johnson: If we want to assist Pakistan, we can find a basis for doing it.

Mr. Van Hollen: If we make a policy decision to assist Pakistan militarily, we don't have to worry about it.

Dr. Kissinger: If the word of a country has any legal meaning, it seems to me this would apply. The Paks haven't raised it with us yet, of course.

Mr. Packard: There is the practical problem, though—if we do anything, we should do something effective.

Mr. Helms: I agree. If we don't win, don't do it.

Mr. Packard: We should take a good look at it.

Mr. Williams: In 1965, the Paks closed our base at Peshawar and for all practical purposes left CENTO. With the fall of East Pakistan two days away, I think an attempt to get a cease-fire in West Pakistan needs to be made diplomatically.

Mr. Johnson: But that would stop the Paks in Kashmir.

Mr. Williams: But if they will be chewed up, we might be doing them a favor.

Dr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), would you get us by tomorrow an assessment of Pakistan's capabilities in Kashmir.

Mr. Helms: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: We need four things tomorrow:

- 1) the assessment of the international implications of the situation;
- 2) an assessment of Pakistan's military prospects in Kashmir;
- 3) our stance on the military supply question;
- 4) revision of the cable to Jordan to get word to King Hussein to stay in a holding pattern, that we are reviewing the situation, and that we share his concern and do not consider this a trivial issue.

If we're too enthusiastic about telling him not to do anything for Pakistan, he may think we would treat his country the same way in a comparable situation.

Mr. Johnson: We have done a new version of the note protesting the Indian blockade (circulated at the table and attached at Tab B),<sup>9</sup> but

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<sup>9</sup> Attached at Tab B, but not printed, are a draft protest note and a related draft press statement, under cover of an undated copy of a memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger. The memorandum, as sent with the attachments indicated, was dated December 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27-2 INDIA-PAK)

I don't think we should send it. There is nothing to be gained. We have already protested the attack on our ship, and there's not much purpose in doing anything more.

Dr. Kissinger: Except to show our displeasure with the Indian action.

Mr. Johnson: The Paks have also declared a blockade.

Dr. Kissinger: With what?

Mr. Johnson: On paper they have taken the same action as India.

Dr. Kissinger: We could protest to Pakistan too.

Mr. Van Hollen: We could make a paper protest to the Pakistanis.

Mr. Johnson: We don't have a legal case to protest the blockade as such. The two countries have declared a state of war between them and, under this declaration, they have the right of blockade. It's more a question of how the blockade is carried out. Firing on an American ship is an illegal act, and we have protested that twice. We can protest that again.

Dr. Kissinger: Formally? We don't know how it was done—we just saw a press statement.

Mr. Van Hollen: I called in the Indian Minister, and the Secretary called in the Indian Ambassador.

Mr. Johnson: We would have no problem with a formal protest in writing on the *Buckeye State* incident.<sup>10</sup> It would be difficult to protest the blockade, however. If we want to continue any even-handedness, we would have to protest to Pakistan also.

Dr. Kissinger: We're not trying to be all that even-handed. The President has told all of you what he wants—do any of you have any doubts as to what he wants? He doesn't want to be completely even-handed. He's trying to get across to the Indians that they are running a major risk in their relations with the US. If every time we do something to the Indians, we have to do the same thing to Pakistan, we will be participating in the rape of Pakistan, given the difference in their strengths. This blockade protest is a tactical decision that doesn't bother me one way or the other. Am I misrepresenting what the President has said? You have all heard him. He said to look for things we can do to get the message across to India.

Mr. Johnson: We can do it.

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<sup>10</sup> A situation report prepared by the Department of State India–Pakistan Working Group on December 4 noted that the U.S. merchant ship *SS Buckeye State* had been shelled by unidentified aircraft while at anchor in Chittagong Harbor. The captain and two crewmen were wounded. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 571, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/1/71–12/4/71) The draft protest note, cited above, identifies the planes as belonging to the Indian Air Force.

Mr. Packard: We have some reports that India may be experiencing a little concern about our attitude. Maybe we should pour it on a little.

Dr. Kissinger: Why should we do anything to ease India's state of mind? If India is mad, they won't get any less mad if we don't do some of these things. Mrs. Gandhi is a cold-blooded, tough customer. She won't become a Soviet satellite out of pique. We've had one NSC meeting on this. If anyone disagrees that this is the President's intention, we can have another meeting. On the blockade, I don't care. But we shouldn't ease their minds about our intentions.

Mr. Helms: Have we a policy decision on the evacuation of white faces from Dacca?

Mr. Johnson: There's a meeting going on in New York now. It's not a black-white issue. The evacuation is in the context of UN and third-country personnel, who happen to be white. We're working with Defense on this in New York.

Dr. Kissinger: On the question of a massacre, does anyone know what is happening in the areas India has occupied? Will we know if there is a massacre?

Mr. Helms: Yes, but we won't know developments minute by minute.

Mr. Johnson: We put something in the GA resolution<sup>11</sup> on that.

Mr. Van Hollen: To recap the assignments, CIA will assess the overall implications, Defense will assess Pak capabilities in Kashmir, State will give you the options on military supply, and we will redraft the message to Hussein.

Dr. Kissinger: Let him know that we understand his problem and give him the reasons why we want to hold up for the time being.

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<sup>11</sup> On December 7 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that made reference to the need for a political solution to the crisis, called upon India and Pakistan to agree to a cease-fire and the withdrawal of armed forces from each other's territory, and urged the creation of the conditions necessary for the return of refugees to their homes in East Pakistan. (UN doc. A/RES/2793, adopted by a vote of 104 to 11, with 10 abstentions) For the debate that led up to the vote, see UN doc. A/PV.2003.



**249. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 8, 1971, 3:50 p.m.

V: How are you, General?

H: Fine, Mr. Minister. I am calling to convey a message. Dr. Kissinger is in a meeting right now, but he wanted you to have this message as soon as possible. It is to the effect that with respect to your note yesterday,<sup>2</sup> the President does not feel a response at this time is necessary until he receives a response to his written communication, and he wanted it understood that the "watershed" term<sup>3</sup> which he used was very, very pertinent, and he considers it a carefully thought-out and valid assessment on his part.

V: Okay. I will have this in mind and transmit it to Moscow. Thank you, General.

H: Good-bye, Mr. Minister.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 998, Haig Chronological File, Haig Telcons 1971. No classification marking. Another copy is in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 395, Telephone Conversations, Dobrynin File, Sept 1971–Apr 1972.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the message from the Soviet leadership delivered by Vorontsov to Kissinger on December 6; see Document 241.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 231.

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**250. Editorial Note**

On instructions from Washington, a senior Embassy official met with the Shah in Tehran on December 8, 1971, to discuss the possibility of Iranian military support for Pakistan. The Shah stated that he had informed the Pakistani Ambassador in Tehran that, in light of the treaty of friendship signed by India and the Soviet Union, he could not send Iranian aircraft and pilots to Pakistan. He was not prepared to risk a confrontation with the Soviet Union.

The Shah proposed an alternative way to provide support to the hard-pressed Pakistani Air Force. He suggested that the United States urge King Hussein to send Jordanian F-104 fighters to Pakistan. The Shah in turn would send two squadrons of Iranian aircraft to Jordan

to defend Jordan while Jordanian planes and pilots were in Pakistan engaged in support of fellow Muslims.

The Embassy official indicated that, because of legal constraints regarding the use of military equipment provided by the United States, it would be difficult for officials in Washington to give permission for the transfer of the F-104s from Jordan to Pakistan, or to overlook their absence in Jordan. The Shah said that the United States could not hope to achieve the objective of bolstering Pakistan while maintaining that it was not involved in the effort. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan)

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## 251. Editorial Note

President Nixon, Attorney General Mitchell, and National Security Assistant Kissinger met in the Old Executive Office Building on the afternoon of December 8, 1971, for an extended discussion of the crisis in South Asia. Kissinger referred to a message that had been received from the Shah of Iran. (See Document 250.) The Shah could not send aircraft to support Pakistan because of the treaty between India and the Soviet Union. "He's proposing that the Jordanians send their planes to Pakistan, because the Pakistanis can fly Jordanian planes. And then he sends his planes to Jordan with Iranian pilots to cover Jordan while they are engaged in Pakistan." Nixon said: "I think we could get a commitment from Israel on the Jordanians." Nixon and Kissinger talked at the same time agreeing that it should be possible to negotiate Israeli restraint. Nixon instructed Kissinger to discuss the matter with Prime Minister Golda Meir: "When you talk to her, you tell her, Henry, that this is a goddamn Russian ploy."

Turning to the situation in East Pakistan, Kissinger warned that "the Indian plan is now clear. They are going to move their forces from East Pakistan to the west. They will then smash the Pakistan land forces and air forces." He added that India planned to "annex the part of Kashmir that is in Pakistan." [Azad Kashmir]. Kissinger went on to attribute to the Gandhi government the goal of Balkanizing West Pakistan into units such as Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier Province. West Pakistan would become a state akin to Afghanistan and East Pakistan would equate with Bhutan. "All of this would have been achieved by Soviet support, Soviet arms, and Indian military force." Kissinger warned that "the impact of this on many countries threatened by the Soviet Union" would be serious. He pointed in particular

to the potential impact upon the Middle East. If the crisis resulted in “the complete dismemberment of Pakistan,” Kissinger worried that China might conclude that the United States was “just too weak” to have prevented the humiliation of an ally. Kissinger felt that the Chinese would then look to other options “to break their encirclement.” “So I think this, unfortunately, has turned into a big watershed.”

Kissinger went on to suggest how Nixon should react in this “tough situation.” “It seems to me that what we have to do now, or what I would recommend, is where we went wrong before is not to try to scare off the Indians.” Nixon asked: “How could we scare them?” Kissinger offered no concrete answer, but he said that if Nixon’s advisers had understood the situation better they would have proposed a stronger response to Indian actions. He assured Nixon that he had done “exactly what all your advisers recommended.” Nixon said that he had given Prime Minister Gandhi a warning during his dinner in Washington with her: “I told her that any war would be very, very unacceptable.” Kissinger observed that any such warning obviously fell on deaf ears: “She was determined to go.” [Into East Pakistan]

Kissinger continued: “We should have been tougher with the Russians.” Nixon asked: “What could we have done?” Kissinger responded: “We should have told them what we finally told them last Sunday [December 5] that this would mark a watershed in our relationship, that there could be no Middle East negotiations if this thing would grow. We would have to play it tough. And thirdly, we should have cut off economic aid the first or second day, plus all of arms instead of waiting 10 days and diddling around. Nixon observed: “We have done all of that. But I ordered all of that.” Kissinger felt that the United States had responded too slowly in the fast moving situation, a failing he ascribed in part to insufficient concentration of control in the White House.

Nixon asked: “Now what do we do?” Kissinger responded: “We have two choices. . . . We have got to convince the Indians now, we’ve got to scare them off from an attack on West Pakistan as much as we possibly can. And therefore, we’ve got to get another tough warning to the Russians.” Kissinger noted that in doing so “you are risking the summit. On the other hand, the summit may not be worth a damn if they lose—if they kick you around.” Militarily, Kissinger judged, “we have only one hope now.” “To convince the Indians the thing is going to escalate. And to convince the Russians that they are going to pay an enormous price. It may not work, Mr. President . . . we can’t make up 6 years of military imbalance.” Nixon said: “We should never have let it get out of balance.” He attributed the military imbalance on the subcontinent in good part to President Johnson “to his great discredit.” Kissinger faulted the bureaucracy. “You promised Yahya on your first visit to send some arms.” The difficulty, he said, was to get the

bureaucracy to fulfill the promise. "We didn't know there would be a war in '71, but it took a year to get your promise to Yahya worked out."

Nixon turned to the question of whether to encourage a transfer of planes to Pakistan. Kissinger and Nixon agreed that the issue posed a risk. Kissinger said: "I think we're in trouble." He went on to say: "If we did this, we could give a note to the Chinese and say if you are ever going to move, this is the time." Nixon agreed: "All right, that's what we'll do." Mitchell observed: "All they have to do is put their forces on the border." Kissinger noted the danger of a corresponding move by the Soviet Union to support India and said: "I must warn you, Mr. President, if our bluff is called, we'll be in trouble."

Nixon said they had to "cold-bloodedly make the decision." Kissinger added: "We've got to make it within 36 hours." Nixon said that he did not want another meeting: "No more goddamn meetings to decide this." Kissinger noted that he had a WSAG meeting scheduled for the next day. He said that after the meeting he would present the choices confronting the administration to Nixon. Nixon said that one of his choices was to do relatively little to intervene further in the crisis, which he noted was "basically the State line." "If we let it go," he observed to Kissinger, "your fear is that it will certainly screw up the South Asian area. . . . Your greater fear, however, is that it may get . . . the Chinese stirred up so that they do something else. . . . And it will encourage the Russians to do the same thing someplace else." Kissinger concurred and pointed to the possible implications of the crisis for the Middle East. Nixon said: "I am for doing anything. . . ." The tape is difficult to understand at this point but the essence of his remarks is that he favored an interventionist approach. Kissinger worried that the United States did not have the requisite "punch to make it [an intervention] effective." Nixon agreed: "We can't do this without the Chinese helping us." He added: "As I look at this thing, the Chinese have got to move to that damn border. The Indians have got to get a little scared." He instructed Kissinger to get a message to that effect to the Chinese.

Beyond making an approach to China, Nixon puzzled over "what really we can do to affect the outcome." Kissinger suggested that one thing that could be done would be to encourage Jordan to transfer planes to Pakistan. Another would be to move the carrier force into the Bay of Bengal. After considerable discussion, Nixon noted that another form of pressure on India would be to brand India publicly as an aggressor. He also asked: "What about Indian aid? Is there anything more that we can do there?" He observed that in putting economic pressure on India: "I was for doing it more openly. . . . The whole line was well let's do it but not say anything. Well we've done that and it hasn't worked." Kissinger observed that the Department of the Treasury under Secretary Connally had moved quickly to put economic pressure on India, but he felt that the Department of State, reflecting Secretary

Rogers' instincts, had been slow to implement instructions to do so. "So we didn't give the Indians the real shock effect when . . . at first the Indians were not claiming they were invading."

Summarizing the decisions they were considering, Kissinger said: "We should get a note to the Chinese, we should move the carrier to the Bay of Bengal." Nixon interjected: "I agree." Nixon continued: "With regard to an announcement, with regard to the aid thing, I mean just cut it off. All aid to India period." Kissinger observed that "it is practically all cut off now." Nixon suggested that another step would be to announce that economic assistance to India would not be included in the next budget. On the question of planes for Pakistan, Kissinger said that the United States, which could oppose the transfer of equipment supplied by the United States, should allow Jordan to send planes to Pakistan and similarly allow Iran to send planes to Jordan to ensure the security of Jordan in the absence of a significant portion of its air force. Nixon agreed. Kissinger also pointed to the importance of getting a "stemwinder of a note to the Russians." Nixon observed about such a note: "I don't know what we can say that you have not already said." Kissinger said that the note would be in reply to the Soviet note received on December 6 "and I think we should just say nothing until we've done something, because we've got nothing left to say." Kissinger felt that the next steps should come after Nixon had made his "final decision" on the transfer of planes and on the introduction of a carrier force into the Bay of Bengal. He said: "I think if we do anything we should do it all together."

Nixon instructed Kissinger again to discuss a coordinated move with China. He told him to go to New York and say he had a message from the President for Premier Chou En-lai. Kissinger said that he was more optimistic than he had been earlier that China would respond positively to a suggestion regarding a coordinated move. "They know," he said, "that this is a dress rehearsal of what could happen to them." Nixon picked up on that theme: "What I would like to do in a note to the Chinese is to state exactly that, that I consider this to be a dress rehearsal and I think their move toward the border would restrain India." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among Nixon, Mitchell, and Kissinger, December 8, 1971, 4:20–5:01 p.m., Old Executive Office Building, Conversation No. 307–27) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 165.

## 252. Editorial Note

President Nixon and Henry Kissinger concluded their discussion of the crisis on the Indian subcontinent on December 8, 1971, with a telephone conversation that began at 8:03 p.m. They began by discussing the summit scheduled for Moscow in May in light of the crisis. Their view was that the Soviet failure to restrain India imperiled the summit. Nixon said: "Maybe we really have to put it to the Russians and say that we feel that under the circumstances we have to cancel the summit. . . . We've got to look at it down the road." "The things that we've got to consider are these: one, the cost of letting this go down the drain . . . and then doing the other things. And then on the other hand, we've got to figure that if we play this out, the fact [is] that we may not be around after the election." He concluded: "It's a tough goddamned decision and yet on the other hand being around after the election, if everything is down the drain, [it] doesn't make any difference." Kissinger's assessment was that if the United States were to "play it out toughly" it would get compensation somewhere and Nixon would be able to go to Moscow with his head up. But, he said, "if you just let it go down the drain, the Moscow summit may not be worth having." Nixon found it hard to believe that progress in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union on issues such as strategic arms limitations was being jeopardized by Soviet policy toward South Asia. He said: "Under the circumstances . . . we have to choose as to what we can do here." The major problem, Kissinger said, was to maintain Soviet respect for the United States. "If they are going to play it into an absolute showdown, then the summit wasn't worth having anyway."

Nixon and Kissinger went on to discuss what they could do to allow the Soviet leaders to save face, to give them "a way out" of the crisis. Nixon recognized that the United States could not suggest to the Soviet Union that the situation in South Asia should revert to the status quo ante. But, he added, "we can say get the hell out of West Pakistan."

Kissinger also pointed to the threat to West Pakistan: "At this stage, we have to prevent an Indian attack on West Pakistan." Nixon agreed. Kissinger continued: "We have to maintain the position of withdrawal from all of Pakistan." He concluded that if the United States held firm in its approach to India and the Soviet Union, the administration would achieve its overall goals, even if it failed to prevent India from dismembering Pakistan: "If they maintain their respect for us even if you lose, we still will come out all right." For Kissinger, it was a question of preserving credibility and honor. By introducing United States military power into the equation, in the form of a carrier and other units from the Seventh Fleet, the United States was seeking to prevent "a Soviet stooge, supported by Soviet arms" from overrunning an ally.

Nixon returned to his conviction that China could exercise a decisive restraining influence on India. "The Chinese thing I still think is a card in the hole there." "I tell you a movement of even some Chinese toward that border could scare those goddamn Indians to death." Kissinger agreed and said: "As soon as we have made the decision here, we can then talk to the Chinese." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 8, 1971, 8:03–8:12 p.m., White House Telephone, Conversation No. 16–64) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 166. Another record of this conversation is in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File.

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### 253. Letter From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Moscow, December 8, 1971.

Dear Mr. President:

We have already conveyed to you certain reflections regarding the developments in the Hindostan peninsula that we had in connection with your preliminary considerations transmitted through Mr. Kissinger.<sup>2</sup> Now your letter<sup>3</sup> has been received, and I would like to set forth to you, in an urgent manner as required by the acuteness of the question, our considerations in greater detail.

I would like to note, first of all, that we are also profoundly concerned about the situation in the Hindostan peninsula, the more so that the dangerous events are taking place in immediate proximity to the borders of the Soviet Union.

The events that had led to the armed conflict between Pakistan and India, are well known to you as well as to us. Striving to forestall their deterioration we were in mutual contact and kept informed of the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 497, President's Trip Files, Exchange of Notes Between Dobrynin and Kissinger, Vol. 2. The source text is an unofficial translation, apparently done in the Soviet Embassy or the Foreign Ministry. A handwritten notation on the letter indicates it was handed to Kissinger by Soviet Minister Vorontsov on December 9 at 8:15 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 231.

<sup>3</sup> Document 236.

actions of each other. Yet, the military confrontation still could not have been averted.

Concerned about the dangerous development of events in the Peninsula and interested in maintaining good relations both with India and Pakistan, the Soviet Union from the very outset took the position aimed at a peaceful solution of the questions at issue, and did everything necessary in this respect, trying in every way to convince both sides of this. We stated to President Yahya Khan and the Pakistani Government that the only way to proceed is the way of political settlement, and that a political settlement requires political means. Also, we repeatedly laid emphasis on the essence of the problem to be solved.

And that essence is that as a result of the reprisal by the Pakistani authorities against those political forces in East Pakistan which were given full confidence by the people in the December 1970 elections and as a result of cruel repressions against the broad masses of the East Pakistani population, India was flooded with a stream of refugees unprecedented in history—some 10 million people. This influx of many millions of those ill fated and deprived is a misfortune not only for themselves but also for India. That would be a misfortune for any country, even the richest one.

But it was clear all along that it would be impossible to get the refugees back to their native hearths without a political settlement in East Pakistan itself through negotiations between the Pakistani Government and the East Pakistani leaders who were elected by the people, and elected at that by universal vote which the Pakistani authorities themselves termed as completely free. That is why we advised President Yahya Khan to speedily take that path. We figured that the United States, too, would act in the same direction, and told you about it.

Our approach in this matter has not been and is not one-sided. We persistently expressed to both Pakistan and India our view about the necessity of a speediest political solution of the problem at issue. We sought to exert influence on the Pakistani leadership not because we were interested, for some special considerations of ours, in supporting the other side. We acted in that way because we saw the events in East Pakistan as the main cause of what was happening. And our viewpoint has not changed.

Unfortunately, President Yahya Khan and his Government did not take our advice. We are still puzzled as to the reason why the Pakistani leadership did not want to follow the way of political settlement—the way of negotiations. But the fact remains that they preferred to conduct the affairs in such a way as to make the guns speak and blood shed. Nobody can tell how many people have already perished—and still many more may die.

I shall not, however, go into this side of the matter. I would like to draw your attention to another thing. We are far from making the



conclusion that everything is now lost and nothing can be done. Such a conclusion could only be dictated by lack of confidence in the power of reason and in the possibilities for action, which remain in the present situation as well.

The Soviet Union applies and will continue to apply most determined efforts in order to stop the bloodshed and to turn the course of events towards political settlement. We trust this is possible.

You refer to your understanding that in times of international crises neither we nor you should seek unilateral advantages. I agree with this. But I would go beyond that and would say that it is important not only to formulate this realistic principle but also, on its basis, to act for the purpose of overcoming the crisis. In general I believe that a favorable element, from the viewpoint of prospects in the struggle for ending the conflict, is that there is no confrontation here of our two powers. And this being the case, we have all the more ground for parallel actions.

The thing to do now is to stop the war already underway. This requires a cease-fire. But the question arises—what is the best way to achieve it? It seems to us that, proceeding from the situation which developed from the very start, effective can be such a cease-fire which would be connected with a simultaneous decision for a political settlement, based on the recognition of the will of the East Pakistani population. Otherwise it is impossible to ensure the respect for the lawful rights and interests of the people of East Pakistan and to create conditions for the return of the millions of refugees. Without it a cease-fire will not be stable.

You already know about this proposal of ours, i.e. to solve together and simultaneously both questions—of cease-fire and of immediate resumption of negotiations between the Government of Pakistan and the East Pakistani leaders concerning a political settlement in East Pakistan. Those negotiations should, naturally, be started from the stage at which they were discontinued. We feel that this proposal provides a way out for all, including Pakistan. On the other hand, all would lose—and Pakistan maybe even more than others—on the way of continuing the war and rejecting a political settlement.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Kissinger briefed Nixon on Brezhnev's letter less than 2 hours after he received it: "They're proposing a cease-fire and a political negotiation between Islamabad and the Awami League." These he characterized as "old proposals" and added: "It is a very conciliatory letter, which is in itself unacceptable." He proposed a response: "If this negotiation is within the framework of the united Pakistan, with maximum autonomy for the east, we are willing to discuss it with them. That will separate them to some extent from the Indians. And secondly, it will get us a cease-fire in the west, which we've got to have if the West Pakistanis aren't to be smashed." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 9, 1971, 9:47–9:55 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 633–4)

That is why I would like to pose a question to you: is the above mentioned basis for the restoration of peace and ensuring the political settlement acceptable to the US? We think that it does not contain anything that cannot be acceptable, and we have in mind to apply our efforts in this direction, wherever this question is considered.

The crust [*sic*] of the whole matter, as we are convinced, is the question of how to exert due influence upon President Yahya Khan and his Government. We continue to do that. But here, it seems, you have more possibilities.

The events in the Hindostan peninsula constitute a major question. It is necessary to do everything in order to bring about a turn towards peace there, and our two powers can in many respects contribute to that. Particularly needed for this purpose is a calm and balanced approach which would take into account both the specifics of the current moment and the general prospects of world development.

My colleagues and I will be waiting for your earliest possible reaction to the considerations above.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev

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**254. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* Indian forces in East Pakistan are now making steady progress on several fronts and are at one point 22 miles from Dacca. The most immediate threat is from the east, but the Indians must now make a major river crossing if their thrust is to continue. The main port of Chittagong to the southeast has been cut off from Dacca, and there is a report that to the southwest the only other major water

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

terminal has also been cut off. There are also significant advances in the northern and northeastern salients of the province.

How long Pakistani resistance will continue will depend on whether the Pakistani forces give up or are captured as their posts are taken or are able to fall back in relatively good order to a few urban centers like Dacca for a last-ditch defense. President Yahya in a conversation with Ambassador Farland yesterday seemed resigned that he could not do anything more to help his troops in the east, but he said that they will fight "to the last Muslim." There have been some reports of desertions by members of army and police units, but there have been no indications yet that discipline is collapsing or that large numbers are surrendering. Meanwhile, the Defense Secretary in New Delhi yesterday put forth a "personal suggestion" that India could be more effective in protecting the minorities in East Pakistan, including West Pakistani soldiers, if the Pakistani Government were prepared to arrange an orderly Bangla Desh takeover.

In the West, the military situation remains about the same. The Indians, with the exception of an extending penetration toward Karachi in the south, are still in a holding posture on the ground while conducting repeated air attacks against military targets throughout West Pakistan. The Paks are taking some initiative in the Punjab plain and especially along the Kashmir cease-fire line, and there are reports of an increased offensive in the next day or two. However, they are still to launch the major offensive that many have expected. It is possible that they are hoping that the Indians will be ready to stop or at least more subject to international pressure once East Pakistan falls and do not want to provoke unnecessarily a major Indian counter-offensive in the West. On the other hand, if the Indians do shift to an all-out offensive in the West, the Paks will still have most of their forces intact to defend their heartland.

At the UN, yesterday's activity was highlighted by a strong appeal from U Thant for a Dacca area cease-fire to permit the evacuation of international community personnel there. Thant asked both the Indians and Paks to agree to a 24-hour stand-down to permit repair of runways for evacuation of foreigners. So far there has been no positive response from the Indians who are chafing under charges that they have failed to live up to the terms of two earlier evacuation cease-fire agreements that broke down. Meanwhile, UN and International Red Cross people in Dacca are also making arrangements for two "neutral areas" in the event that Dacca falls before an evacuation can be mounted. This neutral area would also accommodate our consulate staff who will lose diplomatic rights and privileges when the Bangla Desh Government takes over and could be in a hostile atmosphere when the guerrillas arrive. The WSAG today will be discussing what, if any, transitional role the consulate should play.

Both India and Pakistan are preparing for another round of debate at the UN. Indian Foreign Minister Singh is on his way to New York as is Bhutto, the new Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. On the political front, Yahya has confirmed to Ambassador Farland that he has speeded up and intends to carry out his "blue-print" for transferring power to a civilian government, although it has been announced that Yahya will remain President. Apparently Nuril Amin, the Bengali who has been appointed Prime Minister, is at least officially in office, although Yahya said that Bhutto was not sworn in because of his rapid departure for the UN. It is possible that Yahya may be hoping to pin the blame for a settlement on this new government and especially Bhutto. Yahya also welcomed the UN General Assembly resolution saying that he had been agreeable to this concept for months.

The Tuesday<sup>2</sup> afternoon backgrounder has spurred a counter backgrounder in New Delhi. The Indians appear to have homed in on my remarks about our peace efforts and are saying that they cooperated subject to certain minimum conditions, but that the efforts failed because of bad faith on the part of Yahya. There were also some testy remarks about "baseless" allegations and questioning of the propriety of dealing with such issues out of diplomatic channels.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>2</sup> December 7.

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## 255. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 9, 1971, 10:09–11 a.m.

SUBJECT

South Asia

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-115, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. 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

John N. Irwin, II

Joseph Sisco

Christopher Van Hollen

Samuel DePalma

Anthony Quainton

Bruce Laingen

Thomas Pickering

Defense

Armistead Selden

James H. Noyes

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Capt. Howard N. Kay

CIA

Richard Helms

John Waller

AID

Donald MacDonald

Maurice Williams

C. Herbert Rees

NSC Staff

B/Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr.

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Col. Richard T. Kennedy

Harold H. Saunders

Samuel Hoskinson

Rosemary Neaher

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

(1) the JCS would prepare urgently a plan for deployment of a carrier task force for evacuation of Americans from East Pakistan, and the agencies should comment on the advisability of such a move by this afternoon;

(2) State should draft a telegram of instruction to Ambassador Farland for a possible approach to Yahya;

(3) State will prepare a scenario for a possible approach to the Indians to seek assurances on the maintenance of present lines of demarcation.

Mr. Kissinger: Dick (Helms), can you tell us where we are?

(Mr. Helms briefed from the attached text.)<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Kissinger: The President is astonished that American officials could appear to agree with the Indian interpretation that, since they have split off only some 60% of the country and did not actually annex the territory, this demonstrates that they are essentially peacefully inclined. This is not our position and he does not want the Indians to

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed. According to his briefing notes, Helms reported that the defense being mounted by Pakistani forces in East Pakistan was crumbling. Indian forces suffered heavy casualties during the early stages of the fighting, but they were breaking through outmanned Pakistani positions. There were no indications that Pakistani forces were surrendering in large numbers or that discipline had broken down, but the CIA assessment was that Pakistani forces in East Pakistan would have a hard time regrouping. Indian officials were calling for a surrender of those forces to prevent further bloodshed. By contrast, the fighting in the west had produced only limited results.

be left under any misapprehension in this regard. He wants this corrected today.

Mr. Helms: In the last few hours we have a report from Karachi that the oil tanks there have been hit again, in the 12th or 13th air raid, and that six or eight of them are burning. An ESSO representative has indicated that this means the loss of 50% of Karachi's oil reserves, which amounts to over 80% of the POL for all of Pakistan. He estimates that they are left with a two-weeks' supply, possibly less at the rate at which POL is now being consumed.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Adm. Moorer) What is your estimate of the military situation?

Adm. Moorer: In East Pakistan, in the absence of a ceasefire, it's just a matter of time until the Pakistan Army will be essentially ineffective. There is, however, no indication that their morale has broken down. Their supplies are cut off and they have no air left. Any serious fighting could be over in ten days or two weeks, depending on whether the Paks continue to fight to the last man or whether they begin to surrender in large numbers, which does not seem to be in the cards now. In West Pakistan, the Paks are slightly superior in numbers, (they have about 90–100,000 men), and they are trying to occupy enough of Kashmir to give them a bargaining chip if and when there is a ceasefire. They are trying to block the main lines of communication. South of the Kashmir area, the Indians outnumber the Paks two-to-one, and they may plan to move south to Lahore, although there is no indication of that now. The best Pakistan can do is to gain as much control of Kashmir as possible.

Mr. Kissinger: How much is that?

Adm. Moorer: Enough to keep the Indians out until there is enough international pressure to bring about a ceasefire.

Mr. Irwin: What are their chances of doing that?

Adm. Moorer: The Paks can operate for about three weeks or so. However, if there is a period of attrition, with no ceasefire, the Indians can hold out longer and the Paks have had it. Mrs. Gandhi has stated that her objective is to destroy the Pak military forces.

Mr. Kissinger: So if the war is prolonged, it won't make any difference if the Paks take Kashmir, since they wouldn't be able to hold it.

Adm. Moorer: Yes, but that is their only chance.

Mr. Kissinger: Yesterday someone here said a ceasefire in West Pakistan would work to the disadvantage of the Paks. Now do I understand that you are saying that a prolonged war, even if the Paks get Kashmir, will lead to the destruction of the Pak Army?

Adm. Moorer: Exactly. When East Pakistan is gone, the Indians will transfer their divisions to West—possibly four of the six divisions

now in the East. This will take one to three weeks, depending on how much air they use. If the war continues to the end, the outcome for Pakistan is inevitable.

Mr. Kissinger: So we have to prevent an Indian onslaught on West Pakistan, since the outcome will be the same as in East Pakistan. The Indians will then control the area to Bhutan in the East and Nepal in the West.

Mr. Irwin: The CIA paper (Implications of an Indian Victory Over Pakistan, December 9)<sup>3</sup> predicts the possible acceleration of the breakup tendencies in West Pakistan—possibly into as many as four separate states.

Mr. Johnson: That sounds reasonable.

Adm. Moorer: I think the Indians will be slowed down somewhat by logistic problems, care of casualties, etc., but they will not slow down as fast as the Paks.

Mr. Williams: It sounds as though POL is the critical element, if they have lost 50% of 80% of the supplies for all of Pakistan. Doesn't this mean that their planes and tanks will come to a halt in about three weeks?

Mr. Helms: The Indians have already hit the reserves at Rawalpindi.

Mr. Williams: Then POL is the critical point. (to Adm. Moorer) Was that the basis for your estimate of three weeks?

Adm. Moorer: That and the ammo supply. The Indians will run short of ammo, too, ultimately, but not to the point that they can't operate.

Mr. Williams: The Indian objective is to take out the Pak tanks and planes. If they run out of POL and can't move, they'll be sitting ducks.

Mr. Irwin: Do the Paks have any capability of defending their POL?

Adm. Moorer: No.

Mr. Johnson: What is the possibility of trucking POL from Tehran?

Adm. Moorer: There is one road. We have one report that indicates that Chinese trucks are coming in but we don't know what they are carrying. Iran is the logical source of POL. I talked to the Turkish Chief of Staff at NATO and asked him how much assistance he thought Iran was prepared to give to Pakistan. He said he thought the Shah wanted to be helpful, but had one eye cocked on Iraq. In the end, he didn't believe the Shah would give significant assistance.

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<sup>3</sup> This 12-page CIA assessment is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 170.

Mr. Helms: We have a good telegram from Doug Heck<sup>4</sup> on this today, saying the Shah is playing the situation coolly and even-handedly. He pointed out the difficulty of resupply.

Mr. Kissinger: So the critical attitude is ours. If they had any indication from us that we were favorable, they might do it. But judging by our reaction in the Jordan episode, they are getting signals from us not to do it—possibly not directly but at least by osmosis.

Mr. Helms: There are serious logistical problems in doing much of anything in the existing time frame. They don't have the ability, even if they went flat-out, of doing anything in any quantity.

Mr. Kissinger: Are we agreed that we should do our best to prevent an Indian attack on West Pakistan? That this is our chief objective?

Mr. Irwin: The question is how to do it. To what degree would this require involvement of the United States.

Mr. Kissinger: We are involved, no matter how often our press spokesmen say we are not. The question is the degree of our involvement.

Mr. Johnson: If the fighting in the West could be brought to a stop now, it would be to the advantage of the Paks.

Mr. Kissinger: What do you suggest?

Mr. Irwin: The question is what our policy is. We could undertake little direct support to Pakistan without increasing the degree of our involvement.

Mr. Johnson: I think we should make a maximum effort with both sides to bring the fighting to a stop. The Paks have already accepted the UN cease-fire resolution.

Mr. Kissinger: Including withdrawal.

Mr. Johnson: Yes; the Indians have not accepted it. A withdrawal by both sides to the previous boundaries is clearly in Pakistan's interest.

Mr. Kissinger: Pakistan would implement the resolution in the West but India would not implement it in the East.

Mr. Johnson: I'm talking about the West only. We would go to the Indians and press them to implement the resolution in the West.

Mr. Kissinger: But they have acquired no territory in the West.

Mr. Johnson: Each of them has some territory. The point is that continuation of the fighting in the West is not to the advantage of Pakistan under any circumstances.

Mr. Kissinger: Is that all we can do?

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<sup>4</sup> Not found.



Mr. Selden: What will be the fate of the Pak Army in East Pakistan? There will be a massacre if they keep on fighting.

Mr. Johnson: What can we do in the East?

Mr. Helms: There is nothing to do. There is no way of getting them out.

Mr. Johnson: India can afford to withdraw their troops from East Pakistan, once the Mukti Bahini are in the saddle.

Adm. Moorer: Not until the Pak Army is destroyed. Mrs. Gandhi has said also that she wants to straighten out the border.

Mr. Noyes: The more territory Pakistan takes in the West, the more provocation this is to India—the more justification India has to continue.

Adm. Moorer: India doesn't need any provocation or justification. They have a plan and they are carrying it out.

Mr. Johnson: And the Paks can't prevent it.

Mr. Helms: What leverage do we have on India?

Mr. Johnson: None. I'm talking about our objectives.

Mr. Irwin: We can move politically through the UN. We can take some action with regard to military assistance. Suppose we decided to move into substantial military assistance to Pakistan? How effectively could we do it in terms of enabling them to hold in the West?

Adm. Moorer: To make it effective, we would have to move very fast. The most effective material would be consumables—ammunition, POL.

Mr. Irwin: If we decided to do this, could we get enough additional supplies in within a week to make the difference? There's also the question of what third parties could do.

Mr. Kissinger: We have two separate problems: (1) the deterrent effect on India of our undertaking a supply effort for Pakistan; and (2) the actual military effect. For everything we have done after India was committed to war, we have been accused of being punitive since it was too little to affect the outcome. What if we do nothing? Non-involvement is a lovely phrase, but it earns us no Brownie points. Our Brownie points will come from the outcome a year from now. In the larger international arena, would we be better off if we did not become involved, assuming we ignore the meaning of our bilateral treaty and subsequent assurances to the Paks. Or would we be better off if we tried to scare the Indians off and, if we do lose, of having salvaged at least the indication that, when we are pressed, we will do something. Indeed, in the Middle East or Indonesia, we might do more. No one has a bigger stake in the relaxation of tensions than the President, for personal reasons. But in a situation where non-involvement means the Soviets can pour in supplies with equanimity and we can't, we will be judged by the outcome and not by the theory by which we arrived at it. If this is true, we should look at the moves we could take. Someone

said here yesterday that if we wanted to move, we could find a basis for it. Why can't we call in the Indian Ambassador and ask him for assurances that no demarcation line is to be changed?

Mr. Johnson: We would have a good basis for this in Kashmir since we have a UN resolution on it.

Mr. Kissinger: We could just ask for flat assurances. That wouldn't be too provocative and it would posture us for the future.

Mr. Johnson: I think we should do it. We should talk to the Soviets too.

Mr. Kissinger: On the question of military supply, if it is true that the Indians are willing to fight to a bloody finish, what would be most likely to deter them? What if Jordan should send planes to Pakistan? Why would this be such a horrible event?

Mr. Johnson: It wouldn't, but it would be the same as if the Americans did it.

Adm. Moorer: We made this problem for ourselves when we stopped aid to Pakistan in the first place.

Mr. Kissinger: But no one told us that then.

Adm. Moorer: If we asked the Indian Ambassador for assurances on boundaries and he said no, this would be very important, regardless of what action we take.

Mr. Johnson: Shouldn't we also talk to Yahya?

Mr. Kissinger: About what?

Mr. Johnson: To get his views on the restoration of the status quo ante in the West.

Mr. Kissinger: Wouldn't he say "they have taken half my country, and I can't talk about it"?

Mr. Johnson: What is the alternative—continued fighting in the West until his forces are destroyed?

Mr. Williams: But Yahya doesn't expect this to happen. He expects the fighting will be stopped by the great powers. He expects them to bring it to a halt and then to go to some form of negotiating table.

Adm. Moorer: Is there any way to get NATO into the act?

Mr. Helms: The British and French don't go along with us.

Mr. Kissinger: What are we telling the NATO countries?

Mr. Sisco: I sent a telegram<sup>5</sup> to the Secretary last night suggesting he draw on your backgrounder.

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<sup>5</sup> Telegram 221059 to Brussels, December 8, sent the text of Kissinger's background briefing of the press on December 7 on the South Asian crisis to Secretary Rogers, who was attending the NATO meetings. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan Situation)

Mr. Kissinger: What part?

Mr. Sisco: I left that to the Secretary.

Mr. Kissinger: When the Soviets were in an equally disadvantageous situation in the Middle East in 1967 and were trying to bring the war to a conclusion, they gave the impression that they might do something serious. The question is whether another flood of notes, without actually doing something, would indicate that unless the fighting stops there will be increased danger. Unless we can settle on a strategy, speak with the same voice, and stop putting out all these conflicting stories from the various agencies and all this leaking, we don't deserve to succeed.

Mr. Williams: If we approach the Indians, their response will probably be that they will stop the war in the West in return for Pakistan's recognition of Bangla Desh.

Mr. Johnson: But with the destruction of the Pak forces in the East, they can't do anything anyway.

Mr. Williams: But the Indians have already said this is what they want, and we would get this response to any approach to them. Once they achieve their objective in the East, there is the possibility that they may stop.

Mr. Irwin: But they have said they intend to destroy the Pak Army and Air Force and straighten out the line on Kashmir.

Mr. Kissinger: If they destroy the army and the air force, Pakistan will be in their paws. The result would be a nation of 100 million people dismembered, their political structure changed by military attack, despite a treaty of alliance with and private assurances by the United States. And all the other countries, on whom we have considered we could rely, such as Iran, would know that this has been done by the weight of Soviet arms and with Soviet diplomatic support. What will be the effect in the Middle East, for example—could we tell Israel that she should give up something along a line from A to B, in return for something else, with any plausibility?

Mr. Sisco: I don't accept that view. We do have a kind of alliance with Pakistan in both the CENTO and the bilateral context, but that alliance was against communist aggression. I grant that the Russians are behind India in this, but our commitment was not in the India-Pakistan context. I don't believe Iran, or Israel or any other Middle Eastern country expect direct US involvement in South Asia.

Mr. Kissinger: No one is talking about that.

Mr. Sisco: We are involved, and we are talking about the nature of our involvement. I don't see the implication for the rest of the world that you draw. I have the impression from what Yahya told (Ambassador) Farland that he has "accepted" the inevitable result in East Paki-

stan. We can't do anything about that. East Pakistan is gone and we both have to face that fact. The thing that confronts Yahya and us in relation to the balance on the subcontinent is what happens in West Pakistan. It is not in our interest to have India destroy the Pak Army in West Pakistan, or otherwise effect a further radical change in the status quo, possibly resulting in the fractionalization of Pakistan. I think we have three options: (1) we can do nothing—complete non-involvement—in which case East Pakistan would be lost, India would destroy the Pak Army and would take at least Azad Kashmir. This is clearly unacceptable. (2) That we not accept this situation, but see what we can do diplomatically or otherwise to deter the Indians from their present course. We should recognize that we are limited in the ways in which we can deter the Indians. Even if we should move rapidly on arms supply to the Paks, this would have only a marginal effect.

Mr. Kissinger: Assuming the Indians were willing to press the fighting to a conclusion.

Mr. Sisco: Yes. We should ask ourselves how we could deter the Indians so as to end with a West Pakistan based on the status quo ante, including no alteration of the boundaries of Kashmir.

Mr. Kissinger: Would you accept Bangla Desh?

Mr. Sisco: I have no problem with going to the Indians alone, as you suggest. We should also go to the Russians. I think we should also have a serious talk with Yahya.

Mr. Kissinger: What would be the point of a serious talk with Yahya?

Mr. Sisco: To see how he reads his position. I realize this is an oversimplification, but Yahya is faced with a situation involving the sure destruction of elements of his Government in East Pakistan. How does he read his capability in the West? Probably not as we do. Given the disproportionate military capability between India and Pakistan, we see the likelihood of a Pak defeat. But if Yahya doesn't read it that way, he may want to continue the military struggle. If he wants to do this, we're not in a position to second-guess him. The fundamental question is whether we should try to have some exchange along the line that the East is pretty well lost, and how do we save the rest of Pakistan?

Mr. Kissinger: So we would go to Yahya and say he should settle now?

Mr. Sisco: Yahya is faced with the necessity of cutting his losses and saving West Pakistan.

Mr. Kissinger: Suppose Yahya says yes, and the Indians say he has to recognize Bangla Desh?

Mr. Sisco: We shouldn't press him to do that. I'm stating the situation in bald terms.

Mr. Johnson: India doesn't need Yahya's recognition of Bangla Desh. Neither Yahya nor the U.S. can restore the status quo ante in Bangla Desh. There is nothing Yahya can do, even if he doesn't accept the loss.

Mr. Williams: We have only a limited leverage on India. In the absence of any assurance that a military supply effort would be effective and would make any difference in the military balance, we're in a terribly weak position. I think we need something additional if we are to extract Yahya with some shred of honor. I think we should go back to a sharpened Security Council resolution—a stand-fast of some sort which would save the army and hold to the demarcation of the present boundaries. We might add Bangla Desh to this equation in some way.

Mr. Sisco: I don't exclude the possibility of a deal of some sort, even now.

Mr. Williams: There are still elements of concession. Don't forget that the spirit of nationalism was terribly strong in East Pakistan even before the fighting broke out. This is where any talent we have needs to be applied. I think we should discuss it with Yahya. If we put some force behind it, we may even have a chance of getting the Russians behind it. Many West Pakistanis will recognize and accept the loss of East Pakistan, although it will be hard for the Army to take.

Mr. Kissinger: Assuming that this kind of option will be kept open, the President wants India to understand very clearly that we would not look with indifference on an Indian onslaught on West Pakistan. Our press spokesmen should not press the idea of neutrality or non-involvement to the point that the Indians could misunderstand that this foretells our attitude toward an attack on West Pakistan. We should keep open the option of trying to deter the Indians, by a show of force, if necessary. We could then use that as a bridge to the sort of negotiation you (Williams) are talking about. This would also give the Soviets an excuse to try to help.

Along this line, the President has asked for the pros and cons of getting an American aircraft carrier into the Bay of Bengal for the purpose of evacuating Americans. (to Moorer) Can you do it?

Adm. Moorer: Sure. It will take five or six days. We have several options.

Mr. Kissinger: Can you all consider it and have your views over here by early afternoon?

Adm. Moorer: We could put in a carrier task force, including some destroyers and a cruiser and some helos.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's get your plan over here by 2:00 this afternoon, and any views the rest of you may have by 6:00 p.m. We may have an-

other meeting with the President if he wants to move more energetically, to remove any lingering doubts any of you may have. But we should get ourselves postured, without any prejudice to the kind of solution Maury Williams has suggested. (to Irwin) Will you draft a telegram of what we might say to Yahya?

Mr. Johnson: And also what we might say to the Indians.

Mr. Kissinger: Yes.

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## 256. Editorial Note

President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger met at 12:44 p.m. on December 9, 1971, in the Oval Office of the White House for another discussion of the crisis in South Asia. Kissinger began by repeating his warning of the dangers of allowing India to dismember Pakistan. Kissinger felt that the impact of the dismemberment of a United States ally would "be severe in Iran, in Indonesia, and in the Middle East." He concluded "there is no good deal possible any more at this stage. And if the Russians want to press it to a brutal conclusion, we're going to lose." He saw possibilities, however, in the "conciliatory" letter from Brezhnev (Document 253). The Soviets wanted a Middle East settlement, a European security conference, trade with the United States, and a summit meeting. Kissinger added that they were also concerned about pushing the United States and China closer together. "So we are not without assets."

Kissinger felt that the United States was in a position to "warn the Russians and the Indians that if this continues we could leak out or in some way make clear that Kennedy made a commitment to Pakistan against aggression from India." "Secondly," he added, "we should move that helicopter ship . . . and some escort into the Bay of Bengal" ostensibly to evacuate U.S. citizens. He was not, at this point, recommending introduction of the carrier. "From the Chinese angle, I would like to move the carrier. From the public opinion angle, what the press and television would do to us if an American carrier showed up there." Nixon asked: "Can't the carrier be there for the purpose of evacuation?" Kissinger responded: "But against whom are we going to use the planes? Are we going to shoot our way in?" Nixon asked what good it would do to move a helicopter ship into the area. Kissinger said it would be "a token that something else will come afterward." He also recommended letting "the Jordanians move some of their planes. And I'd get the Indian Ambassador in and demand assurances that India doesn't want to annex territory."

Kissinger again highlighted what he saw as the differing approaches to the crisis adopted by the Department of State and the White House. The Department, he said, "would propose a cease-fire in the west in return for in effect our recognition of Bangladesh." Kissinger argued that such an approach would constitute "a total collapse" and "it would hurt us with the Chinese." Nixon, however, felt it was necessary to take account of the "realities" of the situation. "The partition of Pakistan is a fact" he said. "You see those people welcoming the Indian troops when they come in." "Why then," he asked, "are we going through all of this agony?" Kissinger replied: "We are going through this agony to prevent the West Pakistan army from being destroyed. And secondly, to retain our Chinese arm. And thirdly, to prevent a complete collapse of the world's psychological balance of power, which will be produced if a combination of the Soviet Union and the Soviet armed client state can tackle a not insignificant country without anybody doing anything."

Kissinger felt that if the United States would "put enough chips into the pot" it could persuade the Soviets "for their own reasons, for the other considerations, to call a halt to it." "What are we going to ask the Russians to do," Nixon asked. "Cease-fire, negotiation, and subsequent withdrawal," Kissinger responded. "But," he added, "we'd have to clear it with Yahya first." "Cease-fire and negotiation on what basis," Nixon wanted to know. "Between the Awami League and Islamabad," Kissinger said, "on the basis of the December 1970 election," and "within the framework of a united Pakistan." Withdrawal, he anticipated, would occur after the negotiations.

The time to effect such an agreement was clearly limited. Kissinger said that Pakistan's army would run out of ammunition and oil within 2 weeks. In response to Nixon's question about what the United States could do to influence the outcome, Kissinger replied: "I would keep open the possibility that we'll pour arms into Pakistan." If the Soviet Union could ship arms to India, Kissinger did not see why the United States could not supply arms to Pakistan. "I don't understand the theory of non-involvement," he said. "I don't see where we will be as a country. I have to tell you honestly I consider this our Rhineland." He warned: "If the Russians come out of it totally cocky, we may have a Middle East war in the spring."

Nixon was concerned about the implications of taking a hard line. "We have to know what we are jeopardizing," he said. Kissinger responded: "You are jeopardizing your relationship with the Soviets, but that is also your card, your willingness to jeopardize it." Not to play that card, Kissinger suggested, would be to concede the Soviet Union a dangerous victory. Nixon observed that opponents of his policy toward South Asia were also concerned about jeopardizing United States relations with India. Kissinger said: "You could argue that it will help

us in the long-term with the Indians." Nixon replied: "I don't give a damn about the Indians."

Reverting to the question of introducing U.S. Naval forces into the area, Kissinger said he had discussed the matter with Connally and Connally had favored using a helicopter ship rather than a carrier. Connally felt that using a carrier would be interpreted by the American public as a threat to intervene militarily. It was a tough decision, Kissinger said, "I go back and forth on it myself." He noted that there were some 200 U.S. citizens in East Pakistan. Nixon said: "Goddamn it, I've got a responsibility to protect American lives. I'm going to do it." The tape is difficult to understand at this point, but Nixon apparently said he was prepared to use the carrier force to protect U.S. citizens in East Pakistan. "Nobody will believe it," Kissinger warned. "The Indians will scream we're threatening them." "Why are we doing it anyway," Nixon asked. "Aren't we going in for the purpose of strength?"

Kissinger shifted ground in the face of Nixon's apparent determination to use the carrier: "I'd move the carrier so that we can tell the Chinese tomorrow to move their forces to the frontier." He advised that a decision to move the carrier group into the Bay of Bengal meant that "we'd have to do a lot of things, and we'd have to do them toughly." "I understand," Nixon agreed. Kissinger continued: "We'd have to get the Indian Ambassador called in and demand assurances against annexation. We'd have to leak at that moment that secret understanding to protect the Indians [*Pakistanis*] against aggression." Nixon responded: "I understand," and he authorized Kissinger "to get the whole thing together."

Nixon asked how the transfer of planes from Jordan to Pakistan could be facilitated. Kissinger said: "The way we would do that is . . . to tell the King to move his planes and inform us that he has done it . . . and then we would tell State to shut up. We would have to tell him it is illegal, but if he does it we'll keep things under control." "All right," Nixon said, "that's the way we play that."

Some discussion followed concerning a meeting scheduled later that day with senior administration officials involved in managing the crisis. Kissinger recommended that Nixon express himself firmly with them regarding the policy line he wanted them to follow. Nixon wondered if he should tell them about his decision to use the carrier. Kissinger said: "If you've decided to do this game plan, I think it is more important to see the Russian today because his cable would go back." (See Document 257.) He added that the others could be informed later.

Turning to the political impact of using the carrier, Kissinger noted that it would take 6 days to move the carrier from Southeast Asia to



the Bay of Bengal by which time Congress would be out of session. He said he would talk to Admiral Moorer “to see whether we can keep the carrier back of the Bay of Bengal.” Nixon asked: “Then can we move the other helicopter thing in?” Kissinger said yes.

Nixon reviewed the other decisions reached during the discussion: to encourage the transfer of Jordanian planes to Pakistan, to notify the Chinese of about what they had decided to do, to leak the Kennedy commitment to protect Pakistan, and to ask India for assurances that there would be no annexations as a result of the crisis. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 9, 1971, 12:44–1:27 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 633–11) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 168.

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## 257. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 9, 1971, 4–4:41 p.m.

Following an exchange of pleasantries in which Matskevich<sup>2</sup> emphasized Mr. Brezhnev’s warmly anticipated meeting with President Nixon, the President informed the Soviet representatives that he wished to discuss an urgent problem very frankly. The President con-

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive. The heading on the memorandum describes the report of the conversation as an extract. The meeting was held in the White House Oval Office. The time of the meeting is from the President’s Daily Diary, as is the fact that it was also attended by Kissinger and Deputy Assistant to the President Alexander Butterfield, who apparently took the notes on the meeting. (Ibid., White House Central Files)

<sup>2</sup> Minister of Agriculture Vladimir Matskevich arrived in Washington on December 9 and Nixon saw him and Vorontsov on Kissinger’s recommendation. Kissinger saw Matskevich’s presence as an opportunity to send a high-level message to the Soviet leadership that if India turned its military strength on West Pakistan after defeating the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan it would create a crisis of the utmost gravity. Kissinger felt that Nixon should make the point that Soviet support of the Indian use of force in East Pakistan raised serious questions as to whether the United States could work with the Soviet Union on issues of mutual concern. (Memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, December 9; *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 492, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8)

tinued, "I want you to know how strongly I personally feel about this issue." Great progress has been made in US/Soviet relations. No one two years ago would have thought this progress possible. It includes progress on SALT, the Berlin situation, and an agreement on the Spring Summit. Discussions have been held on the possibility of a European Security Conference, and the opportunity exists for a totally new relationship between the U.S. and the USSR.

"Now, quite frankly, a great cloud hangs over it—the problem of the Subcontinent." Six-hundred million will win over 60,000,000 people. Pakistan will be cut in half. In the short-range, this may be a gain for the Soviet Union and a setback for China. It is certain to be a tragedy for Pakistan. What is far more significant if the situation continues is the fact that it will poison the whole new relationship between the U.S. and the USSR. The question is, 'are short-term gains for India worth jeopardizing Soviet relations with the U.S.?' This is not conveyed in a threatening way.<sup>3</sup> It would be difficult, however, for the U.S. to stand by if the Indians move forces into West Pakistan. The key to a settlement is in the hands of the Soviet Union. If the Soviets do not restrain the Indians, it will be difficult for the U.S. to deal with Yahya.<sup>4</sup> If the Indians continue military operations, we must inevitably look toward a confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Soviet Union has a treaty with India, but the United States has obligations to Pakistan. The urgency of a ceasefire must be recognized.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> At this point in the conversation, Nixon said: "I think there is a better way. A better way is for the Soviet Union and the United States to find a method where we can work together for peace in that area. Now, the first requirement is that there be a ceasefire. The second requirement is that, and this is imperative, that the Indians . . . desist in their attacks on West Pakistan." He went on to propose that a cease-fire be succeeded by political negotiations "within a Pakistan framework." (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Soviet Minister Matskevich, December 9, 1971, 4–4:41 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 634–12) A transcript of the conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 169.

<sup>4</sup> Nixon said: "If the Soviet Union does not restrain the Indians, the United States will not be able to exert any influence with Yahya to negotiate a political settlement with the Awami League." (Ibid.)

<sup>5</sup> Nixon concluded the conversation by reiterating that it was important not to allow differences over South Asia "to endanger and jeopardize the relations that are far more important." He said: "Now is the time to move, to settle this thing before it blows up to a major confrontation." Nixon and Kissinger assessed the meeting after Matskevich and Vorontsov left. Nixon was pleased with the exchange. "I really stuck it to him." Kissinger predicted: "It will end now. It will end. We will lose 70 percent but that's a hell of a lot better. We were losing 110 percent yesterday." Nixon felt that, at a minimum, his initiative with Matskevich would have the effect of stopping "the goddamn Indians from going to the West." (Ibid.)

258. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Your Meeting with the Senior Members of the WSAG at 4:30 p.m., Thursday, December 9, 1971

You are scheduled to meet with the following senior members of the WSAG at 4:30 p.m. this afternoon to discuss your policy and actions you expect from the bureaucracy on the South Asia problem. In attendance will be the Acting Secretary of State Irwin, Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard, Director of Central Intelligence Helms, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Moorer, and myself.

*Purpose of the Meeting*

The purpose of this meeting is to instill the necessary discipline within the bureaucracy and the forum of the Washington Special Actions Group to insure compliance with your policies on South Asia. This policy must include prompt steps designed to prevent the dismemberment of Pakistan as a result of Indian military actions supported and abetted by the Soviet Union. While it is obvious that events have already progressed to a point where there must be inevitable damage to U.S. interests, a careful and disciplined gameplan can salvage a great deal from the present situation.

*Talking Points*

Inform the group that you have convened them on short notice to insure that your policies are clearly understood with respect to the situation in South Asia. Therefore, you wish each of the senior members of the Washington Special Actions Group to hear from you personally where you stand on this difficult issue:

—Your policy and the policy of the United States Government is to undertake those practical steps which are necessary to prevent the dismemberment and defeat of Pakistan as a result of Indian military

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. The President's Daily Diary indicates that the meeting was held as scheduled in the Cabinet Room. (Ibid., White House Central Files) A tape recording of the meeting was made, but the tape is essentially unintelligible. (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of a conversation among Nixon, Irwin, Packard, Helms, Moorer, and Kissinger, December 9, 1971, 4:41–4:54 p.m., Cabinet Room, Conversation No. 86–1)

action supported and abetted by the Soviet Union. There should be no mistake that Pakistan's collapse and dismemberment would result in a major setback for U.S. interests worldwide and, in this context, the United States is indeed involved in the situation in South Asia.

—The first step which you wish taken without further delay is to have the Acting Secretary of State call in the Indian Ambassador and to inform him that the United States Government is gravely concerned about recent developments on the subcontinent.

—In the meeting with the Indian Ambassador, the Acting Secretary of State should ask whether India will attempt, as a result of military operations in West Pakistan, to annex or in any other way to occupy and permanently hold territories which are now under Pakistani sovereignty. Any attempt to do so would be taken most seriously in Washington.

—Inform the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that you wish him to undertake immediate actions under the pretext of prudent contingency measures to move a carrier task force including an amphibious ship with helicopters to the Indian Ocean with movement to commence immediately. (Admiral Moorer recommends the movement of a carrier with four destroyers to be followed by an amphibious helicopter ship and two destroyers. The elements of the task force are currently in the Western Pacific in the vicinity of Taiwan, Subic in the Philippines and the Yankee Station. Admiral Moorer anticipates that the movements can get under way now without surfacing publicly until such time as they pass through the Straits of Singapore which we can control. The shortest time for them to reach the Straits would be two days.)

—Inform the group that in the event the *démarche* to the Indian Government does *not* receive a satisfactory response, you wish the Department of Defense to prepare by 9:00 a.m. in the morning specific recommendations for additional military actions which might be undertaken to convey U.S. determination.

—In view of the great sensitivity of the matters being discussed, you want each Department and Agency involved to handle this affair with the greatest sense of security and will tolerate no leaks of any kind, and prompt disciplinary action is to be taken against any violators.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kissinger called U. Alexis Johnson after the meeting and told him that the President had "raised hell" during the meeting. According to Kissinger, Nixon said "he didn't want the State Department to be loyal to the President but to the U.S." He was concerned about leaks by the Department of State to the press, and he felt that his decisions were not being properly implemented by the Department. Johnson objected that there was no intention to challenge policy, but added: "We do think we have an obligation to give him our views." Kissinger responded: "After he has ruled then it has to be done. You have given your views—yesterday he wanted a cable to Keating. That thing takes forever. Yelling at Yahya takes two hours." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

—For the present, you are ordering no additional measures. However, Dr. Kissinger will convey to the Washington Special Actions Group tomorrow morning whatever additional instructions you deem appropriate.

—Thank the Group for their cooperation and loyalty during this difficult period and emphasize again the importance of utmost security.

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**259. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 9, 1971.

1. Please arrange a meeting with President Yahya on an urgent basis and convey to him the following operative paragraphs of a note received from the Soviet Union today.<sup>2</sup> No one in our bureaucracy is aware of the note and you should not leave it with him.

“The thing to do now is to stop the war already underway. This requires a cease-fire. But the question arises—what is the best way to achieve it? It seems to us that, proceeding from the situation which developed from the very start, effective can be such a cease-fire which would be connected with a simultaneous decision for a political settlement, based on the recognition of the will of the East Pakistani population. Otherwise it is impossible to ensure the respect for the lawful rights and interests of the people of East Pakistan and to create conditions for the return of the millions of refugees. Without it a cease-fire will not be stable.

“You already know about this proposal of ours, i.e. to solve together and simultaneously both questions—of cease-fire and of immediate resumption of negotiations between the Government of Pakistan and the East Pakistani leaders concerning a political settlement in East Pakistan. Those negotiations should, naturally, be started from the stage at which they were discontinued. We feel that this proposal provides a way out for all, including Pakistan. On the other hand, all would

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. No time of transmission appears on the message; received in the White House Situation Room at 6:46 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Document 253.

lose—and Pakistan maybe even more than others—on the way of continuing the war and rejecting a political settlement.”

2. You should also tell President Yahya that we are under no delusions concerning Soviet aims. On the other hand, it would seem that their proposal has the following advantages:

—It would gain time and preclude the possibility of destruction of the Pakistani army. The proposal would give Pakistan time. If hostilities resumed India would be in a much worse international position and Pakistan forces would have had a breathing spell.

—It commits the Soviet Union not to recognize the Bangla Desh.

—It indicates a measure of disassociation of the Soviet Union from India.

It is conceivable that the Soviet proposal could serve as the basis for negotiations, provided that:

—it is understood that they are being conducted in the framework of a united Pakistan which is implied by the Soviet note;

—the Soviet Union agrees that India commit itself to immediate withdrawal after negotiations;

—the Soviets give convincing demonstrations that they are urging restraint on the Indians;

—the wishes of Pakistan are taken into consideration in determining which individuals will negotiate as “East Pakistani leaders.”

3. You should emphasize that the above message is conveyed by the United States as a friend who wants to help preserve Pakistan and should not in any way be construed as pressure from the United States.

4. You may also tell President Yahya that we are actively talking about moving military supplies from other sources.

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## 260. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 9, 1971, 0036Z.

221794. Subject: Pak Appeal for U.S. Assistance.

1. Pak Ambassador Raza called on Asst Secy Sisco December 8 to deliver urgent appeal for U.S. assistance. Depy Asst Secy Van Hollen

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 575, Indo-Pak War, South Asia Military Supply, 11/23/71–12/31/71. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by W. Scott Butcher (NEA/PAF) on December 8, cleared by Laingen and Van Hollen, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to New Delhi.

and Butcher, NEA/PAF sat in. Raza raised following points: (a) Pakistan facing grave difficulties in East Pakistan, especially lack of air cover and ammo; (b) Soviets heavily committed on side of Indians (according info available to Paks Soviets are manning missile sites in India and in one instance Soviet pilot seen flying Indian plane in India); (c) activity at UN proves other “Western Communist” nations also siding with Indians and Russians against Paks and additionally there indications a “Bangla Desh” would be Communist influenced; and (d) having formally recognized fact of Indian aggression, and in light of links between Soviets and Indians, U.S. “obliged” come to Pakistan’s assistance in this case.

2. Raza referred to 1959 bilateral<sup>2</sup> but said main point was willingness U.S. help Pakistan in hour of need, not specific treaty commitments which might be subject to differing interpretations. Noting that “We depend on you entirely,” Raza said he understood U.S. unable provide manpower but that U.S. could provide armaments, either directly or indirectly via third countries. Raza referred to Yahya’s letter of December second<sup>3</sup> to President Nixon and expressed hope U.S. could respond promptly to Pakistan’s appeal for assistance (at several points he reiterated urgency of request).<sup>4</sup>

3. Sisco expressed understanding of the difficulties facing Pakistan and assured Raza that we will give this matter our active consideration. Although noting that his remarks should not be taken to prejudge matter, Sisco commented that this difficult problem for US as well and hoped Paks realized USG faced difficulties posed by some who criticize our policy as being “pro-Pakistan.” Raza replied that Paks understood, but this was life and death matter.

4. Raza referred to overwhelming majority voting in favor of ceasefire/withdrawal in UNGA and stated “by and large world is with us—that gives you a lever.” Any action U.S. would take to aid Paks would have UN backing.

5. Following is full text of aide mémoire Raza submitted during call:

“I have been instructed by my government to approach the U.S. Government and point out that different interpretations could always

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 9, Document 218.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 219.

<sup>4</sup> Raza reiterated his appeal in a meeting with Under Secretary Johnson on December 10. Using undiplomatically blunt language, Raza said that the U.S. had let Pakistan down in the past by trying to adopt a neutral stance between Pakistan and India. He expressed the hope that the U.S. would not do so again. (Telegram 223548 to Islamabad, December 11; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 627, Country Files, Middle East, Pakistan, Vol. VIII, Nov–Dec 71)

be given to treaty commitments should a contracting party desire to avoid involvement. The main question at the moment is whether or not U.S.A. is willing to help Pakistan at this most critical juncture. Pakistan fully appreciates the political support given to her by President Nixon and the administration. But because of deep and open Soviet involvement, mere political support is not enough.

U.S.A. has now recognized formally that aggression has been committed against Pakistan. It has also been established that Soviet Union has abetted and assisted Indian aggression. Mr. Jacob Malik, the Soviet representative, admitted in the Security Council that Soviet security interests were linked with those of India. Further, authoritative sources have stated that Soviet personnel were flying Soviet supplied Indian aircrafts inside Indian territory and were manning Indian missile sites.

Pakistan supported the U.N. General Assembly resolution<sup>5</sup> adopted by an overwhelming majority early this morning for immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of troops etc. The U.N. General Assembly action demonstrates that the world public opinion, except for a few Communist countries, is totally against Indian aggression.

The government of Pakistan is grateful to the Government of the United States for the incessant efforts of the U.S. representative both in the Security Council and in the U.N. General Assembly to bring about immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of troops. It is apparent from the negative Soviet attitude and Indian representative's statements in the U.N. Security Council and the U.N. General Assembly refusing to stop hostilities and withdraw Indian troops, that the United Nations is unable to stop aggression. U.S. had gone to the United Nations with the avowed objective of restoring peace in the sub-continent, but, since the United Nations has failed, the U.S. Government should do all it possibly can for the realisation of its objective for which it took the matter to the U.N. Security Council and U.N. General Assembly. It may be noted that time factor is of greatest importance.

The bilateral US-Pakistan agreement calls upon the United States to take necessary steps for the preservation of territorial integrity and independence of Pakistan. The Indian aggression abetted and supported by the Soviet Union posed the gravest threat to Pakistan's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote 11, Document 248.



It is requested that the U.S. Government may please quickly decide in what manner the U.S. can extend material assistance to Pakistan.<sup>6</sup>

December 8, 1971.”

**Irwin**

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<sup>6</sup> Ambassador Farland urged that in framing a response to Pakistan’s appeal policymakers in Washington obtain as accurate a reading as possible of Indian intentions beyond the conflict in East Pakistan. He noted that there was a strongly held conviction in West Pakistan that the ultimate Indian objective was to inflict a decisive military defeat on Pakistan’s forces throughout Pakistan. (Telegram 12278 from Islamabad, December 9; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

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## **261. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 9, 1971, 0152Z.

221830. Ref: New Delhi 18944.<sup>2</sup> Subj: East Pakistan: Minorities, Pak Army, Third Country Nationals.

1. We were interested in your conversation with DefSec K.B. Lall as we have been increasingly concerned about possibility of major bloodletting directed at non-Bengali minorities and remnants of Pak forces. We also have major concern in regard security third country nationals in Dacca.

2. We welcome Lall’s statement that India considers it is responsible for safeguarding lives of Biharis and Punjabis. We hope GOI will

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Schneider on December 8; cleared by Laingen, Chief of the Evacuation and Relocation Staff James P. McDonnell (A/OPR/WLG), Under Secretary Johnson, and in the White House by Saunders and Kissinger; and approved by Sisco. Also sent to Islamabad and repeated to Calcutta, Dacca, London, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 18944 from New Delhi, December 8, reported on a conversation between Ambassador Keating and Defense Secretary Lall in which Lall said that humanitarian considerations dictated that the conflict in East Pakistan should be brought to an end as soon as possible. India wished to avoid further casualties. Lall said that if there was an orderly takeover, India would assume responsibility for safeguarding the lives of the Biharis and Punjabis. (Ibid.)

take whatever action is possible to fulfill this responsibility, including impressing on authorities under its control need to begin process of public reassurance.

3. In regard to Pak army, see septel<sup>3</sup> regarding Lall's "personal suggestion" to end conflict in East Pakistan. We note GOI appeals for surrender to Indian forces and welcome Indian assurances that prisoners will be given protection of Geneva Convention.

4. We are greatly concerned over security of third country nationals. In view of difficulties we are facing in regard to evacuation, we recognize possibility some such nationals will remain in Dacca throughout conflict and will require careful protection.

5. *For New Delhi:* You should seek urgent appointment with Fon-Sec Kaul to discuss these matters. During your conversation you should repeat statements made by K.B. Lall in regard to Indian responsibility for safeguarding lives of Biharis and Punjabis. You should indicate our great concern that retaliation against Biharis be prevented, concern which General Assembly resolution indicates is shared by world community as a whole. You should press for categorical and explicit affirmation by Kaul of GOI responsibility already accepted by Lall.

6. You should also raise subject of protection of military prisoners indicating that we have noted GOI statements that prisoners will be given protection of Geneva Convention. You should note that attention of world community will similarly be focused on this issue; that we presume GOI will make maximum effort prevent Bangla Desh retaliation against remnants of Pak forces.

7. In regard third country nationals, you should say that we are in close touch with UN in continuing to try air evacuation, but military situation and condition of Dacca runways may prevent this. In the event that air evacuation possible, UN may make urgent short-notice request of GOI for ceasefire and guarantee of safety for airlift. In the event air evacuation is not feasible we will ask GOI to ensure that Indian forces and Mukti Bahini are notified that special efforts should be made to protect third country nationals who will probably be collected in identified areas. GOI will recognize protection of these nationals will be of great importance to international community and UN.

8. *For Islamabad:* If you believe it is possible, we believe it would be also highly desirable if you could convey to GOP our humanitarian concerns with respect to minorities and our hope that Pakistan Army

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<sup>3</sup> Reference is to telegram 18944; see footnote 2 above.

and administration will avoid actions which could intensify already inflamed communal animosities. We recognize this is extremely sensitive subject and leave it to your discretion how and at what level such points might be got across.

Irwin

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**262. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 10, 1971, 0113Z.

222636. 1. Under Secretary accompanied by Sisco called in Jha, accompanied by Verma, First Secretary.

2. Irwin said the United States is deeply concerned over the current developments in South Asia and wishes to ask the Ambassador what Indian intentions are. The US cannot countenance an Indian policy resulting in India's taking of any territory. That would have a most profound and long-lasting effect on US-Indian relations and require the US to consider the implications resulting from such an action. Irwin said he had been instructed to ask the Ambassador to obtain from his government the assurance that India has no intention of taking any territory, including any part of Azad Kashmir. He made clear that while not minimizing US concern over Indian policies and actions in East Pakistan he spoke with particular reference to West Pakistan.

3. Jha noted that India had recognized Bangla Desh, but there was no intention of annexation in the East or what he termed a protectorate relationship with Bangla Desh.

4. Jha continued that in the West there has never been any intention of territorial annexation. However, with respect to Azad Kashmir, he could not give any answer totally free of uncertainty. He said he would have to inquire of Delhi and he would be in touch with us as soon as possible. He noted that as in 1965 that Pak forces had moved into Kashmir. He said he thought one factor which would have to be weighed is how prolonged and how broadly [based] the fighting will be. Here we had the impression he was referring to the fighting in the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted on December 9 by Sisco and approved by Irwin. Also sent to Islamabad, Moscow, and to Brussels as Tosec 44 for the Secretary at NATO meetings.

East, since he added that if Bangla Desh fighting could be sorted out quickly without new factors intervening, India would possibly go along with an early normalization of the situation. He said this was only personal speculation on his part since he would have to report to his government and get their views.

5. Jha then asked what are the Pak aims? Under Secretary pointed out that Pak aims were made very clear today in note to Secretary General accepting General Assembly resolution calling for ceasefire and withdrawal.<sup>2</sup>

6. Meeting concluded with Irwin stressing we were approaching a most serious crisis in our relations and the Ambassador saying again he would be in touch with us soon as he heard from Delhi.

**Irwin**

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<sup>2</sup> Pakistan's acceptance of the General Assembly resolution was reported in telegram 4901 from USUN, December 10. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, Pakistan Chronology, Dr Kissinger)

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## 263. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 10, 1971, 9:45–10:17 a.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
 U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs  
 Admiral Thomas Moorer, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
 Richard Helms, Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
 Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs  
 Maurice Williams, Agency for International Development  
 Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, Pakistan, 12/12/71. Secret; Sensitive. No drafting information appears on the memorandum. The meeting was held in the Situation Room at the White House.

Kissinger: The President read in the news summary<sup>2</sup> that American planes were attacked by the Indians.

Johnson: This was several days ago. It's been protested.

Moorer: Many are being killed in the West in ships.

Kissinger: They are asking also for withdrawal of India's troops.<sup>3</sup>

Johnson: Not as a condition.

Kissinger: Where does this lead us?

Johnson: I talked with George Bush. The UN has received it and has asked the Security Council to decide on it. Only the Chinese haven't been in on it.<sup>4</sup> Joe has the scenarios. We should send a flash message to Farland to confirm that this is Yahya's view. We should bypass the Security Council. It's quicker to do it by the Secretary General. We should get the UN Indian rep on the ground to talk with the Pak Generals. The Secretary General should tell his man.

Kissinger: The President feels we are obliged to call for a ceasefire in the West. We should demand a ceasefire in the West. It must be clearly understood that our policy is to get a ceasefire in the West. We'll make a treaty if necessary.

Sisco: Let's tell Yahya in a message that this is what we plan to do, and does he agree?

Kissinger: If there is a ceasefire now, we don't have to worry about the territorial question in the West.

Johnson: This goes right along with the UNGA resolution.<sup>5</sup>

Sisco: Add a sentence to the cable.<sup>6</sup> Tell Yahya he can assume if this is his proposal, he can assume it is based on a ceasefire in the West. We will go all out.

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<sup>2</sup> The news summary prepared for the President on December 9 contained an item based on a televised report of Indian aircraft having attacked two neutral planes in Pakistan. One plane belonged to the UN, the other to the United States. Nixon penned an instruction to Kissinger in the margin that reads: "K—State *immediately* is to file a strong *public protest* on this—(India always protested our V. Nam actions even though they were not involved at all)". (Ibid., White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Annotated News Summaries, December 9–24, 1971)

<sup>3</sup> The discussion at this point apparently relates to telegram 5573 from Dacca, December 10. That telegram reported that UN Special Assistant Paul Marc Henry had received from the commander of the Pakistani forces, Major General Rao Farman Ali Khan, a copy of a message Farman sent to President Yahya asking him to approve a request by Farman for the UN to arrange for an immediate cease-fire in East Pakistan. Yahya approved Farman's proposal, which stipulated the repatriation of Pakistani forces to West Pakistan, and asked for a guarantee of no reprisals. It was not an offer of surrender, and Farman's message indicated that if the offer was not accepted, Pakistani forces would continue to fight "to the last man." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK)

<sup>4</sup> See Document 274.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on December 7; see footnote 11, Document 248.

<sup>6</sup> For text of this telegram, as sent to Ambassador Farland, see Document 264.

Kissinger: I assume they did this in the East because they are finished.

Moorer: With only 3–4 days left, there is time for the Indians to regroup.

Williams: They'll fight to the death. The Indians are close now.

[omission in the source text]: The situation is hopeless.

Kissinger: We don't want to be the instrument pushing a Pakistani surrender, when the Chinese are on their side. Bush shouldn't do anything until we hear from Yahya.

Sisco: We don't want it in the Security Council again. We'll negotiate down from the resolutions.

Kissinger: Why not make Soviets put up?

Johnson: We're apt to get into a long debate and lose track of what's happening on the ground.

Sisco: The Paks have taken the initiative.

Kissinger: The President doesn't want us to move in the UN to arrange a surrender. Take a tough line with the Indians. If the Paks want it, we will help.

Helms: If we want West Pakistan tied in, we have to go to the Security Council. If there is an early agreement on what the Paks want in the East, we can move outside of the Security Council.

Kissinger: We want to stop the attack in West Pakistan. There is no objection to this proposal but we must prevent an attack in the West. Get a flash to Farland to get Yahya's views. Tell him it is our judgment we should use it as a basis for a ceasefire in the West.

Sisco: Assume the Pakistani proposal is that Yahya wants a ceasefire in West. We will be helpful with the Indians to this end.

Kissinger: We must prevent the destruction of the Pak Army in the West. We don't want our Ambassador to press Yahya to surrender.

Sisco: There is no danger of that. Farland wouldn't do that.

Moorer: We should give Yahya our judgment that his army can be destroyed in three weeks. He doesn't see that.

Sisco: Let me make a language suggestion: We assume the Pakistani proposal was based on the assumption that Pakistan is ready for a ceasefire in the West as well. Please confirm, and indicate that we are prepared to weigh in heavily with the Indians and others to bring this about if this is Yahya's desire.

Kissinger: The Indians must know our priority area and the Russians must know we are serious.

Moorer: How about the integrity of the border?

Sisco: Some mutual withdrawals will be necessary in the West but it means the Indians can't take any Pakistani territory.

[omission in the source text]: Previous borders good.

Johnson: The Indians want to straighten out the border. We should add the status quo ante to the telegram.

Kissinger: We must be sure Yahya sees we are not turning on him.

Packard: They don't know where they are up there.

Johnson: He accepted the General Assembly resolution which calls for that.

Sisco: It won't remove any danger. Leave it fuzzy.

[omission in the source text]: It's o.k. at this time.

Kissinger: Couldn't we just say "Does this mean he is ready for a ceasefire in the West as well? If so, we are willing to make a major effort to bring this about to help preserve his territorial integrity and prevent the destruction of his army. Please respond FLASH."

[All agree. Final text is attached at Tab A.]<sup>7</sup>

Kissinger: Back to the UN: Bush is to be clearly told that we should take no stance which suggests we are supporting the surrender of Pakistan. He should be one step back of what the Pakistanis say.

Sisco: Bhutto asked to see the President. We got an interesting cable from the DCM.<sup>8</sup>

Kissinger: I saw it. Bhutto's comments are interesting. The DCM's comments suggested he's thinking of reconciliation with India. The President may be willing to see him—I don't know. It couldn't be sooner than Wednesday.

Sisco: Should the Secretary and Henry see him sooner? The Secretary returns tonight.

Kissinger: What is the Security Council problem?

Sisco: The document<sup>9</sup> is circulated. I don't know whether the Secretary General has convened the Security Council. If we temporize—

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<sup>7</sup> Brackets in the source text. The attached text is identical to the final paragraph of the telegram sent to Farland; Document 264.

<sup>8</sup> Sober met with newly designated Deputy Prime Minister Bhutto in Rawalpindi on December 7, the eve of Bhutto's trip to New York to participate in the UN debate on South Asia. To help facilitate a settlement to the crisis, Bhutto said that he was prepared to seek an accommodation with Awami League leaders, including negotiations with Mujib. At the appropriate time he was also prepared to go to New Delhi to seek a reconciliation with India. Bhutto added that while he was in the United States he hoped to meet with President Nixon in Washington to discuss the crisis in South Asia. (Telegram 12205 from Islamabad, December 8; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 PAK)

<sup>9</sup> Apparent reference to the December 9 letter from Pakistan's Permanent Representative Ambassador Shahi to the Secretary-General informing him that Pakistan had decided to accept the General Assembly's call for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of troops, and expressing the hope that UN observers would be stationed along both sides of the border to supervise the cease-fire and withdrawals. (UN doc. S/10440)

have Bush say we haven't decided whether a Security Council meeting is indicated—while we are checking the authenticity of the request. If Yahya wants it and the Secretary General then goes to the Indians, saying they are ready to talk. . . .

Kissinger: Suppose the President wants to go to the Security Council and insist we will cooperate only if there is a ceasefire in the West. This is like the Soviet resolution.<sup>10</sup> If the choice is between stop in the East but not in the West or an end of action in the West, there may be no need to pursue withdrawal anymore except as a negotiating ploy.

Williams: An honorable withdrawal for Pak forces from the West [East] is a key point.

Helms: Let's get out the message.

[The meeting ended.]<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Apparent reference to the draft resolution introduced in the General Assembly on December 7 by the Soviet Representative that called upon Pakistan to effect a political settlement in East Pakistan by recognizing the will of the population of East Pakistan as expressed in the elections of December 1970. The Soviet resolution called for a cease-fire, but did not address the issue of withdrawal. (UN doc. A/L.648)

<sup>11</sup> Brackets in the source text.

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## 264. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 10, 1971, 1539Z.

222703. Islamabad for Ambassador.

You will have seen Dacca 5573.<sup>2</sup> Contact Yahya immediately. Confirm whether this is the bona fide Pak position. If so ask him whether he would like us to be helpful vis-à-vis the UN with communications and otherwise.

Does this mean that Yahya is ready for a cease-fire in the West? If he is, we want him to know that we are ready to make a major effort

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Flash. Drafted by Sisco and approved by U. Alexis Johnson. Repeated to New Delhi, Dacca, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 3, Document 263.



to bring it about in order to preserve Pakistan territorial integrity and armed forces.

Please respond flash.<sup>3</sup>

Irwin

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<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Farland contacted Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan who consulted with President Yahya and confirmed Pakistan's request for a UN-organized cease-fire in East Pakistan. Sultan Khan said that Pakistan was also ready for a UN-monitored cease-fire in the west, to be followed by negotiations to effect a troop withdrawal and a settlement of the war. (Telegram 12355 from Islamabad, December 10; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

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**265. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 10, 1971, 10:53 a.m.

You will be receiving flash instructions through regular channels concerning Pakistani proposal for immediate ceasefire.<sup>2</sup> The President has directed that future scenario be within the framework of the proposal which I provided to you within this channel.<sup>3</sup> Above all, no actions should be undertaken within regular channels that have not been previously cleared with President via this channel. There is to be no additional pressure on Yahya.

In everything we do with Yahya, we cannot have it said that we stabbed Pakistan in the back. This must be your guiding principle on each issue from this point on.

Warm regards.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 264.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 259.

**266. Editorial Note**

President Nixon met with Henry Kissinger in the Oval Office of the White House at 10:51 a.m. on December 10, 1971, for another discussion of the crisis in South Asia. The conversation began with Nixon and Kissinger talking about the protest the Department of State was instructed to make concerning the strafing of United States planes on the ground in Pakistan by the Indian Air Force. Nixon wanted to make certain that the protest had been made. Kissinger again suggested that the Department did not promptly or effectively carry out White House instructions. He said: "I want to tell you what I have done, tentatively, subject to your approval. They've got this East Pakistan, they've got the offer of the commander of the Pakistan forces in East Pakistan to get a cease-fire and so forth. They [the Department of State] were going to run to the Security Council and get that done. We don't want to be in a position where we push the Pakistanis over the cliff. So I told them to link the cease-fire in the east with the cease-fire in the west." Kissinger said that the cease-fire in the east was "down the drain." He added: "the major problem now is protect the west." Nixon agreed: "Yeah." Kissinger continued: "I've got Vorontsov coming in at 11:30 and I'm going to tell him that what the Pakistanis did in the east was as a result of what we did. Which is true. I'm going to show him the Kennedy understanding. I'm going to hand him a very tough note to Brezhnev and say this is it now, let's settle the, let's get a cease-fire now. That's the best that can be done now. They'll lose half of their country, but at least they preserve the other half." Nixon agreed that "our desire is to save West Pakistan."

Nixon asked for an assurance that the necessary steps were being taken to "keep those carriers [*sic*] moving." Kissinger assured him that "everything is moving." In addition to the carrier group, Kissinger reported that "four Jordanian planes have already moved to Pakistan, twenty-two more are coming. We're talking to the Saudis, the Turks we've now found are willing to give five."

Later in the conversation Nixon asked when Kissinger planned to meet with the Chinese. Kissinger replied that he was meeting with them that afternoon at 5:30. Nixon asked what would be discussed and Kissinger replied: "I'm going to tell them what forces we're moving." Nixon said: "Could you say it would be very helpful if they could move some forces, or threaten to move some forces." Kissinger said: "Absolutely." Nixon added: "They've got to threaten or they've got to move, one of the two. You know what I mean? Kissinger replied: "Yeah." Nixon continued: "Threaten to move forces or move them, Henry, that's what they must do now. Now, goddammit, we're playing our role and that will restrain India. And also tell them this will help

us get the cease-fire." He indicated that he did not want to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union that China would reject. Kissinger agreed and added: "If we stay strong, even if it comes out badly, we'll have come out well with the Chinese, which is important."

Casting about for other sources of support for Pakistan, Nixon asked whether France could be encouraged to sell planes to Pakistan. The conversation then turned to the impending talks between Nixon and French President Pompidou in the Azores on monetary issues.

Nixon said: "Coming back to this India–Pakistan thing, have we got anything else we can do?" Kissinger replied: "I think we're going to crack it now." Nixon asked: "Well, the Indians will be warned by the Chinese, right?" Kissinger replied: "Well, I'll have to find out tonight." Nixon said: "You do your best, Henry. This should have been done long ago. The Chinese have not warned the Indians. They haven't warned them that they're going to come in. And that's the point, they've got to warn them. . . . All they've got to do is move something. Move their, move a division. You know, move some trucks. Fly some planes. You know, some symbolic act. We're not doing a goddamn thing, Henry, you know that. We're just moving things around, aren't we?" Kissinger agreed: "Yeah."

Nixon said: "These Indians are cowards, right?" Kissinger replied: "Right, but with Russian backing. You see the Russians have sent notes to Iran, Turkey, to a lot of countries threatening them. The Russians have played a miserable game." In response to Nixon's question, Kissinger said the Russian threats were vague rather than specific. He felt that the Soviet Union would change course in light of Nixon's conversation with Matskevich.

Looking ahead, Nixon posed the question of whether the United States should recognize the emerging political reality in East Pakistan. "What do we do about that? Are we going to just say . . . Indian occupation or Bangladesh? Or what? Are we going to oppose Bangladesh recognition? What's our position? Is anybody involved on these things?" He added that what was lacking was a plan outlining "how we want it come out." Kissinger responded: "After the Brezhnev letter came yesterday, we sent a copy of it to Yahya. . . . And now Yahya has come back with a proposal saying cease-fire, negotiations for mutual withdrawal, and negotiations to settle the political future. . . . And then what will happen on Bangladesh, Mr. President, is that whatever West Pakistan and these people work out we will accept. But we will not be in the fore, in the front." Nixon asked: "Whatever West Pakistan works out with whom?" Kissinger replied: "The negotiations on East Pakistan." Nixon said: "But India will not agree to negotiations on East Pakistan." Kissinger replied: "Yeah, but the Russians have already agreed to it. So what will happen, let's be realistic, what will happen is that the representatives of East Pakistan will demand independence.

And in practice I think that is what West Pakistan will then agree to. But then it won't be us who have done it. This will solve the problem of do we recognize Bangladesh against the wishes of the Pakistan Government." Nixon said: "We must never recognize Bangladesh . . . until West Pakistan gives us the go ahead."

In concluding, Nixon said: "I want a program of aid to West Pakistan formulated immediately. . . . We cannot let them hang out there by themselves." He observed that while he was constrained from sending military assistance to Pakistan, the United States could encourage others to do so. He could provide economic assistance recognizing that Pakistan could convert such assistance to military purposes. Nixon concurred with Kissinger's observation that "we have to continue to squeeze the Indians, even when this thing is settled." Nixon instructed that economic assistance programmed for India be reprogrammed to help pay for war damage suffered by Pakistan. Nixon also angrily instructed that a concerted effort be made to publicize India's role in the crisis: "Get a white paper out. . . . I want the Indians blamed for this, you know what I mean? We can't let these goddamn sanctimonious Indians get away with this. . . . Here they are raping and murdering. They talk about West Pakistan. These Indians are pretty vicious." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 10, 1971, 10:51–11:12 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 635–8) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 172.

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## 267. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 10, 1971.

### SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* The war in the East has reached its final stages. The Indian forces are encircling Dacca and preparing for the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

final assault if the Pak forces in the capital area refuse to surrender. Pak resistance elsewhere in the province appears on the verge of total collapse, although they continue to hold some isolated areas. Faced with this desperate situation, the top Pak military official in Dacca has called on the UN to arrange (a) peaceful transfer of power to the "elected representatives of East Pakistan," (b) an immediate cease-fire, (c) repatriation of the Pak forces to West Pakistan, (d) repatriation of all other West Pak personnel who desire to leave, (e) the safety of the others settled in East Pakistan since 1947 and (f) a guarantee of no reprisals.

In the West, the Indians seem to be successfully repulsing Pak attacks in Kashmir, but show no signs yet of initiating a major offensive of their own. Repeated Indian air strikes and shellings from naval forces on Karachi have dealt a major blow to Pakistan's POL supply. One experienced observer on the spot judges that under optimum conditions West Pakistan may run out of key POL items in about two weeks and, under the most likely combination of circumstances, supplies will dry up even sooner. In the Lahore and other areas to the north, the Indian air attacks are concentrating more heavily on communications, the power infrastructure and more direct military targets. Some observers think that the purpose of these heavy air attacks is to soften up West Pakistan for an all-out Indian ground offensive as soon as the situation is under control in the East. There are some unconfirmed reports that the Indians may already be beginning the process of shifting aircraft and troops to the Western front.

On the sea, the Paks have apparently given up trying to contest the approaches to their ports in both the East and West. The Paks, from Yahya on down, are charging that Soviet technicians<sup>2</sup> are aboard the OSA missile boats which have sunk a Pak destroyer and attacked the Karachi port area.

According to a reliable clandestine source, Mrs. Gandhi has said that there are "some indications" that the Chinese intend to intervene militarily. She did not reveal her evidence, but reportedly said that the Chinese may create border incidents in the East before the fall of Dacca and later take some action in the contested Ladakh area near Kashmir. So far, we have no evidence that the Chinese are actually planning such actions.

The UN could soon be seized with the Pak cease-fire request. Pakistan has also formally accepted the General Assembly resolution and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Bhutto is arriving in New York to lead the Pak delegation. Before he left Islamabad, Bhutto said he would like to see you while he is in the U.S. and Yahya has expressed his hope that you can do this. Mrs. Gandhi, at a mass student

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<sup>2</sup> President Nixon circled Soviet technicians and added a handwritten marginal comment at this point which reads: "K—This must get out."

rally today, said that India "neither accepted nor rejected" the General Assembly resolution,<sup>3</sup> but was giving it "serious consideration." Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh and Foreign Secretary T.N. Kaul are on their way to New York.

The Indians have announced a bombing pause over both Dacca and Karachi for evacuation purposes. Evacuation planes will be given safe conduct into Karachi for four-hour periods today and tomorrow and the Dacca airport is to be free from attacks for 24 hours so that it can be repaired. Foreign evacuation planes bound for Dacca will then be given safe conduct for 10 hours on Saturday on the condition that they land at Calcutta before and after going to Dacca. UN personnel reportedly will remain behind in Dacca for possible assistance in arranging a cease-fire or surrender.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>3</sup> The President underlined the portion of this sentence that begins with neither and concludes with resolution and added a handwritten marginal comment which reads: "K—Keep the 'world opinion' heat on India."

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## 268. Editorial Note

According to Henry Kissinger's Daily Schedule, he was to meet with Soviet Chargé Yuli Vorontsov at 11:35 a.m. on December 10, 1971, and did so at 11:58. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) In his memoirs Kissinger writes that at this meeting he outlined a modified United States proposal for a settlement of the crisis. The proposal no longer called for a withdrawal of Indian forces. It stipulated a cease-fire and standstill agreement to be monitored by United Nations representatives in both wings of Pakistan. After the cease-fire took effect, there would be negotiations directed at troop withdrawals and the satisfaction of Bengali aspirations. (*White House Years*, page 905) Kissinger noted that he also conveyed to Vorontsov the text of the letter Nixon sent to Brezhnev on December 10 (Document 269). The only other record of this meeting that has been found is a tape recording of Kissinger's report on the meeting to Nixon shortly thereafter.

Kissinger told President Nixon that after their meeting, Vorontsov had needed no further proof of United States resolve. He said that "we got the message loud and clear from the President yesterday." Vorontsov added: "I can tell you informally that if they are not

working through the night now in Moscow, they are not doing their duty." Kissinger concluded: "We're going to get it." He said he had underlined the significance of the understanding President Kennedy had with President Ayub about coming to Pakistan's assistance. "I showed him the secret treaty. I said now I hope you understand the significance of this. It isn't just an obligation. It will completely defuse the Democrats because they are not going to attack their own President. So I said when the President yesterday spoke of an obligation he was speaking of a Kennedy obligation. . . . He said within an hour this will be on Mr. Brezhnev's desk. And I told him we're moving some military forces, but it will not be visible until Sunday night. . . . In effect, it was giving him sort of veiled ultimatum."

Nixon said: "If Brezhnev does not have the good judgment not to push us to the wall on this miserable issue, . . . we just may as well forget the summit." Kissinger's judgment was that "by Sunday night or Monday" (December 12–13) there would be an acceptable cease-fire. He said: "I think that the Russians will agree with us to call for one." The Chinese would accept such a proposal, he assured Nixon, "because we've got Yahya. What we are proposing to the Russians, Yahya gave us." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 10, 1971, 12:47 a.m.–1:01 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 635–17) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 173.

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## 269. Letter From President Nixon to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 10, 1971.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have carefully noted the contents of your letter of December 8, 1971.<sup>2</sup> My own views of the basic issues involved in the conflict on the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 497, President's Trip Files, Exchange of Notes Between Dobrynin and Kissinger, Vol. 2. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Document 253.

Indian Subcontinent were expressed in my previous letter<sup>3</sup> and in my conversation with your Minister of Agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

The situation is constantly deteriorating and as it does the adverse implications grow for our relations and for progress toward a stable international peace.

The proposals, contained in your letter, concerning the political evolution of East Pakistan appear to be being met. Pakistan's actions today in this respect were largely due to our influence initiated immediately upon receipt of your letter.

This must now be followed by an immediate cease-fire in the West. If this does not take place, we would have to conclude that there is in progress an act of aggression directed at the whole of Pakistan, a friendly country toward which we have obligations.

I therefore propose an immediate joint appeal for a complete cease-fire.

Meanwhile, I urge you in the strongest terms to restrain India with which, by virtue of your treaty, you have great influence and for whose actions you must share responsibility.

Sincerely,

**Richard Nixon**

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<sup>3</sup> Document 236.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 257.

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**270. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 10, 1971, 1:27 p.m.

K: I just spoke with the President before going off. I think this is basically clear but I wanted to be sure there was no ambiguity left. It seems to us that basically your proposal<sup>2</sup> is being accepted and therefore even harder to understand a delay in the joint action.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> An apparent reference to the proposal for a cease-fire put forward in Brezhnev's December 8 letter to Nixon (Document 253). The Soviet proposal also called for negotiations between Yahya Khan's government and East Pakistani leaders concerning a political settlement in East Pakistan.



V: I understand and I proceeded from that assumption.

K: So some formulation should begin between East and West Pakistan. It's not exact text but substance.

V: When I was reading the paper,<sup>3</sup> in what form this joint action should be.

K: [omission in the source text] Security Council?

V: That's clear.

K: Consider other proposals as well.

V: I will make that clarification.

K: The language you have is more precise than one I gave you.

V: I understand.

K: We will draft something in Security Council-type language and get it to you this afternoon.

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<sup>3</sup> An apparent reference to Nixon's December 10 letter to Brezhnev; Document 269.

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**271. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 10, 1971.

1. I met with Yahya in his residence at 1000 hrs. local Dec. 10 and conveyed to him the information contained in your message of Dec. 9.<sup>2</sup> Yahya's initial reaction was to indicate a lack of comprehension regarding exactly what was implied by the information conveyed. After I went over the entire subject again and reiterated salient points, Yahya still indicated strong objections because "Russia is giving India everything she wants."

2. I then undertook the hardest "sell job" of my life. After about 30 minutes I brought Yahya around to a point where he was making his own proposition. Except for the slightly different wording and the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Secret; Sensitive. The text of this message was conveyed to Haig in a December 10 memorandum. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Document 259.

fact it was his own proposal and not the Russian one, Yahya in fact "bought" the original proposal as delivered.

3. Yahya proposes that, subject to the provisos contained in paragraph 2 of your communication, (a) India and Pakistan should agree to an immediate ceasefire with the separate armed forces "standing fast"; and that the United Nations or other international organization provide observers to see that the ceasefire is effective; (b) that India and Pakistan "at any effective level" immediately open negotiations aimed at a settlement of the war and troop withdrawal; and coincident therewith simultaneously enter into negotiations looking towards the political satisfaction of Bengali aspirations, i.e., a political settlement.

4. I read the operative paragraph above to Yahya and he reaffirmed his position. Warm regards.

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**272. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 10, 1971.

Ref: [*message number not declassified*]<sup>2</sup>

We are making strongest *démarche* to Soviets today which proposes that they join with us in supporting provisos contained in my message of December 9<sup>3</sup> and paragraph 3 of your [*message number not declassified*] which provides (a) India and Pakistan should agree to an immediate ceasefire with the separate armed forces "standing fast"; and that the United Nations or other international organization provide observers to see that the ceasefire is effective; (b) that India and Pakistan "at any effective level" immediately open negotiations aimed at a settlement of the war and troop withdrawal; and coincident therewith negotiations be started looking towards the political satisfaction of Bengali aspirations; i.e., a political settlement.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1-10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. No time of transmittal appears on the message.

<sup>2</sup> Document 271.

<sup>3</sup> Document 259.

It is essential that Government of Pakistan refrain from making additional proposals until we have had opportunity to move within the above framework.

In discussing the foregoing procedure with Yahya, you should emphasize that the President has made the strongest démarche to the Soviets and included warning to them that we have obligations towards Pakistan which will not permit aggression against West Pakistan. President added that should Indian offensive be launched in the West, with Soviet acquiescence, a US/Soviet confrontation would ensue.

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**273. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 10, 1971.

Henry:

[*name not declassified*] called and said that the Jordanians have replied as follows. They will send four aircraft with Jordanian pilots immediately to Pakistan. The Paks asked for 12, but he will hold to four initially to see how it goes. He is prepared to go as high as 22 ultimately.

Attached is a message from Raza<sup>2</sup> referring to six F-5's which the Turks have apparently agreed to provide if the U.S. agrees.

**AH**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan, December 1–10. Top Secret; Sensitive.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed is a December 9 letter to Kissinger from Ambassador Raza.

274. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, December 10, 1971, 6:05–7:55 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Huang Hua, PRC Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Ambassador to Canada

Ch'en Ch'u, PRC Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Director, Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

T'ang Wen'sheng, Interpreter

Shih Yen-hua, Interpreter

Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Ambassador George Bush, US Representative to the United Nations

Brig. General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Winston Lord, Senior NSC Staff Member

Dr. Kissinger: I see you in the newspapers all the time. You're a great publicity expert. And very argumentative.

Ambassador Huang: No, I always argue in self-defense.

Ch'en Ch'u: He counterattacks in self-defense.

Dr. Kissinger: Preemptive attack.

Mr. Ambassador, what we have is not strictly UN business, but our contact in Paris is not there.

Miss T'ang: Mr. Walters?

Dr. Kissinger: He is not in Paris right now. He is going to be with the President in the Azores.

This may turn out to become UN business, but we wanted the Prime Minister urgently to know certain things we are doing. Therefore we have taken the liberty of this slightly irregular procedure. (Ambassador Huang nods.)

The apartment is slightly improved over last time. Next time we meet we will really have a suitable place. (Looking at a Chinese scroll on the wall) There seems to be a wandering Chinese painting that we hang up every time we have an apartment. (Chinese laughter.) I hope those sentences are friendly.

Ambassador Huang: I can't see them from such a distance.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 849, For the President's File, China Trip, China Exchanges, October 20, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. According to an attached memorandum from Lord to Kissinger, December 15, Lord drafted the memorandum and Kissinger approved it as accurate. Kissinger's account of this conversation with Huang Hua is in *The White House Years*, p. 906.

Ch'en Ch'u: (Looking at the scroll) It is an ancient poem.

Dr. Kissinger: I have some great colored pictures of you (Ch'en). I will send them to you. They were taken at the Great Wall.

Let me explain to you what we have done in various categories. Incidentally, just so everyone knows exactly what we do, we tell you about our conversations with the Soviets; we do not tell the Soviets about our conversations with you. In fact, we don't tell our own colleagues that I see you. George Bush is the only person outside the White House who knows I come here.

You know we have made a number of public declarations about India. I held what is known as a press backgrounder this week in which I pointed out that India is at fault. I will give you the text of it before you leave so that you can read it. And we will continue to pursue this line publicly.

You know what we have done in the United Nations so there is no point in reviewing this with you.

In addition we have taken other measures. We have canceled \$87 million of loans to India and \$14 million of military equipment.

Ambassador Huang: \$40 million or \$14 million?

Dr. Kissinger: \$14 million. But in addition, there is \$17 million due to be purchased which fell through because we aren't issuing new licenses. So the net cancellation amounted to \$31 million. In fact, we have canceled the entire military equipment line to India. There is no military equipment going to India. This means specifically we have canceled all radar equipment for defense in the north.

Then we have two other items due to be signed this week that we are not signing, and that we have no intention of signing. One is an agreement for \$72 million worth of food, PL 480.

Miss T'ang: PL 480?

Dr. Kissinger: That's a food program, a specific program. Another is \$100 million in loans. And we are working, using our influence, at the World Bank to defer loans of \$75 million which are becoming due. Our Ambassador (looking toward Bush) thinks we are never doing anything.

Ambassador Huang: You mean Mr. Bush thought that you are doing nothing?

Dr. Kissinger: He thinks we just sit in the White House and do nothing.

Ambassador Bush: I think I do all the work and that they do nothing.

Dr. Kissinger: What he really thinks is that we are pursuing an evenhanded policy. That's what our press spokesman says.

Now I want to tell the Ambassador, for the Prime Minister, about a number of communications we have had with the Soviet Union.

Ambassador Huang: You mean in the sense of the first question just discussed, i.e., the question of the India–Pakistan subcontinent?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, India–Pakistan. We have had the following contacts—the Soviet Ambassador is back in Moscow, so I have to deal with the Chargé. Last Sunday I called the Soviet Counsellor Vorontsov to the White House.

Miss T'ang: Soviet Counsellor?

Dr. Kissinger: Mr. Vorontsov. He's the Chargé. And I told him that the Soviets support of Indian aggression endangers the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States. Incidentally, these conversations are known only in the White House and only to you.

On Monday,<sup>2</sup> President Nixon sent a letter<sup>3</sup> to Secretary General Brezhnev in which he said that Indian aggression with Soviet support is unacceptable to the United States, and that if pursued this would complicate for a long time the international situation and would have an adverse effect—this is a quote—on the whole range of our relationships. (Ambassador Huang checks the translation.)

Mr. Brezhnev sent a reply<sup>4</sup>—we sent the letter December 6 and we received the reply December 9th in the morning. The letter was phrased in conciliatory language and it proposes a ceasefire and “an immediate”—this is quoting again—“resumption of negotiations between the Government of Pakistan and the East Pakistan leaders concerning a political settlement.” (Miss T'ang asks and Dr. Kissinger repeats)—this is a quote—“concerning a political settlement in East Pakistan.” The continuation of the—quote—“the negotiations should, naturally, be started from the stage at which they were discontinued.” I said this meant on the basis of a united Pakistan.

Miss T'ang: You said . . . ?

Dr. Kissinger: I said orally that on March 25 there was a united Pakistan, and he (Vorontsov) said yes. Incidentally, we inform the Pakistani Ambassador of everything we do. I don't know whether he informs you.

Yesterday, December 9, we learned that the Soviet Minister of Agriculture was in Washington and that he was a friend of Brezhnev who wanted to see the President.

Ambassador Huang: His name?

<sup>2</sup> December 6.

<sup>3</sup> Document 236.

<sup>4</sup> Document 253.

Dr. Kissinger: Matskevich. These gentlemen (the Chinese) have a file on everybody. Someday I must find out what they know about me; it is more than I do. (Ambassador Huang gestures in mock denial.)

During this discussion, which lasted 15 minutes and was primarily a statement by the President, the President emphasized that Pakistan is a friend of the United States and that if India were to continue its attacks and launch an attack against West Pakistan, it could lead to a US-Soviet confrontation.

Today, on December 10, we sent forward a reply to Brezhnev.<sup>5</sup> We pointed out that—this is based on the information we have that the Pakistani commander in East Pakistan has asked for a ceasefire—we said if there is not a ceasefire in West Pakistan as well, “we would have to conclude that there is in progress an act of aggression directed at the whole of Pakistan, a friendly country, toward which we have obligations.”

In order to underline what we have said, we worked with a number of countries to provide aid to Pakistan.

Ambassador Huang: But this is not in the letter that you are quoting.

Dr. Kissinger: No, I am telling you about this. This is terribly complex. We are barred by law from giving equipment to Pakistan in this situation. And we also are barred by law from permitting friendly countries which have American equipment to give their equipment to Pakistan.

So we have worked out the following arrangements with a number of countries. We have told Jordan and Iran and Saudi Arabia, and we will tell Turkey through a channel other than the ones with which Ambassador Bush is familiar. We said that if they decide that their natural security requires shipment of American arms to Pakistan, we are obliged to protest, but we will understand. We will not protest with great intensity. And we will make up to them in next year’s budget whatever difficulties they have.

On this basis, four planes are leaving Jordan today and 22 over the weekend. Ammunition and other equipment is going from Iran.

Ambassador Huang: You mean over the weekend?

Dr. Kissinger: We don’t know the exact time, but immediately we understand. And six planes from Turkey in the near future. This is very confidential obviously, and we are not eager for it to be known. At least not until Congress gets out of town tomorrow.

In addition, we are moving a number of naval ships in the West Pacific toward the Indian Ocean: an aircraft carrier accompanied by

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<sup>5</sup> Document 269.

four destroyers and a tanker, and a helicopter carrier and two destroyers. I have maps here showing the location of the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean if you are interested. These are much smaller ships. They are no match for the US ships. (Showing Ambassador Huang the map) Here is a merchant tanker . . . a submarine . . .

Ambassador Huang: (laughing) I'm no expert.

Dr. Kissinger: I'm not either. There is no difficulty.

There is not much in the Soviet fleet. What is the total number, Al? (to Haig) I've read it somewhere.

Ambassador Huang: There's a cruiser coming in now.

Dr. Kissinger: Their ships are not much.

I now come to a matter of some sensitivity. We have received a report that one of your personnel in a European country, in a conversation with another European, expressed uncertainty about the Soviet dispositions on your borders and a desire for information about them. We do not ourselves concentrate on tactical intelligence. We only have information about the general disposition, and we collect it at irregular intervals by satellite. But we would be prepared at your request, and through whatever sources you wish, to give you whatever information we have about the disposition of Soviet forces. I don't have it with me, but we can arrange it easily wherever you wish and in an absolutely secure way.

Secondly, the President wants you to know that it's, of course, up to the People's Republic to decide its own course of action in this situation, but if the People's Republic were to consider the situation on the Indian subcontinent a threat to its security, and if it took measures to protect its security, the US would oppose efforts of others to interfere with the People's Republic. We are not recommending any particular steps; we are simply informing you about the actions of others.

The movement of our naval forces is still East of the Straits of Malacca and will not become obvious until Sunday<sup>6</sup> evening when they cross the Straits.

I would like to give you our assessment of the military situation on the subcontinent. I don't know whether you have any assessments. I would like to give this to you and then tell you one other thing.

The Pakistani army in the East has been destroyed. The Pakistani army in the West will run out of what we call POL—gas and oil—in another two to three weeks, two weeks probably, because the oil storage capacity in Karachi has been destroyed. We think that the immediate objective must be to prevent an attack on the West Pakistan army

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<sup>6</sup> December 12.



by India. We are afraid that if nothing is done to stop it, East Pakistan will become a Bhutan and West Pakistan will become a Nepal. And India with Soviet help would be free to turn its energies elsewhere.

So it seems to us that through a combination of pressures and political moves it is important to keep India from attacking in the West, to gain time to get more arms into Pakistan and to restore the situation.

We sent yesterday the relevant paragraphs, the non-rhetorical paragraphs, from Brezhnev's letter to President Yahya for his opinion. (To Ambassador Huang and Miss T'ang) Why don't you read what we told him? It is an unusual method of proceeding, but we have to understand each other. This is just a quotation, an extract. (To Miss T'ang) Don't write it down word for word, Nancy.

You don't need a master spy. We give you everything (handing over his file). We read that you brought a master spy with you. You don't need him. He couldn't get this by himself. (Chinese laughter) Next time he (Ambassador Huang) will show me one of his dispatches, but it will do me no good at all, since I can't read it. (Chinese laughter)

(To Ambassador Bush) Don't you discuss diplomacy this way.

Ambassador Bush: I'm trying to understand it. I'm waiting for the Chinese translation.

(Miss T'ang continues to read out the cable to Yahya.)<sup>7</sup>

Dr. Kissinger: This is to our Ambassador, but it goes through a secret channel. No one in the bureaucracy sees it. (Miss T'ang keeps reading.)

I went over this with the Pakistani Ambassador. I showed it to him to see if he thought it was alright.

Miss T'ang: And then you sent it.

Dr. Kissinger: So we are being open and we are doing it in friendship.

Miss T'ang: (Repeating) "disassociation."

Dr. Kissinger: Let me explain, Mr. Ambassador. If the Russians advocate negotiations as they were in March, that means they cannot accept Bangla Desh. (To the Ambassador) You can read that next page.

Miss T'ang: It says "exclusively eyes only."

Dr. Kissinger: There's a better one that says "burn before reading."  
(Dr. Kissinger confirms the translation.)

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<sup>7</sup> See Document 259.

(Miss T'ang keeps reading) I wanted you to know so that you know exactly what we tell them. Now they have replied to us. Can I read it to you, which is the answer from Yahya?<sup>8</sup>

Ambassador Huang: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: He said that subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 of my communication—in other words these two provisions concerning negotiations being done in a united way—India and Pakistan should agree to an immediate ceasefire with the separation of armed forces standing fast; and the UN or another international organization should provide observers to see that the ceasefire is effective; and India and Pakistan at any effective level should immediately open negotiations aimed at a settlement of the war and troop withdrawal; and coincident therewith there would be negotiations looking toward the political satisfaction of Bengali aspirations, that is, a political settlement. (Miss T'ang repeats, then interprets)

So now you know everything we know. Our judgment is if East Pakistan is to be preserved from destruction, two things are needed—maximum intimidation of the Indians and, to some extent, the Soviets. Secondly, maximum pressure for the ceasefire.

At this moment we have—I must tell you one other thing—we have an intelligence report according to which Mrs. Gandhi told her cabinet that she wants to destroy the Pakistani army<sup>9</sup> and air force and to annex this part of Kashmir, Azad Kashmir, and then to offer a ceasefire. This is what we believe must be prevented and this is why I have taken the liberty to ask for this meeting with the Ambassador.

One other thing. The Acting Secretary of State—the Secretary of State is in Europe—called in last night the Indian Ambassador and demanded assurance that India has no designs, will not annex any territory. We do this to have a legal basis for other actions.

So this is where we are.

Ambassador Huang: We thank Dr. Kissinger very much for informing us of the situation on the subcontinent of India–Pakistan, and we certainly will convey that to Prime Minister Chou En-lai.

The position of the Chinese Government on this matter is not a secret. Everything has been made known to the world. And the basic stand we are taking in the UN is the basic stand of our government. Both in the Security Council and the plenary session of the General Assembly we have supported the draft resolutions that have included both the ceasefire and withdrawal, although we are not actually satisfied with

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<sup>8</sup> See Document 271.

<sup>9</sup> According to the intelligence report, Gandhi referred to the destruction of Pakistani “armored and air force strength”; see Document 246.

that kind of resolution. But we feel that the draft resolution which had support in the Security Council and especially the one which we voted in favor of in the General Assembly, reflect the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the small and medium countries. And in the plenary session of the General Assembly this draft resolution was put forward by Algeria and Argentina and 38 more and it was adopted by a majority of 104.<sup>10</sup> The opposition consisted in effect of only two—the Soviet Union and India. The others were either their followers or their protectorates. We feel that this reflects the aspirations, it shows where the hearts of the people in the world turn to.

Miss T'ang: (To Dr. Kissinger) Do you understand?

Dr. Kissinger: Oh, yes.

Ambassador Huang: It shows what the majority of the people in the world support and what they oppose. Because if India, with the aid of the Soviet Union, would be able to have its own way in the subcontinent then there would be no more security to speak of for a lot of other countries, and no peace to speak of. Because that would mean the dismemberment and the splitting up of a sovereign country and the creation of a new edition of Manchukuo, the Bangla Desh. It would also mean aggression by military force and the annexation of sovereign territory.

Therefore we believe that the draft resolution that was put forth in the General Assembly in the UN put forward two minimum principles, two minimum criteria. One is ceasefire; the other is withdrawal. And in his speech in the General Assembly with regard to this matter; Deputy Minister Ch'iao Kuan-hua has explained this question in a more comprehensive and fuller way. We should persist in this stand, and we hold that any action that may be taken by the UN cannot go below the resolution passed by the General Assembly. It cannot be anything that carries less than that resolution.

And on this point of view, in my personal opinion, we feel the position taken by the United States Government has been a weak one. From what I just heard in the letter to Yahya Khan and your conversation with the Indian Ambassador and also your communications with the Soviet Union, we have found that you have not put forward both the principles of ceasefire and withdrawal.

Dr. Kissinger: That's not correct. We put forward both principles. There are two separate problems, in all due respect. We don't want in the principle of withdrawal to have West Pakistan go the way of East Pakistan.

Ambassador Huang: And then there's this question that the British put forward that they wanted the leaders of the Pakistan government

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<sup>10</sup> See footnote 11, Document 248.

to enter into political negotiations. You also mentioned that, picked up their position that negotiations should begin.

Dr. Kissinger: Not to Brezhnev.

Ambassador Huang: And you mention negotiations should start from where they were continuing.

Dr. Kissinger: Brezhnev said that. What I showed you was a question to Yahya. We have not agreed with Brezhnev.

Ambassador Huang: But Brezhnev's proposal is essentially the same one that Mr. Malik has been saying here.

Dr. Kissinger: That's true.

Ambassador Huang: In fact, it means legalizing of the new refurbishment of another Manchukuo, that is, to give it legal status through the UN, or rather through the modalities of the UN.

This goes against the desires of the people in Pakistan, against the desires of the peoples of the world that was expressed in the voting of the General Assembly on this issue. The Soviet Union and India now are progressing along on an extremely dangerous track in the subcontinent. And as we have already pointed out this is a step to encircle China.

Dr. Kissinger: There is no question about that.

Ambassador Huang: And you also are clear about our activity, that is we are prepared to meet attacks coming from the east, west, north, and south.

Dr. Kissinger: When we have an exchange program between our countries, I hope to send a few State Department people to China. I'll send you a few of our State Department people for training. I may look weak to you, Mr. Ambassador, but my colleagues in Washington think I'm a raving maniac.

Miss T'ang: We didn't finish. Ambassador Huang: We are prepared for attacks on the east, west, north, and south. We are prepared to engage in guerrilla warfare once again with millet and rifle, and we are prepared to begin our construction over again, after that eventuality. And the private attitude adopted by Brezhnev which we see now, in which he talks about so-called political negotiations is in fact direct and obvious intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign country and something we feel is completely unacceptable, is inadmissible.

Of course we have nothing here about the military situation in the India-Pakistan subcontinent except what we read in the newspapers. But from our experience of a longer period we feel that the struggle waged by the people in Pakistan is a just struggle and therefore it is bound to have the support of the Chinese people and the people of the world. Whoever upholds justice and strives to defend their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity . . .

We have an old proverb: "If light does not come to the east it will come to the west. If the south darkens, the north must still have light." And therefore if we meet with some defeats in certain places, we will win elsewhere. So we keep persevering. So long as we persevere in principle and a just struggle, then final victory will still be ours. I don't think there's need for any more elaboration on that, because the history of the Chinese people's revolution itself is a good example.

Mr. Kissinger: Mr. Ambassador, we agree with your analysis of the situation. What is happening in the Indian subcontinent is a threat to all people. It's a more immediate threat to China, but it's a threat to all people. We have no agreement with the British to do anything. In fact we are talking with you to come to a common position. We know that Pakistan is being punished because it is a friend of China and because it is a friend of the United States.

But while we agree with your theory, we now have an immediate problem. I don't know the history of the people's revolution in China nearly as well as you do. I seem to remember that one of the great lessons is that under all circumstances the Chinese movement maintained its essence. And as an article on the Chungking negotiations makes clear, it is right to negotiate when negotiations are necessary and to fight when fighting is necessary.

We want to preserve the army in West Pakistan so that it is better able to fight if the situation rises again. We are also prepared to attempt to assemble a maximum amount of pressure in order to deter India. You read the *New York Times* every day, and you will see that the movement of supplies and the movement of our fleet will not have the universal admiration of the media, to put it mildly. And it will have the total opposition of our political opponents.

We want to keep the pressure on India, both militarily and politically. We have no interest in political negotiations between Pakistani leaders and East Pakistani leaders as such. The only interest that we possibly have is to get Soviet agreement to a united Pakistan. We have no interest in an agreement between Bangla Desh and Pakistan.

We are prepared also to consider simply a ceasefire. We are prepared also to follow your course in the UN which most of my colleagues would be delighted to do and then Pakistan would be destroyed. If we followed your course of insisting on ceasefire and withdrawal and do nothing then Pakistan will be destroyed, and many people in America will be delighted. If you and Pakistan want this then we will do it. That is no problem for us. That is the easiest course for us.

So we will . . . we agree with your analysis completely. We are looking for practical steps in this issue which happens to be a common fight for different reasons. We will not cooperate with anyone to impose anything on Pakistan. We have taken a stand against India and we will

maintain this stand. But we have this problem. It is our judgment, with great sorrow, that the Pakistan army in two weeks will disintegrate in the West as it has disintegrated in the East. If we are wrong about this, we are wrong about everything.

What do you think of ceasefire without political negotiations? The only reason we want political negotiations at all is to preserve East Pakistan, not to weaken it.

Ambassador Huang: Are you prepared to take the step in the UN of putting forward a proposal simply for ceasefire, along this course?

Dr. Kissinger: No, that's why I'm talking to you. Let's be practical—by tomorrow the Pakistan Army in the East will have surrendered. Therefore should one have a resolution for a ceasefire in the West?

Ambassador Huang: Why should we not condemn India for its aggression against East Pakistan? Why should there not be a demand for the resolution already passed in the General Assembly which calls for withdrawal? And if it is . . . if you find it impossible to condemn India . . .

Dr. Kissinger: We do. We don't mind condemning India.

Ambassador Huang: . . . A step should not be taken backward from the resolution already passed in the General Assembly.

Dr. Kissinger: There are two separate problems. The resolution in the General Assembly is one for the whole problem—that can be maintained. We are not saying we accept the occupation of East Pakistan; we don't have to accept that. But this would be a resolution for a ceasefire only. And the Arabs would not accept the occupation of their territory even though there is a ceasefire. So . . . but we are not here to tell you . . . When I asked for this meeting, I did so to suggest Chinese military help, to be quite honest. That's what I had in mind, not to discuss with you how to defeat Pakistan. I didn't want to find a way out of it, but I did it in an indirect way.

But this is for you to decide. You have many other problems on many other borders. What is going to happen is that the Pakistani commander in East Pakistan, independent of anything we did, has asked the UN to arrange a ceasefire in East Pakistan. We will not take a stand in opposition to you on this issue. We think we are on the same side. So . . .

Ambassador Huang: We feel that the situation on the subcontinent is very tense and is in the process of rapid development and change. And therefore, as I expressed earlier, we will immediately report what you tell me.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't want the Prime Minister to misunderstand. We are not looking for a way to get out of the situation. We are looking for a way to protect what is left of Pakistan. We will not recognize Bangla Desh. We will not negotiate with Bangla Desh. We will not encourage talks between Pakistan and Bangla Desh.

We have the immediate practical problem—is it better to have a ceasefire or is it better to let the military events continue? In either event both of us must continue to bring pressure on India and the Soviet Union.

(There is an exchange in which Dr. Kissinger confirms to Bush that he talked to Bhutto, that he was meeting him the next morning and that Bush's appointment with him was confirmed for later this night.)

I shall tell him (Bhutto) he should take his direction from you on whatever resolution he wants and that we will support him. I shall tell him to disregard any American official except me and General Haig. He doesn't have to take his direction from you, but I will tell him to check with you. Usually you criticize us for sticking too much to our friends, so we will not in this case create the wrong impression.

Ambassador Huang: As for Bangla Desh, has Ambassador Bush recently met with anybody from Bangla Desh?

Ambassador Bush: The Ambassador is referring to a squib in the *New York Times*.

(Ambassador Bush then explains the incident that led to Ambassador Huang's query. Mr. Choudury, who used to be in the Third Committee of the UN, three weeks ago asked Ambassador Bush for an appointment in his capacity as a judge in Pakistan. Ambassador Bush had his staff check the man out. Choudury then made a personal call but brought along three men with him. When they started mentioning Bangla Desh, Ambassador Bush told them to wait a minute, pointing out that Choudury was seeing him as a judge. It was a humiliating experience for Ambassador Bush. He had not seen the men since. Ambassador Bush had told them that they should wait a minute, that he was inhibited from discussing such matters. Mr. Choudury left two to three weeks ago. Ambassador Bush repeated that Ambassador Huang was referring to a story in the *New York Times*. He pointed out that Mr. Choudury is around a great deal of the time including in the delegates' lounge. He added that it was very embarrassing to him.)

Ambassador Huang: I am clear now.

Dr. Kissinger: In any event, no matter what you read, no one is authorized to talk to the Bangla Desh. We don't recognize Bangla Desh and will not recognize it.

Ambassador Huang: I thank Ambassador Bush very much for his explanation.

Ambassador Bush: One of the men had defected from the Pakistan Embassy in Washington and came here. Ambassador Shahi would kill me.

Dr. Kissinger: My former personal assistant is now working for Senator Muskie. There are many defectors around these days.

Mr. Ambassador, I am going to the Azores on Sunday afternoon with the President for 48 hours. General Haig has my complete confidence, and we have very rapid communication. So if you have some communication for us . . .

But I want Peking to be clear that my seeing you was for the purpose of coordinating positive steps, not to prepare you for negative steps.

Ambassador Huang: I don't have anything else.

Dr. Kissinger: Good. I wish happier occasions would bring us together. We have particular affection for Pakistan because we feel they helped to reestablish contact between the People's Republic and the United States.

So we are prepared to listen to any practical proposals for parallel action. We will do our best to prevent pressure against any country that takes unilateral action. I shall speak to Mr. Bhutto tomorrow in the sense that I have indicated to you.

Ambassador Huang: Of course, we will also contact Mr. Bhutto and, of course, as you later clarified yourself, we of course will give no directions. Yahya Khan is the President, and we only have friendly exchanges.

Dr. Kissinger: Of course. The word "direction" was not well-chosen.

Ambassador Huang: We think that is all there is today. What we need to do is to relay this to Prime Minister Chou En-lai.

[Omitted here are closing pleasantries.]



275. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 11, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* Pakistan late yesterday revised the proposal reported here yesterday morning from Dacca<sup>2</sup> for a cease-fire, repatriation of Pakistani troops and a transfer of power to the elected representatives of East Pakistan. The revised proposal contains only a call for cease-fire and guaranteed safety of military and civilian personnel; there is no reference to a political settlement or the withdrawal of Pakistani troops.

The diplomatic effort, therefore, stands still while Pakistani Foreign Minister Bhutto now in New York awaits instructions. He told Ambassador Bush late yesterday that he had arrived to find conflicting instructions and was seeking clarification. In an indication of the division of view that must exist within the Pakistani government, he said that yesterday's first proposal had "flabbergasted" him and that if this remained policy he would take the first plane home and not be shackled with it. The Pak Ambassador at the UN observed that the first proposal had been drafted by a field commander under great strain and contained "such unprecedented requests as asking the UN to effect a transfer of power."<sup>3</sup>

The other important development overnight was the failure of another effort to evacuate international personnel from Dacca. A cease-fire in the evacuation area had been arranged by the UN and Red Cross, and a British C-130 from Calcutta was within thirty minutes of landing when the Pakistani commander withdrew permission to land because the plane was coming from Indian soil and he feared the Indians would use it as cover for a movement of their own.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates that the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 3, Document 263.

<sup>3</sup> President Nixon highlighted this paragraph and wrote: "K—Did we get caught on this too? We may look foolish with the Soviet[s] by claiming we helped to get the Paks to move in this direction."

The UN representative in Dacca has received an urgent message from U Thant instructing him to evacuate all UN personnel from Dacca. Thant earlier in the week had ordered them to stay on for possible usefulness in arranging a cease-fire. Thant said he had reversed position following India's demand that all UN operations cease and notification that, in the case of non-withdrawal, the presence of UN personnel in neutral evacuation zones in Dacca would cause such zones not to be recognized as neutralized by India and Bangla Desh forces. Thant was reported to feel that he had no choice but to withdraw. Bush reports that Thant's staff is "deeply wounded in their pride" by the decision to cave in to the Indians. Keating has been instructed to protest this veiled threat to international personnel, and Bush is being instructed to follow up with Thant and Foreign Minister Singh, who arrives in New York this morning.

Meanwhile, Indian military advances throughout East Pakistan remains virtually unchecked outside the Dacca area as the Pak troops retreat in an increasingly disorderly fashion. Even in Dacca, where many of the survivors seem to be holding up, morale among both officers and enlisted men is reported to be low. From all indications, the Indian forces are consolidating for the final thrust at the capital city if efforts to secure a cease-fire fail.

On the Western front, there are press reports of the largest tank battles to date in two areas of Kashmir. According to a reliable [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] source, Mrs. Gandhi's staff as of Thursday was still saying that, as soon as the situation in the East is settled, India will launch a major offensive against West Pakistan and hope that all major fighting will be over by the end of the month. This, of course, was before Acting Secretary Irwin made his strong *démarche* to Ambassador Jha late Thursday<sup>4</sup> concerning India's intentions toward West Pakistan. At the same time, it is worth noting that the British also have been pressing the Indians for a statement that their war aims do not include Pak-held Kashmir but so far with no success. Reports are now being circulated in Delhi by the government's Press Information Bureau that the U.S. Seventh Fleet is moving toward the Bay of Bengal.

The Soviets show no sign of slackening their support for India. There are unconfirmed reports that a Soviet military team will soon be visiting New Delhi. Potentially more significant is a current trip to Moscow by D.P. Dhar, the negotiator of the friendship treaty and former Indian Ambassador to Moscow who is known to be very close to Mrs. Gandhi. Dhar could be going to sound out the Soviets on India's intentions toward West Pakistan. Finally there is an unconfirmed

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<sup>4</sup> December 9; see Document 262.

Indian report that units of the Soviet Mediterranean Fleet have been ordered to move to the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, although even if true it would take some time for them to sail around the tip of Africa.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

*Soviet Combatants Possibly En Route to Indian Ocean:* Soviet ships equipped with surface-to-surface missiles may be en route to augment the Indian Ocean Squadron. A guided-missile light cruiser, a diesel-powered cruise-missile submarine, and a naval oiler left the Sea of Japan via Tsushima Strait yesterday and may be bound for the Indian Ocean. The cruiser and submarine together carry a total of 20 SS-N-3 cruise missiles.<sup>5</sup>

Sixteen Soviet naval units are now in the Indian Ocean area, including three space support ships. Communications intelligence indicates that most of the ships are near Ceylon and Socotra, although one space-related unit may be monitoring British naval units in the Arabian Sea. However, of the sixteen ships less than half are combatants.

[Omitted here is a summary report on a foreign policy issue unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>5</sup> The President added another marginal note here that reads: "K—a reaction to our move?"

276. **Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 11, 1971.

After meeting this morning in New York with Bhutto,<sup>2</sup> Raza and Shahi we have concluded that the proposal we have been considering (contained in my message of December 9<sup>3</sup> and paragraph 3 of your [*message number not declassified*])<sup>4</sup> has been overtaken by events and is too complicated to succeed here. Therefore, we have agreed to following scenario:

(1) Government of Pakistan will obtain third-country support to introduce resolution in Security Council which will include provision for both ceasefire and withdrawal.

(2) It is likely that such a resolution would be vetoed. We would then move to accept simple ceasefire without any linkage to the Soviet formulation which would seek political negotiation.

(3) While remaining adamant in step (2) that ceasefire alone is essential first step, we would express willingness to include political negotiation following establishment of ceasefire.

Were we to follow any other course, it would look like complete collapse. Furthermore, should we start Security Council action with step (2) above, there is strong possibility that step (2), itself, might be vetoed if it were presented as initial position. Its chances of succeeding on second round are greatly enhanced by moving with step (1) first, recognizing that step (1) will probably not succeed.

Please meet with President Yahya urgently and explain foregoing and urge upon him essentiality of sticking with the procedure and of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only; Flash. No time of transmittal is indicated on the message.

<sup>2</sup> Bhutto was named Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in the civilian government formed by Yahya Khan on December 7. Yahya remained as President and Nural Amin became Prime Minister. On December 8 Yahya sent Bhutto to the United Nations to join Ambassador Shahi in mustering support for Pakistan in its conflict with India. (Telegram 12215 from Islamabad, December 8; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK) A handwritten record of Kissinger's conversation with Bhutto, prepared by Haig, is *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 999, Haig Chronological File, Haig Memcons To Be Done [1 of 4].

<sup>3</sup> Document 259.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 271.

avoiding initially any indication that proposals short of step (1) might be acceptable.<sup>5</sup> Pak delegation here is prepared to do same.

Warm regards.

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<sup>5</sup> Farland responded on December 12 that he had discussed with President Yahya the UN scenario laid out in Kissinger's message and Yahya had "expressed his full accord with the procedures suggested." Yahya indicated that Ambassador Shahi would be instructed accordingly. (Backchannel message from Farland to Kissinger; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan)

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**277. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 11, 1971, 3 p.m.

RN: Have you kept anybody in State informed on the Bhutto business?

HAK: Yes. Well, I have told State of Bhutto's, I have told Rogers about Bhutto's request to see you. And turning it down. I have not told, because it happened afterwards, of the latest Bhutto thing of their complaint about our weak position—of the Chinese complaint that is. But Bush has reported already a conversation he has had with the . . . .

RN: The main thing is that they be informed, not totally, but enough so that they know that State [has] a play as to what's going on.

HAK: Oh yes, Bush has kept them informed of the Chinese attitude which he got from the permanent representative of Pakistan at the UN.

RN: Yeah. I understand. Then that is the way we have to move then.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. A handwritten note on the memorandum indicates that the conversation began "ca. 3:00 p.m." The President spent Saturday, December 11, at Camp David and returned to Washington on Sunday; Kissinger was in Washington.

HAK: We may even have to add one other thing Mr. President. After the message to them tonight, simply to clear our record, we might make a public—a hotline appeal to them tomorrow saying that now that it goes to the Security Council we want to appeal to you once again on the hotline to help us get the fighting stopped. So that we can show the record of appeals to them.

RN: Yeah. Well, I will be back before 9:00 in the morning, the thing to do is to—we could have it prepared—all that is done it is basically just sending the message isn't it?

HAK: Yes. It just uses a special machine. Yes we should do it it will help our public record.

RN: Yes, and also, might indicate the urgency to them.

HAK: I think that what we ought to do when we say friendly country towards which we have obligations, if then Ziegler is asked what the obligations are we will reveal the Kennedy commitment.

RN: I suppose the only problem with that is that it isn't the revealing of it that concerns me, it is the fact that we won't do anything—that we say we will make a commitment and we do nothing about it. You see that's our problem with that. When the game is all over, we may get some personal—out of pointing this all up, but in turn we have got to think of it only in terms of whether it helps our game at this point, and not in terms of whether it justifies what we are doing. See what I mean? And I am certainly inclined to get it out only in that context however, not simply for the purpose of justification.

HAK: Oh no, in the context of showing them that this is not a frivolous move.

RN: To make both the Indians and the Russians realize the obligations—

HAK: Well, I am inclined to believe to agree with the Chinese that if we do play it all out, they will not drive it [India] to an extreme, because after all they already got 60% of the population of Pakistan.

RN: Well, I agree, but that's the way we are going to play and we'll see what the Chinese do, and I am not inclined to think though that if the Chinese do make some threatening moves—I know you are concerned about the fact that they may frighten the Indians and it may stiffen the Russians—but I am not inclined to think so—I don't think the Russians want to get that involved in that area. That's what it really gets down to.

HAK: Well, I am pretty sure the Chinese are going to do something and I think that we'll soon see. I may be mistaken—we have no clear intelligence evidence though at this point.

RN: No, Bhutto thinks they are, but. . . .

HAK: No, no we have independent intelligence.

RN: But nothing to indicate that they are moving. . . .

HAK: Well, they are calling in the reserves of the mountain divisions.

RN: Okay, I think that the whole thing is—the note to the Russians, but in any event that Bush will be prepared to go to the UN tomorrow in any event—that has to be done—Right.

HAK: That's right.

RN: So that's and State should be informed of that, that Bush should go to the UN on another—

HAK: We can wait with informing State tomorrow morning.

RN: Yeah, but he must do it tomorrow, don't you think so?

HAK: Absolutely, we have to play it out, give the Russians till tomorrow noon.

RN: And then tomorrow at noon, he takes it up there and then we go the second step after that, ceasefire, correct?

HAK: Correct.

RN: And all of that can be undertaken even while we are on the road.

HAK: Oh yes, we can get all the messages.

RN: But in the meantime, we will get something from the Russians for tomorrow—we may not—they may just decide.

(the tape ended at this point) (New tape)

RN: The Indians are now getting greedy.

HAK: And they may want to wait until all the East Pakistanis are in Indian hands before they join in an appeal for a ceasefire.

RN: Well, the main thing is to keep our cool with it and not—keep them in the play and on the affirmative line—we know whatever errors in the past have been—they should not have moved to the strict neutrality [omission in the source text], we all know that, but now we will just keep moving on the right course which is that at this point it was debatable among some quarters as to what the situation was when it was East Pakistan, but now when it is West Pakistan any figment of the suggestion that this was provoked by Pakistan is ridiculous. That is the point and this can only be interpreted now that East Pakistan is being wound up as an assault on East Pakistan, and that exposes it to the whole world to see and the world must move. Now of course not enough has been made of the fact that the UN General Assembly voted overwhelming for a ceasefire, withdrawal and that the Indians not just the Russians—but the Indians turned it down correct? I guess Bush is hitting it hard and State and all the rest?

HAK: Well, Bush is.

RN: We ought to hit that very, very hard—this is against the overwhelming weight of world opinion—we happen to have world

opinion on our side this time for whatever it is worth—that point should be made and particularly the UN has to be used right to the hilt—everything [that] is done it has got to be with the UN overwhelmingly on our side and India in effect continuing its aggression against the mandate of the UN—I think that is the PR side of it. —I'd get Scali on it.

HAK: Well, I think also that once we go to ceasefire, we have to insist that Britain be with us.

RN: I think you ought to get hold of the British Ambassador in the morning on that or even tonight. Would you do that.

HAK: I will do it first thing in the morning after we know whether we are going alone or with the Russians.

RN: Well, the British ought to go on that, shouldn't they? They have some obligations to Pakistan too, haven't they?

HAK: Right.

RN: Okay, fine, I'll see you in the morning.

(At this point Mr. Kissinger went back to the Haig conversation.)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A transcript of this telephone conversation, which dealt in part with drafting the hot line message to be sent to the Soviet Union, is *ibid.*

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## 278. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>

December 11, 1971, 7:30 p.m.

K: Mr. President.

P: Yeah, Henry.

K: Sorry to disturb you.

P: That's all right.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President was at Camp David, Maryland; Kissinger was in Washington.



K: We haven't heard from the Russians yet but I've had a call from Bhutto<sup>2</sup> who insisted on seeing you tonight anywhere.

P: Me?

K: Yeah, but I've turned that off. I've turned that off already but that isn't—and I made him tell me what he wanted.

P: Yeah.

K: He said that he had talked with the Chinese. The Chinese had said to him that they were willing to do something and in fact I think that they are going to do something but they said that they had their doubts about us—that we started out by saying aggression; then we pulled off from the word aggression; then we said it wasn't justified; then we pulled off from that and declared strict neutrality. They just don't think that we are firm and they want some word from us what we're going to do if the Russians press them. Of course, you know, I couldn't help Bhutto.

P: Yeah.

K: And, a . . . of course, there is a lot in what they're saying. It isn't that you put ideas before anyone else and we are caught by a domestic public opinion and the Senate and the bureaucracy that creates a tough situation. What we are facing now tomorrow is: if we can hear from the Russians and can go with that game plan we are all right, but if we don't hear by tomorrow morning what we'll have to decide is whether to issue a statement along the lines of what we put in the letter to Brezhnev<sup>3</sup> saying, "If this continues it will be naked aggression against the country toward which we have obligations." According to Bhutto, they said the Russians are the biggest brutes and cowards in the world and the only reason this is going on is because everyone knows the United States is weak. I'm just quoting you what he said, I'm not making a judgment.

P: Yes, okay.

K: There is something in it. It's not that the President is weak, it's . . .

P: Well, what do we have to do at this point?

K: Well, at this point, there is nothing we need to do tonight. We have to decide that when we go to the Security Council tomorrow, we do it with some real pizzazz.

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<sup>2</sup> The conversation that Kissinger summarizes between himself in Washington and Bhutto and Raza in New York was held immediately prior to the call he placed to the President. A transcript of that conversation is *ibid.*, and published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 175.

<sup>3</sup> Document 269.

P: Yes, I think, well I think that is quite clear and we have to use the word aggression—naked aggression.

K: And what we could do is announce that the President has asked Bush to take it back to the Security Council.

P: Yes.

K: And if this continues, now that East Pakistan has practically fallen there can no longer be any doubt that we are dealing with naked aggression supported by Soviet power.

P: Yeah, well it would be my inclination to go in that direction.

K: And if we do that we might consider telling the Russians tonight that that is what we are going to do.

P: Ahmmm, telling the Russians before we hear from them.

K: Well, if we don't hear from them by noon tomorrow we will have to state our position publicly and discuss their involvement.

P: Well, it would seem that that's probably what we'll have to do in terms of the words to inform the Russians that . . . that's how we should do it, you will inform Vorontsov tonight that we're going to take it to the Security Council tomorrow or how would we go about it?

K: That we will then take public steps, including Security Council steps, in which we will publicly have to say what their role is.

P: Well, I would rather it be stated in which it will be clear what their role is—that the steps would inevitably show what their role is unless they cooperate in a policy of stopping the aggression at this point.

K: Well, stopping the war, they don't even have to agree to stopping the aggression.

P: Stopping the war, or bring about a ceasefire.

K: Yah.

P: That seems to be reasonable. I have my doubts that the Chinese will do anything.

K: I think that they will do something now.

P: You do, huh.

K: Yah. Haig does too.

P: Well, that they will do something, you mean where?

K: I do not believe that they will let—they will do what they did in Korea—I do not think they will let these people get at their borders.

P: That's what it gets to isn't it, yeh.

K: Yeh.

P: Let the Indians get at their borders.

K: Well, Haig says he saw movies tonight, a TV film, and he said that the amount of Russian equipment is just massive.

P: Yeh.

K: Of course, no one has brought that out.

P: Pause. . . . Well, I think that you had better let the word go to the Russians then. I think that has to be done tonight, right.

K: Okay, Mr. President.

P: I see no other course for you.

K: No, unfortunately not, Mr. President. This is heartbreaking, but we've got to get on top of it and I think we've got to get out the story better. I mean we shilly-shallied, I mean not we, there have been too many conflicting signals coming out and I saw the Agronsky show tonight and these bleeding hearts are saying that we are driving India away and that no one mentions what the Russians are doing.

P: Right, ahmmm.

K: [omission in the source text]

P: I know, I know what your point [is] though. Your point then is to inform the Russians that we are going to go to their support in the Security Council.

K: But, to say if we don't get from them by tomorrow morning an answer on how to proceed, we will have to take public actions in which we will have—in which their own involvement will become clear.

P: Their own involvement is abetting aggression and in failing to participate in a cooperative action to stop the war.

K: That's right.

P: Ahmm. All right, let's do it on that basis. Tomorrow we will take a look.

K: Right Mr. President.

P: We may hear from them. We don't know.

K: I think so.

P: But it will take some time for them to do it. Well, it will be interesting to see what will happen tomorrow. Too bad we have to be going to the Azores, isn't it?

K: It's not a good time. But maybe it is a good time if we can get Pompidou to come along with something there.

P: That's very, very unlikely but on the other hand I think the thing to do in terms of our American opinion is just to go right ahead with our public (K interrupts).

K: Well you know what the line now is Mr. President, they are all attacking you on personal pique and we have to get out that goddammit you are defending as always the national interest. And for that we have to make clear what the Russians have been doing.

P: Ahmm.

K: And there was no personal pique involved there.

P: Of course not, you mean in terms of our decisions here—not at all—it had nothing to do with that.

K: And we may have to let out the Kennedy commitment to Pakistan, if worse comes to worse.

P: Yes. Bhutto knows about that doesn't he?

K: Well, I haven't told him. We may, you know as we say we have obligations. Some people say what are the obligations—we'll put out the Kennedy thing.

P: The purpose of that being to what?

K: The purpose of that being to make clear that you haven't acted out of personal feelings, but to protect the . . . but to keep the word of an American President and also to warn the Russians that this isn't a free shot.

P: Yup, that makes sense, makes sense. All right, let the message go to the Russians. See what happens tomorrow on it.

K: Good night.

P: Okay, call me if you hear from them.

K: Right.

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**279. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 11, 1971, 7:35 p.m.

HK: Yuly, I have just talked to the President and as you know, we are leaving for the Azores tomorrow at noon. He has asked me to tell you that if we don't hear from you by tomorrow morning that we will proceed unilaterally. We have now waited for 48 hours and in a matter that affects the peace of the world in these circumstances we will proceed unilaterally and if we do we will have to state our view about the involvement of other countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. A handwritten note on the transcript estimates that the call was placed "circa 3 p.m." Internal evidence establishes that the call was placed subsequent to the 7:30 conversation between Kissinger and the President.

YV: I see, of course you know that Kusnetsov<sup>2</sup> is embarked on a mission to India now; and I have reasons to believe that that's in direct connection to whatever we have discussed here.

HAK: When did he leave?

YV: He left this morning Moscow time—I don't have any official word to you about that, but I know it is directly connected. So, of course, I will transmit the message to Moscow.

HAK: I cannot stress to you sufficiently seriously how gravely we view the situation.

YV: Yes, I understand that, but I think that the mutual view of the situation now Kusnetsov trip to Delhi are underlying that. I think we might have something from Moscow tomorrow, but of course the results of his talks there is only to predict they are [omission in the source text] is going to be.

HAK: Well, I understand it, you have to understand that we have not made a move for 72 hours in order to give us a chance of moving jointly. We cannot in all honor wait any longer.

YV: Why by unilateral holds [*moves?*] further on, do you want to reveal a little bit what that means.

HAK: No, we will of course move unilaterally again in the UN, but we may also take certain other steps which were [*while?*] not irrevocable would be preferable if we did not have to take them.

YV: Okay, that is all I can tell you now, but I will transmit it.

HAK: We again want to underline that this is not something that we prefer to do.

YV: I understand that, and in Moscow they understand that.

HAK: Right, Okay.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Vasilij Kuznetsov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union.

<sup>3</sup> Kissinger called President Nixon at 8:45 p.m. and told him that he had learned from Vorontsov that the Soviet leadership had despatched Kuznetsov to New Delhi. Kissinger saw that as a positive development but Nixon was skeptical. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

**280. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and Deputy Prime Minister Bhutto<sup>1</sup>**

December 11, 1971.

HAK: Mr. Bhutto. I have talked to the President and here is our view on the subject. First, in the light of all we have done, it is absolutely essential that we are not exposed to Chinese charges that we are not doing enough. Because if that is going to be the charge why should we do anything? I mean we are standing alone against our public opinion, against our whole bureaucracy at the very edge of legality.

Bhutto: Uh huh, I realize that fully.

HAK: So the Chinese just have to be made to understand what we are doing.

Bhutto: They will . . . .

HAK: Now secondly, if we do not hear from the Soviets tomorrow by tomorrow morning in reply to the presentations we have made to them, we will then go to the Security Council with a strong statement that a continuation of the war would be a naked case of aggression, and we would support our original resolution. I mean we will make the public statement, in that case there can be no doubt where we stand.

Bhutto: Yes.

HAK: Now after our original resolution is defeated, however, Mr. Minister, then I think you have to decide whether you want to go to a simple ceasefire resolution, because it isn't that we don't want to help you, it is that we want to preserve you. It is all very well to stand for principles, but finally we have to assure your survival. And that is the Chinese problem. We are heartbroken about what has happened, but our immediate problem now is what I told you this morning to assure your survival, so what we will do is first thing by tomorrow noon, [if] we have not an agreement on this procedure which we discussed this morning, then we will go to the Security Council (I mean we haven't put that procedure to the Russians, but if you do not get a satisfactory reply from them about ending the war) in any event we will go to the Security Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. No time is on the transcript. Kissinger was in Washington; Bhutto was in New York.

Bhutto: That meets tomorrow evening or Monday.<sup>2</sup>

HAK: We will say tomorrow afternoon and we will go to them along the lines of our discussion this morning supporting a withdrawal part of a resolution.

Bhutto: I follow.

HAK: If after that is defeated, we should decide what you want. But we will make clear public statement tomorrow either at the Security Council or from the White House, depending on how it is played about Indian aggression. So your Chinese friends and our new Chinese acquaintances will have no reason to question where we stand.

Bhutto: No, but I hope you don't misunderstand.

(Call is interrupted by Haig—HAK tells Haig he'll call back.)

Bhutto: But when the Ambassador mentioned it to you, I then took up the phone again. I impressed on them that we are completely satisfied—

HAK: No, no I am not complaining about—look you are in a very sad situation, and you are coming in at a late moment and we have all the sympathy for you, but one way you can help us is to make clear to the Chinese that we have been strong supporters.

Bhutto: I will make that abundantly clear.

HAK: Also, our Fleet will be crossing the Straits of Malacca tomorrow night, and then it will be partly visible.

Bhutto: I will make it abundantly clear to them tomorrow as (tape is blank at this point) . . . I want you to know that it is deeply appreciated what you are doing and we are eternally beholden.

HAK: Well, we are doing it for ourselves too.

Bhutto: You will see the affects of that when this crisis is over how we will express our appreciation.

HAK: No you don't have to worry about that, Mr. Prime Minister. We know where our friends are and you have been a loyal friend.

Bhutto: And you see the question is all that I said was we never want to think of bypassing you nor do we want to think of bypassing them.

HAK: No, you must be honest with both of us. My remarks were directed to them, not to you.

Bhutto: Yes, but I also want you to be clear in your mind, please as far as we are concerned, we know you have helped us and that in this crucial and critical hour, you stood by us. That to us means a great deal.

HAK: And we will continue to help and we do more tomorrow.

Bhutto: Fine, thank you so much.

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<sup>2</sup> December 13.

HAK: Goodbye and the best to you.

Bhutto: Hello, hello, hello. Gen. Raza says he is coming to Washington tomorrow and would like to see you tomorrow.

HAK: Well, yes, he should call me in the morning. It will be a hectic morning, but I will see him.

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## 281. Editorial Note

At 8:45 a.m. on December 12, 1971, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger met with President Nixon in the Oval Office of the White House to discuss developments in South Asia. Kissinger's deputy Alexander Haig joined the conversation later. The conversation, which lasted nearly an hour, dealt at some length with Nixon's desire to mount a public relations campaign to brand India as an aggressor. Nixon spoke of what he viewed as the damning report on Prime Minister Gandhi's meeting with her Cabinet in which she outlined India's war aims, and Kissinger said that he had asked Helms to "put it out through covert channels."

Nixon and Kissinger spent some time discussing the hot line message to be sent later that morning to Brezhnev. Nixon said: "Basically all we're doing is asking for a reply. We're not letting the Russians diddle us along. . . . All we're doing is to reiterate what I said to the Agriculture Minister and what you said to Vorontsov." He asked Kissinger "does that sound like a good plan to you?" Kissinger replied: "It's a typical Nixon plan. I mean it's bold. You're putting your chips into the pot again. But my view is that if we do nothing, there is a certainty of disaster. This way there is a high possibility of one, but at least we're coming off like men. And that helps us with the Chinese." Nixon said: "That's right. And if it goes down the tube now we'll have done the best we can." Kissinger concurred: "If it goes down the tube [it will be] because we can't get anyone to support us. By tomorrow our fleet will be in the Indian Ocean." After a discussion of Southeast Asia, Nixon returned to South Asia and expressed the conviction that the Chinese, the Soviets, and the Indians needed to be shown that the "man in the White House" was tough.

The conversation focused heavily on China and what the Chinese Government could be expected to do as the crisis unfolded. Early in the conversation Kissinger said: "I called Bhutto yesterday evening after we talked just for the record, and I said I don't want to hear one more word from the Chinese. We are the ones who have been operating against our



public opinion, against our bureaucracy, at the very edge of legality. . . . And if they want to talk, they should move some troops. And until they have done so we don't want to hear one more word."

Haig entered in the middle of the conversation with the news that the Chinese wanted to meet on an urgent basis. Because Nixon and Kissinger were on the point of leaving for the Azores, the Chinese proposed a meeting in New York between Haig and Chinese Ambassador Huang Hua. The Chinese initiative in calling for a meeting was "totally unprecedented" Kissinger said. He concluded that the request meant "they're going to move. No question, they're going to move." The tenor of the conversation changed at that point from the earlier expressed concern that China would not make the necessary military moves to help restrain India to a concern over the implications of the military action China had apparently decided upon.

Nixon responded to Kissinger's conclusion that China had decided to move by commenting: "Well, this may change our plans a bit—no it doesn't change our plans at all." The plans he referred to were his plans to travel to the Azores to meet with French President Pompidou. Nixon instructed Haig to "get up there" to meet with Huang Hua. Nixon asked Haig if he agreed that the Chinese request for a meeting "means they are going to move." Haig concurred with Kissinger's assessment. That raised the question of the likelihood of Soviet military action against China in the event of Chinese military moves that menaced India. Kissinger said: "If the Soviets move against them and then we don't do anything, we'll be finished." Nixon asked: "So what do we do if the Soviets move against them? Start lobbing nuclear weapons in, is that what you mean?" Kissinger responded: "If the Soviets move against them in these conditions and succeed, that will be the final showdown. We have to—and if they succeed we will be finished. We'll be through." Kissinger tentatively suggested: "Then we better call them [the Chinese] off." But he quickly concluded: "I think we can't call them off frankly." Haig said: "I think that if you call them off, if we don't give them some assurances, . . . the price you pay for that is almost as bad as if you" Kissinger interjected: "If we call them off, I think our China initiative is pretty well down the drain." Nixon agreed: "That's what I think." He added: "And our China initiative is down the drain. And also our stroke with the Russians is very, very seriously jeopardized." Kissinger went on: "If the Russians get away with facing down the Chinese and if the Indians get away with licking the Pakistanis, what we are now having is the final—we may be looking down the gun barrel." More hopefully Kissinger noted: "It's the Chinese view which they expressed to Bhutto yesterday that the Soviets will back off." He added: "I think the Soviets will back off if we face them." Nixon said: "Well that's the point. The reason that I suggested that the Chinese move is that they talked about the Soviet divisions on their

border and all that sort of thing. You know that the Soviets at this point aren't about to go ripping into that damn mess, having in mind the fact that they're gaining from the Indian thing."

Kissinger said: "Well we've got to trigger this quickly, so that we are positioned, and not at the tail of the Chinese. Otherwise we have no moral authority whatsoever for supporting the Chinese." Nixon asked: "Bhutto asked the Chinese to move too didn't he?" Kissinger responded: "They are not doing it because of us." Nixon said: "That's what I mean. Let me just get that straight right away. Why are the Chinese moving?" Kissinger answered: "We asked, but that's not the reason they're doing it." Nixon concurred: "The way you put it Henry, the way you put it is very different as I understand. You said look we're doing all these things why don't you threaten them. Remember I said threaten, move a couple of people". . . . He added: "We have to scare these bastards". . . . Kissinger stated: "I said we will prevent pressures on you from other countries. But it is immaterial who made them do it. We didn't make them do it. They are acting for the same reason they jumped us when we approached the Chinese border in Korea." Nixon asked: "Is that what you think Al?" Haig responded: "Yes sir." Kissinger said: "It's exactly the same situation. But leaving aside whether we made them do it or not, we did not make them do it, my feeling would be the same, Mr. President, if I had not talked to them on Friday. They don't move that fast. . . . This has been building up. My feeling is, Mr. President, leaving completely aside what we said, if the outcome of this is that Pakistan is swallowed by India, China is destroyed, defeated, humiliated by the Soviet Union, it will be a change in the world balance of power of such magnitude that the security of the United States for, maybe forever, certainly for decades—we will have a ghastly war in the Middle East." Nixon interjected: "Now we really get into the numbers game. You've got the Soviet Union with 800 million Chinese, 600 million Indians, the balance of Southeast Asia terrorized, the Japanese immobile, the Europeans of course will suck after them, and the United States the only one, we have maybe parts of Latin America and who knows." "This is why, Mr. President," Kissinger said "you'll be alone." Nixon responded: "We've been alone before."

Kissinger asked Nixon if, given the menacing developments that appeared to be breaking in the South Asia crisis, he should stay in Washington rather than accompany Nixon to the Azores. Nixon felt that it was important that he be perceived to be making the decisions. Hence leaving Kissinger behind to deal with the crisis "wouldn't do." Haig was therefore instructed to respond to the Chinese request and to schedule a meeting. Kissinger said: "We've got to get this triggered quickly. So that we are positioned. I mean this leaves no doubt now what we've got to do." Nixon agreed: "Right. Now let's come back to

this for a minute. You say that they want to see AI, tell him they are going to move. What they want in the way of assurances, they maybe want something more direct. Well, let me see, the Kennedy memorandum of November 5, 1962 [unclear] and that's what they'll think." Kissinger said: "They'll believe you." Nixon continued: "The point is, the fact of the matter is when I put it in more Armageddon terms than reserves, when I say the Chinese move and the Soviets threaten and we start lobbing nuclear weapons, that isn't what happens. That isn't what happens. What happens is that we then do have a hot line to the Soviets, and we finally just say now what goes on here?" Kissinger said: "We don't have to lob nuclear weapons. We have to go on alert." Nixon agreed. Kissinger continued: "We have to put forces in. We may have to give them bombing assistance." Nixon added: "One thing we can do which you forgot. We clean up Vietnam at about that point." Kissinger concurred: "We clean up Vietnam. I mean at that point we give an ultimatum to Hanoi, blockade Haiphong." Nixon said: "That's right." Kissinger continued: "Now that will hurt China too but we can't worry about that at that point." Nixon interjected: "Well, we'll say it was for the purpose of protecting Americans." Kissinger said: "And above all, we have to give the Chinese the sense that if the Russians threaten them, the worst thing, we cannot desert them then move against Haiphong, because that would then say that the U.S. and China. . . . We'll pick up North Vietnam in the process of that. I mean, North Vietnam will be finished then. If Russia and China are at war, we can pick it up at any time."

Nixon upon consideration concluded that "Russia and China aren't going to go to war." Kissinger rejoined: "I wouldn't bet on that Mr. President." Nixon said: "Well, let me put it this way. I have always felt that India and Pakistan, inevitably would have a war. And there can always be a war in the Mideast. As far as Russia and China is [are] concerned there are other factors that are too overwhelming at this particular point for them to go at each other." Kissinger demurred: "Well, Mr. President, the Russians first of all are not rational on China. Secondly, if they can get a pretext to wipe out China then your trip and everything else is an incident. Your trip in their minds was an incident on the road where they would isolate China, and then could turn against China in '73-'74. Now that works fine with us because it puts China over on our side and we could play. But if they see an" Nixon interjected: "What are you trying to suggest here? Are you trying to get to the point that maybe we tell the Chinese we won't back them?" Kissinger responded: "No, I think we have to tell them we will back them." Nixon asked: "What do you think AI? You think we should tell them we won't back them and discourage them?" Haig responded: "I think they may premise action on three things. One is they said the Soviets are cowards. The United States stood the Soviets down recently

in Cuba and in the Middle East." Nixon asked: "Do they know that? You told them that, is that right?" Kissinger answered: "No, they said that to Bhutto." Nixon said: "If you think they believe that then they got the message where nobody else did." Kissinger said: "The Chinese respect you." Nixon asked: "How the hell do they know that we stood them down in Cuba, for example? You must have told them that." Kissinger responded: "I told them that." Nixon asked: "How about the Middle East? How do they know we stood them down there?" Kissinger answered: "Well, because they see what happened. . . . When all is said and done, they know that Syrian tanks pulled back unconditionally." Reverting to Nixon's earlier question, Haig's advice was: "Tell the Soviets today the direction in which we are moving, and it's going to up the ante of concern." Nixon said: "Suppose the Chinese move and the Soviets threaten, then what do we do?" Haig responded: "Well, we've got to move I think beforehand with the Soviets." Haig counseled that the Soviets should be warned that "a war would be unacceptable." Kissinger concurred: "As soon as the Chinese move, we have to tell them that. We can't tell them before the Chinese move, because it would look like collusion." Nixon agreed: "That's right, that's right, OK." Nixon and Kissinger agreed that the message they were planning to send to Brezhnev would have to be strengthened. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation among Nixon, Kissinger, and Haig, December 12, 1971, 8:45–9:42 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 637–3) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of this conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 177.

Acting on the instructions he had received from the President, Haig met in New York with Chinese Ambassador Huang Hua on the afternoon of December 12. Contrary to expectations, Haig learned that the Chinese initiative did not mean that China had decided upon military action in support of Pakistan. Instead, Huang Hua indicated that China was prepared to support the United Nations procedure Kissinger had outlined in the December 10 meeting, which was to ask for a cease-fire and mutual troop withdrawal but to settle for a standstill cease-fire. (Memorandum of conversation; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 849, For the President's File, China Trip, China Exchanges, October 20, 1971). The full text of the memorandum is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972.

**282. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 12, 1971.

SUBJECT

Situation Report on South Asia

When Ambassador Farland asked for President Yahya's views on a ceasefire at midnight (EST) last night, Yahya said that he was prepared to do "anything reasonable under the circumstances."<sup>2</sup> In response to Farland's question why Pakistan's first ceasefire proposal of Friday had been replaced later in the day by a less comprehensive one omitting political settlement, Yahya looked hard at Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan and said there had been a breakdown of communication and apparently some "general misunderstandings." He added that the Foreign Secretary was rectifying the situation. According to a press report from Rawalpindi, a Pakistani government spokesman said that major diplomatic moves outside the UN and in keeping with the protection of Pakistan's interests are underway to end the conflict.

Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov flew into Delhi today at the head of a five-man delegation. Former Indian Ambassador to Moscow, D.P. Dhar, who negotiated the Indo-Soviet treaty, has flown to Moscow. Both moves are billed as made under the consultation provision of the treaty. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

From the United Nations, Ambassador Bush reports<sup>3</sup> that there are two main routes events there could take:

—One would be to do as Bhutto is presently inclined to do, i.e. return to the Security Council to seek a resolution identical to the one adopted in the General Assembly. Bush feels that some members of the eleven who voted with us in the Security Council previously, including China, would not have much enthusiasm for simply provoking another Soviet veto. Bhutto regards one advantage of this course as further discrediting the USSR in the eyes of the 104 nations who voted for

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, South Asia, Nov–Dec 1971. Top Secret; Codeword. Sent for information. Printed from an uninitialed copy.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 12414 from Islamabad, December 12. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) Telegram 12414 is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 176.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 4960 from USUN, December 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

the Assembly resolution. Bush points out that the Paks could start down this track even if they are prepared (perhaps not overtly), to have a resolution amended to include the last paragraph of the Soviet resolution<sup>4</sup> providing for following through the results of the December 1970 election in East Pakistan.

—The alternative course would be to try through an intermediary to put together the essentials of a resolution which both parties would be able to live with prior to calling for a Security Council meeting. Bush reports<sup>5</sup> that Bhutto's expressed dislike for Pakistan's first Friday proposal including political settlement suggests that Bhutto is more interested in mounting a public campaign against India and the Soviets. Yahya's comments to Farland, however, suggest that Bhutto may receive instructions to accept a ceasefire resolution with at least implication of a negotiated withdrawal and political settlement to follow.

There is, of course, a third approach. This would be (1) to launch Security Council debate calling for endorsement of the General Assembly resolution, as described in the first approach above but (2) to be prepared by pre-arrangement with key parties to divert the debate part-way through to a compromise resolution.

Bush also reports<sup>6</sup> Foreign Minister Singh's view that the UN cannot take useful action at this time. If the UN does meet, he will insist that Bangla Desh representatives be present. He maintained that India's recognition of Bangla Desh had two purposes: (1) to make clear that India had no territorial ambitions in East Pakistan and (2) to establish the moderate, elected democratic group in an effort to control the Mukti Bahini.

Singh and [said] India has no territorial aims *in West Pakistan* but cautioned that this commitment is not open-ended if Pakistan continues the war and tries to make gains in the west to compensate for losses in the east. Under questioning, Singh would not make the same unequivocal commitment on Azad Kashmir. Foreign Secretary Kaul said, "we have no *major* ambitions." Even in peacetime, Kaul said, India and Pakistan had talked about minor rectifications in the border. Both Singh and Kaul repeatedly said that they do not wish to prolong the war.

The evacuation of 300 foreign nationals from Dacca was completed this morning, including more than 100 Americans. Four British C-130's with UN markings completed the job.

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<sup>4</sup> See footnote 10, Document 263.

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 12414 cited in footnote 2 above.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 289.

Yesterday there was a clandestine report from Islamabad<sup>7</sup> that Yahya had told his prime minister designate that the Chinese ambassador in Islamabad had assured him that within 72 hours the Chinese army would move toward the Northeast Frontier Agency border of India.<sup>8</sup> CIA and DIA report this morning that no information has yet been received on unusual activity by Chinese forces in Tibet.

In East Pakistan, Pakistani forces continue to regroup for the defense of Dacca. In contrast to the 30,000 or more Pakistanis that could be mustered there, the Indians have roughly 60,000 men in three divisions moving toward the city with at least as many more in reserve near East Pakistan's borders. The guerrillas are also poised outside the city. In the west, fighting in the Kashmir and Punjab areas continues with little significant movement by either side. In the southern sector on the western front, the Indians claim now to be some 30 miles inside Pakistan's Sind Province. If the Indians press toward Hyderabad, Pakistan might have to divert forces from the north to prevent Karachi from being cut off from the rest of the country.

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<sup>7</sup> Distributed on December 11 as CIA Intelligence Information Cable TDCS DB-315/07532-71. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan)

<sup>8</sup> Apparently in response to this report, Kissinger told Helms on December 11 that "the President wants you to get out the word that a Chinese move may be imminent." (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

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### 283. Editorial Note

President Nixon met again with Henry Kissinger on December 12, 1971, in the Oval Office of the White House to discuss the message just received from the Soviet leadership (Document 284). The White House tapes document log prepared by the Nixon Presidential Materials Project indicates that the conversation began at 10:27 a.m. A note on the message indicates it was conveyed by Vorontsov to Haig at 10:45 a.m., but Vorontsov called Kissinger at 10:05 a.m. and read the text of the message. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) Kissinger began the conversation by reporting: "I got the answer from the Russians. They are giving us a full reply later. The interim reply is that they have an assurance from Mrs. Gandhi that she will not attack West Pakistan. And that they will work out—they are working with her now

to work out a cease-fire." Nixon commented: "We must not be in a position where the Russians and we settle the son-of-a-bitch and leave the Chinese out."

Turning to the decision made earlier in the morning to confront the Soviet Union with military force if necessary in support of China, Kissinger said: "What you did this morning Mr. President was a heroic act." Nixon responded: "I had to do it." He ruminated that the prevailing instinct in the government was to avoid difficult choices: "It's the whole attitude, the whole government, the whole American establishment would say, well don't borrow trouble. It's all going to work out. Nothing ever works out unless you do something about it. That's the trouble with the world." He harkened back to the appeasement of Hitler before World War II and ascribed the war to the "pusillanimous" conduct of the Western allies when confronted with Hitler's challenge. Kissinger pointed to the contrastingly strong stand Nixon had taken in the present crisis: "When I showed Vorontsov the Kennedy treaty they knew they were looking down the gun barrel." Nixon asked: "Did he react?" Kissinger replied: "Oh yeah."

Kissinger suggested that it was time "to turn the screw another half turn." In his view, if the United States was to ease up on the pressure on India and the Soviet Union "we've had it." "Therefore," he added, "my strong recommendation is that we trigger this UN thing as quickly as we possibly can because it is the only way we can go on record now of condemning India." Nixon concurred: "That's right." Kissinger felt that it was "essential" that the condemnation be leveled initially in a White House statement. Kissinger put forward a draft of such a statement and Nixon approved it.

Kissinger was confident that events were moving in the right direction: "We've got them. But the big problem now is, Mr. President, not to give the—is to—if we play this thing well we'll come out ahead with both the Chinese and the Russians." He went on: "We are doing this Mr. President with no cards whatsoever." Nixon felt he had one card: "The Russians want something from us."

The optimism engendered by the Soviet response was tempered, near the end of the conversation, by the fact that the crisis still could take a dangerous turn. Kissinger said: "The Chinese may come anyway and we'll have to face the Russians down anyway." Nixon responded: "Yeah, but if the Russians and the Chinese come now they will come" [largely unclear, apparently Nixon did not feel that a military confrontation with the Soviet Union was as likely as it seemed earlier]. "The Russians want to settle it with us. If this means anything [the Soviet response] this means something. Now there is one great problem. As I said, I may be wrong, but Communists generally use negotiations for the purpose of screwing, not for the purpose of settling."



Kissinger felt that the Soviets were “too scared” to play a devious game with the negotiations. He referred again to the Kennedy commitment to Pakistan as convincing Vorontsov that the United States “meant business.” Kissinger felt that the Soviet Union was not ready for a military confrontation with the United States. “In 73–74 they may have you. They’re not ready yet.” He added: “We must tell the Chinese what the message is. We must inform them.” Nixon asked: “The Russian message?” Kissinger responded: “Yeah.” Nixon said: “That the Russians are—that as a result of the President’s ultimatum, I’d put it that way, the Russians have now” Kissinger interjected: “I showed them the message, to tell you the truth.” It remained, Kissinger felt, “to see what they [the Chinese] want.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 12, 1971, 10:27–10:37 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 637–6)

At 11:06 a.m., Nixon and Kissinger began the process of drafting a response to the message just received from the Soviet Union. They continued to work in the Oval Office on what was sent subsequently as a hot line response. Kissinger concluded from the Soviet message that “there won’t be military action.” He was referring to further Indian military action against West Pakistan. He went on: “It’s just a question of how to wrap it up now.”

Kissinger then read a draft hot line message to Brezhnev. He and Nixon discussed and revised it according to Nixon’s instructions. Nixon stressed that the message should emphasize that “time is of the essence to avoid frightening consequences neither of us want.”

Nixon reverted to the public statement the White House would issue condemning India and observed that in issuing the statement the United States would be “putting it to the Indians.” “The argument against putting it to the Indians,” he said, “is, as you know, that well if we put it to the Indians then they will stiffen their backs and say screw you.” Kissinger interjected: “They won’t.” Nixon continued: “But my view is that . . . they seem to be affected by world opinion. To the extent that they are goddamn it we’re going to get it across that world opinion is against them.” (Ibid., Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 12, 1971, 11:06–11:14 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 637–11) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recordings printed here specifically for this volume. Transcripts of both conversations are published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Documents 178 and 179.

## 284. Message From the Soviet Leadership to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Moscow, December 12, 1971.

The first contacts with the Government of India and personally with Prime Minister I. Gandhi on the question which was raised by President Nixon in his letter<sup>2</sup> testify to the fact that the Government of India has no intention to take any military actions against West Pakistan.

The Soviet leaders believe that this makes the situation easier and hope that the Government of Pakistan will draw from this appropriate conclusions.

As far as other questions raised in the President's letter are concerned the answers will be given in the shortest of time.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan. No classification marking. The message is handwritten in English, is unsigned, and was apparently prepared in the Soviet Embassy. A note indicates it was conveyed by Vorontsov to Haig at 10:45 a.m. on December 12. The message opens with the request that it be conveyed to President Nixon. The hot line response sent by President Nixon to General Secretary Brezhnev 45 minutes later assumes that the message was from Brezhnev (Document 286).

<sup>2</sup> Document 269.

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## 285. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 12, 1971, 11:15 a.m.

### SOUTH ASIA

#### PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Richard Helms, Director, CIA  
John N. Irwin II, Under Secretary of State  
U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs  
Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, Pakistan, 12/12/71. Secret; Sensitive. No drafting information appears on the memorandum.

Maurice Williams, AID  
Admiral Moorer, Chairman, JCS  
Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

Kissinger: Let me give you the President's decisions:

—Bush will go to the Security Council.

—Ziegler will put out the following statement. [He reads the White House statement.]<sup>2</sup>

—We want on record the strongest possible statement calling for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal.

—If this is vetoed, we must call this aggression.

—Instructions are to go to Bush; the timing is today.

—There will be no backgrounding. There must be a united government for the next 72 hours.

Irwin: Bush is to introduce this resolution?<sup>3</sup>

Kissinger: Either we do it ourselves or we get some others to do it, for example, Somalia. The resolution should be based on the General Assembly Resolution. Bush should work with Bhutto to get the strategy clear. After this, if it's vetoed, we may be able to fall back if Bhutto wants it. We have no indication of this. In first round we must be very firm.

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<sup>2</sup> Brackets in the source text. The text of the statement released by the Office of the White House Press Secretary on December 12 reads as follows: "On December 7th the General Assembly by a vote of 104 to 11 with 10 abstentions called on India and Pakistan to institute an immediate cease-fire and to withdraw troops from each other's territory. Pakistan has accepted the resolution. India has refused. In view of India's defiance of world opinion expressed by such an overwhelming majority the United States is now returning the issue to the Security Council. With East Pakistan virtually occupied by Indian troops, a continuation of the war would take on increasingly the character of armed attack on the very existence of a member state of the U.N. All permanent members of the Security Council have an obligation to end this threat to world peace on the most urgent basis. The United States will cooperate fully in this effort." (Circular telegram 223703 to New Delhi, Islamabad and 15 other posts, December 12; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>3</sup> Instructions concerning the draft resolution Ambassador Bush was to introduce in the Security Council were sent to USUN in telegram 223687, December 12. (*Ibid.*, POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK/UN) The Security Council convened at the request of the United States on December 12. (UN doc. S/10444) Bush reviewed the evolution of the crisis to that point, pointed to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on December 7 which had called for a cease-fire and the withdrawal of forces, and noted that Pakistan had accepted the terms but India had not. Bush charged India with responsibility for broadening the crisis and for obstructing, with Soviet support, United Nations efforts to facilitate a solution. He said the Security Council had a responsibility to demand that India comply with the Assembly's resolution. (UN doc. S/PV.1611) Bush introduced a resolution which, in its operative paragraphs, called for an immediate cease-fire, the withdrawal by India and Pakistan of their armed forces from each other's territory, and the creation of conditions necessary to safeguard the lives of civilians and to facilitate the safe return of the refugees to their homes. (UN doc. S/10446 and Rev. 1) The Security Council voted 11-2 in favor of the resolution, with 2 abstentions. The resolution was not adopted because of the negative vote of the Soviet Union.

Sisco: Tell him to put a resolution together and consult with Bhutto.

Kissinger: The President wants all our officers to emphasize how important and serious this is, and edge toward calling it aggression.

The Fleet is to go.

Moorer: The plan is to move through the Straits<sup>4</sup> and then into the Indian Ocean. In 45 hours they can move where we want them. It's a carrier, 4 destroyers, an oiler and amphibious force (the Tripoli) with three destroyers—all set to go at daylight Monday, their time.

Kissinger: Send it where there are Americans—say, Karachi. Defense can comment that they're sent to help in a possible evacuation.

Irwin: Will we announce it?

Kissinger: Wait for a question. Are there any Americans in West or East Pakistan?

Irwin: Yes, in both.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the Malacca Straits separating Malaysia and Indonesia which the carrier force that had been stationed off Vietnam was expected to traverse the evening of December 12, Washington time. The force was anticipated to arrive off East Pakistan by the morning of December 16. (Note on information concerning U.S. Naval forces; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 642, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan)

<sup>5</sup> This is the extent of the record that has been found for this meeting.

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## 286. Message From President Nixon to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 12, 1971, 11:30 a.m.

Mr. General Secretary:

I have just received your interim message<sup>2</sup> concerning the grave situation in the Indian Subcontinent.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. No classification marking. A handwritten note on the message indicates it was sent via the hot line. According to Kissinger's memoirs, the message was drafted by Kissinger and Haig and represented the first use by the Nixon administration of the hot line communication channel between Washington and Moscow. (*White House Years*, p. 909)

<sup>2</sup> Document 284.

However, after delaying for 72 hours in anticipation of your reply to my conversation with Minister Matskevich and Counsellor Vorontsov<sup>3</sup> I had set in train certain moves in the United Nations Security Council at the time mentioned to Counsellor Vorontsov. These cannot now be reversed. I must also note that the Indian assurances still lack any concreteness.

I am still prepared to proceed along the lines set forth in my letter of December 10,<sup>4</sup> as well as in the conversations with your chargé d'affaires Vorontsov, and my talk with your Agriculture Minister.

In view of the urgency of the situation and the need for concerted action I propose that we continue closest consultations through established confidential channels. I cannot emphasize too strongly that time is of the essence to avoid consequences neither of us want.

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<sup>3</sup> See Document 257.

<sup>4</sup> Document 269.

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**287. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 12, 1971, 11:45 a.m.

HAK: The steps we had started are no longer reversible. I want you to understand that. I want us to understand each other. We are calling a Security Council meeting to ask for implementation of the General Assembly resolution. Then when we are still prepared we are sending a hot line message to Brezhnev<sup>2</sup> to tell him that we still are prepared to do what we told you on the 10th. This will give you a chance to send instructions to your people and we will be working with the Pakistanis. We had no choice. We had to make our position clear.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Document 286.

Vorontsov: Do you think that whole situation is that urgent for all these steps. We are talking very actively with the Indians and I think we will have results in several hours.

HAK: We had already given all our instructions. I told you we would move this morning and we didn't get your message till after 10:00 and it could not be reversed.

Vorontsov: Not because of ill-will but just the timing factor of getting messages to and from Moscow.

HAK: I think this can still be settled on that basis.

Vorontsov: I am afraid we will have some trouble in the Security Council. We are thinking of everything together: the ceasefire, status [of the] war, withdrawal of all forces.

HAK: Your communication doesn't mention any of these things.

Vorontsov: We haven't yet gotten approval of the Indians but we expect it in several hours.

HAK: I think all we need is one more round at the Security Council.

Vorontsov: Maybe by the time of the Security Council meeting there will be agreement from India. We must cooperate on this matter because we are now on the same track.

HAK: Our greatest desire is to cooperate with you. But when we didn't hear from you I told you that by 9:00 we would move. I told you on Friday<sup>3</sup> I was holding it up for 48 hours. I was hoping to hear something from you last night.

Vorontsov: Well, maybe everything will fall into place.

HAK: We can still make it fall into place.

Vorontsov: We need an agreement. I hope you will not be insistent on a fist fight in the Security Council because we are in agreement now. All that is needed now is the tactical things. The terms will be acceptable to you.

HAK: You will find us more than cooperative. Make sure your leaders understand this.

V: I think they understand.

HAK: We had no choice but to do this. We had to stand by our allies. Now we will have gone through the exercise.

V: In the Security Council, Malik might ask to receive instructions since he is waiting for the same thing I am telling you now. If he is trying to stall it is because of this reason, not because he wants to disrupt anything.

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<sup>3</sup> December 10.

HAK: Don't have him introduce it before giving me some advance warning. I am in good communications and if you have a concrete proposal that had a chance of acceptance make it to me first.

V: Maybe by 1:00 we will have something.

HAK: General Haig may go to New York to meet with Bush. In that case call Col Kennedy. I will send you right away a copy of the hot line communication.

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**288. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 12, 1971, 12:30 p.m.

K: Yuli, I just talked to the President again. I reported our conversation<sup>2</sup> to him and he asked me to tell you that we will work it out in a spirit so there are no winners or losers. And so we are not looking for any public humiliation of anybody. We also believe—and we will use our influence in the Security Council as it evolves to come up with a compromise as far as the UN is concerned in which everybody gives up a little. We are also prepared to proceed on our understandings on which you are working. We want to make sure that you approach us first so that for now on we will not take any additional steps beyond what we have told you.

V: I recalled this to Moscow. First to you and the President and then . . .

K: . . . and then work out the strategy and tactics and then work toward a solution as rapidly as possible. That is the spirit in which we will approach it as soon as we get confirmation from you.

V: That is very important what they are doing in Delhi—a solution acceptable to you, to us, the Indians and to Pakistan.

K: Thank you, Yuli. I am in immediate touch by phone on the plane, or they will flash a message to me.

V: Or I should talk to Colonel Kennedy.

K: This afternoon and after that talk to General Haig.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 287.

## 289. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

New York, December 12, 1971, 0536Z.

4965. Subj: India/Pakistan: Bush mtg with Foreign Minister Singh.

1. Following highlights of mtg between Bush and Swaran Singh unclear.

2. During two hour conversation between Bush and Singh, at latter's initiative, Singh and entourage (Kaul, Jha, and Sen) made following major points.

3. UN Action. UN cannot take useful action at this time. Further debate will only harden positions and create additional frictions. UN tied to precedent and formalistic rites and cannot deal with such complex issues. If UN has to meet in future, Bangla Desh reps must be present; it is a reality.

4. Indian Aims in East. Indian aims are simple: Surrender of Pak forces with repatriation to follow; recognition of Bangla Desh. US should try understand complex reasons why India recognized Bangla Desh at this time. Recognition was public expression of self-negatism to show that India had no territorial ambitions. Also, situation in East Pakistan is very confused and volatile with many conflicting forces at play. India believed it was necessary recognize moderate, elected, democratic group so that there would be no power vacuum. Recognition of Bangla Desh is an effort control Mukti Bahini.

5. GOI very much aware need protect Biharis. Will establish safe areas under Indian control and assist in repatriation to West Pakistan if they desire.

6. Aims in West. India has no territorial aims in West Pakistan. This commitment, however, is not open-ended if GOP continues war and tries make gains in West to make up for loss of East. Under our questioning, they would not make same unequivocal commitment re Azad Kashmir. Kaul said "We have no *major* ambitions"; even in peace time, he said, we talked with Paks about minor rectifications. Repeatedly, Kaul and Singh said they do not wish to prolong war.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad and New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> When Ambassador Jha met with Under Secretary Irwin in Washington later in the day, he also addressed the concerns Irwin had expressed on December 9 about India's war aims; see Document 262. Jha stressed that India had no territorial ambitions, although he said his government had reservations about offering such assurances unless Pakistan provided similar assurances. The concern was to avoid giving Pakistan the



7. US Influence With Yahya. Thrust of above was that US use leverage with Yahya, or whomever is in control (this point made on more than one occasion) to see realities in East and move to end war in West as well.

8. US/Indian Relations. Throughout conversation there was theme that we must try minimize impact on US-Indian relations, but they firmly held to position that they had taken only course open to India. Singh reviewed eight months history but said, let us put that aside, for it was vital we both understand events on Dec 6. India had not attacked on ground in West (“surely your intelligence knows this”) but, once Yahya said next day that state of war exists, India had chosen how it would react. Pak air attack was effort to “internationalize” conflict. US and India have many ideals in common; let these not be destroyed. Kaul very pointedly said that, if press reports were true that US would resume arms shipments to Pakistan, “this would be very serious”.

9. Bush made it very clear he could not make any commitment re not returning to UN. US was still attempting to see whether UN action “could be useful”. We were not, he said, engaged in exercise “to get someone” but were taking serious look at options. Also, emphasized that he did not wish them to underestimate potential impact of current situation on US-Indian relations. Movement of large armed forces over border had made impact here; American public also concerned over closeness of Indian ties with Soviets. Indians should also understand that large number of UN members also disturbed. US wanted better relations with India but they should clearly understand we have real problems now.

10. *Comment*: Foregoing is summary. Discussion was cordial at all times.

**Bush**

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opportunity to wage war with nothing to lose. Jha added that India held to the position that Kashmir belonged to India, therefore any assurance relating to territorial ambitions would not necessarily apply to Azad Kashmir. Irwin reiterated that the United States would find unacceptable any attempt by India to alter the border between India and Pakistan in Kashmir. (Telegram 223704 to New Delhi, December 12; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK; published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 181) Kissinger summarized Jha’s response to Irwin in a memorandum that he sent to Nixon on December 13. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President’s Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971)

290. **Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) and the Minister of the Soviet Embassy (Vorontsov)**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 12, 1971, 7:40 p.m.

V: General, how are you. You are left alone. They arrived already?<sup>2</sup>

H: Yes. I just spoke to them. He<sup>3</sup> asked me to hold up our Seventh Fleet movements, and we are going to put that movement in orbit for 24 hours at a place so it won't surface—the fact that they are moving.

V: Still like the Vietnamese situation?

H: They are considerably south of there. So it will be no public issue.

V: For 24 hours. Very good. I think that is very necessary. During this 24 hours, we might have good results.

H: Henry wanted you to have this.

V: Thank you very much, General.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 998, Haig Chronological File, Haig Telecons 1971. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> President Nixon traveled to the Azores on December 12, where he met with Portuguese Prime Minister Marcello Caetano and French President Georges Pompidou. Among the topics discussed were European economic integration and international monetary problems. Kissinger, Rogers, and Connally accompanied the President. The President's party returned to Washington on December 14. (Ibid., White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

<sup>3</sup> An apparent reference to Kissinger, acting on Nixon's instructions. In his memoirs, Kissinger states that the decision to delay the movement of the fleet was taken to give the Soviet Union more time to respond to the hot line message sent to Moscow earlier in the day. (*White House Years*, p. 911) For text of the hot line message, see Document 286.

**291. Message From the Soviet Leadership to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Moscow, December 13, 1971.

We have attentively examined your message<sup>2</sup> over the direct communications link. In accordance with the confidential exchange of opinions existing between us, we are advising you that at the present time, we are conducting a clarification of all the circumstances in India.

We will inform you of the results of the clarification without delay.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. Top Secret; Sensitive, Special Category. A handwritten note on the message indicates it was received at 5 a.m. Haig transmitted the text of this hot line message to Kissinger at 7:37 a.m. in telegram WH 11131 to Lajes in the Azores. Haig observed about the message: "Obviously we are still in a holding pattern." (Ibid., Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan)

<sup>2</sup> Document 286.

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**292. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 13, 1971.

SUBJECT

Destruction of US Aircraft in Pakistan

The following are the facts that you requested concerning the reported Indian attack on a US aircraft in Pakistan.

Ambassador Farland reported on December 5 that our Defense Representatives' plane and a UN aircraft were destroyed at the Islamabad international airport that morning during an Indian air attack. Both planes were clearly marked and parked at a separate area of the field away from any Pak military aircraft. Our Defense Representative was convinced that there was no case of misidentification and that both planes were deliberately attacked.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 572, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/12/71–12/13/71. Confidential. Sent for information. A note on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

As soon as the facts were established, Secretary Rogers called in Ambassador Jha and protested this "indiscriminate strafing."<sup>2</sup> There has been no formal Indian response. Jha agreed that it was unfortunate and said that although India did not want to damage the property of neutral countries, it was not possible to insure selectivity in strafing airports. The Secretary retorted that the military planes had been on one side of the field and non-military on the other.

While it is obvious that a more strenuous protest could have been undertaken at the time, events have now overtaken this issue and I recommend no further action.

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<sup>2</sup> Rogers told Jha that it would have been hard to mistake the UN plane in that it was painted white. (Telegram 220235 to New Delhi, December 7; *ibid.*)

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### **293. Backchannel Message From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 13, 1971, 4:07 p.m.

We have just learned that Bhutto approached Bush in New York<sup>2</sup> with suggestion that following amendment to our SC resolution<sup>3</sup> be discussed with Soviets in effort to get compromise:

Calls upon the GOP to take effective action towards a political settlement in East Pakistan giving immediate recognition to the will of the East Pak population within the framework of one Pakistan.

This as you know marks departure from game plan<sup>4</sup> and we are concerned that introduction of this type of clause, particularly at this point, could lead to quick dissolution of our position. Soviets would veto on one-Pakistan grounds and then would be locked into a position on political issue. Debate on political question would inevitably

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan. Top Secret; Flash; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. Haig signed for Kissinger; there is no indication on the message that Kissinger cleared it. The time of transmission is from an attached note.

<sup>2</sup> This exchange between Bush and Bhutto was reported in telegram 4979 from USUN, December 13. (*Ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 3, Document 285.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 276.

ensue and hope for quick ceasefire evaporate. For our part we want to stick with game plan.

Would appreciate knowing soonest whether Bhutto proposal represents instruction from Islamabad and if so what basis for proposal may be.<sup>5</sup> Warm regards.

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<sup>5</sup> Farland took up the proposed amendment with Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan who consulted with President Yahya and reported back that, assuming the revised resolution provided for an immediate cease-fire, Yahya approved the amendment proposed by Bhutto. Sultan Khan emphasized the importance of an immediate cease-fire in order to stop what he characterized as the slaughter in East Pakistan. (Backchannel message, 1089 from Islamabad (Farland to Kissinger), December 13; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan)

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**294. Telegram From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)<sup>1</sup>**

Lajes Air Field, Azores Islands, December 13, 1971, 1650Z.

AWH 10038. My present view on India–Pakistan is as follows:

1. We are positioned well but we must be as careful not to be maneuvered into the position of the last hold-out as we must be to avoid being the first to cave.

2. I therefore suggest that if Security Council is still deadlocked tomorrow morning or the Soviets have vetoed we should consider backing a resolution for cease-fire and later withdrawal—even if Soviet answer is not yet received. Can we position Bhutto to get some of his friends to surface such a resolution? We should trigger stage 2 even if we have not heard from Soviets tomorrow. Can I see what such a resolution would look like. Let us discuss that.

3. As for fleet, I am weighing advantage of moving it against risk of being called off prematurely by public pressure. Can we put it into Singapore for a day? In any event, fleet should go into Indian Ocean,

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan. Top Secret, Flash, Sensitive, Exclusively Eyes Only. Received at 1732Z.

not Bay of Bengal. Let us discuss it. Let us discuss it on plane<sup>2</sup> before final go-ahead.

[Omitted here are instructions from Kissinger on Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.]

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<sup>2</sup> Apparent reference to a proposed discussion among Nixon, Kissinger, Rogers, and Connally on the plane scheduled to return the party to Washington on December 14.

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## 295. Message From the Soviet Leadership to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Moscow, December 14, 1971.

The Soviet leaders believe that further aggravation of the situation on Indian subcontinent demands that urgent measures be taken. That is precisely how we act trying to create a turn from war to peace in the development of events there and to ensure just and stable settlement.

In all this case there are many complexities. The character of the current events demands that all circumstances should be taken into consideration in order to make a really correct decision. That is why a calm, weighed approach is needed. We would like to see our exchange of opinion to be conducted in such a spirit.

In your letter of December 10<sup>2</sup> you proceed from a necessity of ceasefire between India and Pakistan with a simultaneous solution of the political settlement based on the recognition of the will expressed by the East Pakistan population. Thus we have now between us a considerable rapprochement of points of views on the ways of reestablishment of peace on Indian subcontinent.

It also follows from your letter that it was not without the influence on the part of the United States that certain suggestions by General Farman to the UN representative in Dacca have appeared on December 10,<sup>3</sup> which in our opinion lead in general to the right direction.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 497, President's Trip Files, Exchange of Notes Between Dobrynin and Kissinger, Vol. 2. No classification marking. A handwritten note on the message indicates it was delivered by Vorontsov to Haig at 3 a.m. on December 14. The message is handwritten in English and apparently was prepared in the Soviet Embassy.

<sup>2</sup> Document 269.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 3, Document 263.

We are in constant contact with the Indian side. One of the results of these very contacts was the message transmitted to you on December 12<sup>4</sup> that India has no intention to take any military action in connection with West Pakistan. We have firm assurances by the Indian leadership that India has no plans of seizing West Pakistan territory. Thus as far as intentions of India are concerned there is no lack of clarity to which you have referred.

In the course of consultations the Indian side has expressed the willingness to ceasefire and withdraw its forces if Pakistani Government withdraws its forces from East Pakistan and peaceful settlement is reached there with the lawful representatives of East Pakistani population, to whom the power will be transferred and conditions will be created for return from India of all East Pakistani refugees. At the same time the Indians have no intentions to impose their will on the East Pakistani people who themselves will determine their fate.

Then there is a necessary basis for an immediate cessation of the conflict and this opportunity should be used.

We noted with satisfaction that your letter contained an agreement with the approach of the Soviet side to the questions of political settlement. This allows to act appropriately. We believe that it will be only a gain if in our exchange of opinion a confidential agreement does not differ from public positions.

It is even more difficult for us to understand how is it possible to combine striving for a constructive peaceful settlement of the problem by collective efforts of our countries with such unilateral actions like demonstrative movements of naval forces and so on. Suppose the other side will also embark on the path of taking similar measures—what then will be the net result?

We think that after having now reached a rapprochement of our opinions as to how to approach the task of elimination of the conflict, it is desirable to convert this into appropriate agreed actions. And here it is necessary first of all to exert influence on the Pakistani Government. It would be good if the American side on its part also stressed to the Pakistani Government the necessity of embarking on the path towards political settlement in East Pakistan on the basis which is now rather clear.

We on our part intend to continue doing all that depend on us and will continue to maintain closest contacts with you, Mr. President, through the established confidential channels. Now there is a basis for the solution and we must seize this opportunity.

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<sup>4</sup> Document 284.

**296. Telegram From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) in the Azores<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1971, 0859Z.

WH 11161. Deliver urgently as soon as addressee is awake.

At Enclosure 1<sup>2</sup> is report of near collapse of Pak forces defending Dacca. U.S. Counsel Spivack is obviously strong proponent of prompt surrender and is apparently focal point for elements sharing this view. (His reporting during final days has been especially noteworthy.)

At Enclosure 2<sup>3</sup> is confirmation that Pak Governor Malik, with evident endorsement of U.S. Counsel, is reporting collapse of Pakistani defenses in East Pakistan. This time apparent strength of Pak General Niazi and weakness of Pak General Farman have been adjudicated by Islamabad in favor of early surrender. Ambassador Farland has not reported action to Washington but according to Spivack, Farland is engaged in final negotiations in Islamabad.

All this sets the stage for a magnanimous reply from Soviets who had been apparently waiting for this precise moment some 40 hours after their initial commitment to a prompt reply.

At Enclosure 3<sup>4</sup> is Soviet proposal received at 3:00 a.m. today and which includes the following essentials:

(1) Adoption of a calm, weighed approach.

(2) Agreement to a ceasefire between India and Pakistan with a simultaneous solution of the political settlement "... based on the recognition of the will expressed by the East Pakistani population." And reference to suggestions made by General Farman to the UN

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 432, Backchannel Files, Backchannels To/From HAK. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> The text of telegram 5627 from Dacca, December 14, was transmitted as enclosure 1. Consul General Spivak reported in this cable that Governor Malik and General Farman Ali had reached the conclusion that the military situation in East Pakistan had become hopeless and that it was time to take the necessary steps to avoid indiscriminate killing. Spivak agreed and urged that the effort to do so be made before street-to-street fighting began in Dacca. (Telegram 5627 from Dacca is also *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK and published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 184)

<sup>3</sup> The text of telegram 5628 from Dacca, December 14, was transmitted as enclosure 2. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK and published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 185)

<sup>4</sup> See Document 295.



representative in Dacca which according to the Soviet note were referred to in the President's letter<sup>5</sup> and were compatible with the Soviet view. (This is obviously an erroneous presumption on the part of the Soviets since no references were made to General Farman's suggestions.)

(3) Reiteration that India has no intention of taking military action in West Pakistan and emphasizing that India has no plans for seizing West Pakistani territory.

(4) Assurance that India is willing to accept the ceasefire and withdraw its forces if Pakistan withdraws its forces from East Pakistan and if a peaceful settlement is reached in East Pakistan with the "... lawful representatives of the East Pakistani population to whom the power will be transferred and conditions will be created for return from India of all East Pakistani refugees."

(5) India will not impose its will on the East Pakistani people who themselves will determine their fate.

(6) Necessity that the foregoing confidential agreement does not vary from the U.S. public position with specific reference to the unilateral movement of U.S. Naval forces.

(7) Requirement that the Government of Pakistan now agree to political settlement in East Pakistan on the basis outlined.

(8) Willingness to maintain close contact with the President through the established confidential channels.

From the foregoing it is apparent that the Soviets have delayed just long enough to ensure the collapse of Pakistani forces in the East which in turn will ensure that the will of the East Pakistani population will be expressed in favor of total independence. Thus while the Soviets have avoided any reference to Bangla Desh Government or independence they have established criteria which will have that effect. I see no reference in the official Soviet response to the unofficial language used by Vorontsov with you on Sunday which referred to a one-Pakistan solution when he confirmed that India had no designs on West Pakistan.<sup>6</sup> Under the formula underlined by the Soviets therefore we have the advantage of a guarantee of preserving West Pakistan but at the same time it is apparent that the Soviets will insist on conditions in the East which will be tantamount to the creation of an independent East Pakistan which is the likely outcome of the

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<sup>5</sup> Document 269.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to the 10:05 a.m. telephone conversation on December 12 during which Vorontsov read to Kissinger the text of the message from the Soviet leadership (Document 284) he was preparing to deliver to the White House. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

expression of the will of the victorious Bangla Desh. At best we can assume that we have an arrangement which will preserve West Pakistan intact, but it will unquestionably fall short of what will be an acceptable arrangement in the East to either the Government of Pakistan or the PRC.

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**297. Telegram From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) in the Azores<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1971, 0924Z.

WH 11162. Deliver urgently as soon as addressee is awake on December 14, 1971.

By separate message<sup>2</sup> I have forwarded Soviet response. It is apparent we will have to take following steps:

(1) Agree on suitable proposal and language for a negotiated settlement of conflict either in or outside of framework of UN. I am still awaiting reply from UK on language changes to their resolutions suggested last night.

(2) Urgently notify Farland and Government of Pakistan, as well as PRC, of course of action to be pursued.

(3) Bring State and bureaucracy on board with respect to whatever course of action is decided upon.

(4) Consider issue of recalling fleet. (I would hold up pending acceptance by Soviets of final course of action decided upon.)

(5) Regardless of channels used for completing negotiations, decide on strategy for concluding UN involvement in situation.

With respect to PRC I believe Soviet proposal is sufficiently disadvantageous to dictate that we allow Government of Pakistan to coordinate with PRC and leave primary initiative to them. I think Paks will buy this proposal at this time even though complete East Pakistani independence is likely outcome.

Please advise.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 432, Backchannel Files, Backchannels To/From HAK. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>2</sup> Document 296.

**298. Letter From Pakistani President Yahya to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 14, 1971.

My Dear President Nixon,

You must have been informed of the massive supply of tanks of various types including amphibious tanks, heavy guns, anti-aircraft guns and other equipment which the Russians have already slipped through to India in December in addition to the enormous quantities of arms and ammunition that had already reached India during the month of November, by air and by sea.

The Russian proposal about the cease-fire, withdrawal and negotiations has by now clearly been demonstrated to have been only a hoax. They are pursuing filibustering tactics in the Security Council. This does not leave any doubt about their aim of making the military conquest of East Pakistan a *fait accompli*. The passage of time is clearly playing into the hands of the Russians. We are convinced that, after acquiring East Pakistan, they would let the Indians turn their might single-mindedly against West Pakistan for which they have already begun to equip the Indians.

As you know Pakistan has the will to defend itself but for this determination on our part to have any meaning, our supply lines must be kept open and adequate equipment to withstand the increasing Indian power should flow through them while there may still be time.

The American assistance has to assume, without any further loss of time, meaningful dimensions. I am most grateful to you for what you are doing in getting some help reach us through third parties, but the volume of this assistance cannot possibly match the arms build-up by Russia in India. The American intervention in the situation does not only have to be credible but also tangible and meaningful. Time has come for the United States to go beyond warnings and *démarches* if its determination to punish aggression across international borders is to have any effect on the Soviet Union and India. The Seventh Fleet does not only have to come to our shores but also to relieve certain pressures which we by ourselves are not in a position to cope with. In this connection, I have sent a specific proposal through General Raza

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusive; Eyes Only. The text of this letter was transmitted in message 1091 from Islamabad at 0926Z on December 14, which is the source text, with instructions to deliver it to Kissinger for Nixon, and to deliver a copy to Ambassador Raza.

about the role the Seventh Fleet could play at Karachi which, I hope, is receiving your attention.<sup>2</sup>

Now that the Russians have been exposed and India stands isolated in the world community, I am sure that American public opinion will readily understand the measures that you take as intended to preserve the fabric of international law and order and to enable a sovereign state to survive against the aggressive onslaught of a neighbour several times its size and backed by a super power like the Soviet Union. I am convinced that the public opinion in Pakistan is ready and waiting for the adoption of such measures by the United States. The understanding we have reached is ready to develop immediately into an alliance.

The perfidy in the sub-continent may not be the only move by the Soviet Union to counter. There are already reports that the Soviet Union is telling the Arabs about the futility of a United Nations with the sound implication that, in order to achieve their objectives, they too may have to resort to arms. This eventuality causes us considerable concern, because it is bound to erode the solid Arab support that we have enjoyed so far, apart from pre-empting the growth of favourable public opinion in Arab countries as a result of your timely support to Pakistan.

I am sure you will agree that time is of essence. We are paying a heavy price for each hour and I shall be anxiously waiting for your response.

With warm personal regards,

**Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan**  
*H.P.K., H.J.,*  
*General*

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<sup>2</sup> On December 13 Haig sent a telegram to Kissinger in the Azores that transmitted the text of a letter to Kissinger from Raza which had just been delivered to the White House. The letter requested that the Seventh Fleet be used to keep the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea open to Pakistan and to deter the Indian Navy from attacking Pakistan's harbors. (Telegram WH 11146 to Lajes Air Field, the Azores; *ibid.*, Box 432, Backchannel Files, Backchannels To/From HAK)

**299. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 14, 1971, 1055Z.

1092. When I returned home from seeing Yahya this noon, he telephoned to say that while his instructions to Bhutto remained valid, in the event India insisted on pursuing the war. "I will have to have twenty B-57s immediately." I told him I would pass this message along, without assurances. Warm regards.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 573, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/14/71–12/16/71. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusive; Eyes Only.

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**300. Telegram From the Consulate General in Dacca to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Dacca, December 14, 1971, 1250Z.

5637. Subject: Niazi Cease-Fire Proposal.

1. Lt. Gen. Niazi telephoned me at 1720 hours today to ask that I receive him urgently in my office. He appeared in company of Major General Rao Farman Ali and said that bombing of Dacca city this afternoon had convinced him that the fighting must be stopped immediately to prevent further bloodshed, even though, he said, his troops were still in good positions and were not in danger at the moment.

2. General Farman Ali had in his possession a rough draft of a proposal he wished me to transmit to New Delhi so that it could be

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, Calcutta, and USUN. The text of this telegram was repeated by the White House to Kissinger in the Azores in telegram WH 11170. The Department of State repeated it to Rogers in telegram Tosec 41. Both cables were sent to Air Force One. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan)

communicated through Indian channels to the Indian field commander in East Pakistan. After some discussion, the following proposal was drawn up in the form of a letter to me, signed by General Niazi and his signature attested by General Farman Ali:

“In order to save future loss of innocent human lives which would inevitably result from further hostilities in the major cities like Dacca, I request you to arrange for an immediate cease-fire under the following conditions:

- (A) Regrouping of Pakistan armed forces in designated areas to be mutually agreed upon between the commanders of the opposing forces;
- (B) To guarantee the safety of all military and paramilitary forces;
- (C) Safety of all those who had settled in East Pakistan since 1947;
- (D) No reprisals against those who helped the administration since March 1971.

In those conditions, the Pakistan armed forces and paramilitary forces would immediately cease all military operations.

I would further abide by any resolutions which the Security Council of the United Nations may pass for the permanent settlement of the present dispute.

I make this proposal with full authority vested in me by virtue of my position as martial law administrator of Zone B (East Pakistan) and Commander Eastern Command exercising final authority over all Pakistan military and paramilitary forces in this area.”

4. Niazi asked that I indicate in my transmittal message that he was prepared to name a representative immediately to discuss the details of his offer with an Indian counterpart, and he hoped that the Indian commander would do the same immediately, so that negotiations could begin at once.

5. Generals Niazi and Farman still wish to avoid use of word “surrender”.

6. You will note that Niazi states that he has full authority to take above action. When I questioned him specifically whether any concurrence was required by President Yahya or anyone else in Islamabad, his reply was definitely “No”.

7. Niazi will send his ADC to my office in about two hours from now, when he hopes some sort of reaction will be available. He is very anxious that some progress be made before daylight tomorrow, when he fears a resumption of bombing in Dacca.

8. In regard to Niazi’s authority to act, I should also point out that Governor A.M. Malik has left the governor’s house and has placed himself under the protection of the International Red Cross, thus ab-

dicating any governmental function. General Farman Ali said that Malik had submitted a letter of resignation.<sup>2</sup>

**Spivack**

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<sup>2</sup> In telegram 224441 to Islamabad, December 14, the Department instructed Farland to see President Yahya to ascertain what, if anything, he wanted the United States to do with Niazi's cease-fire proposal. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) Farland responded that Yahya had indicated, through Sultan Khan, that General Niazi had full authority to act along the lines reported in telegram 5637 from Dacca. Yahya authorized the transmittal of the proposal to New Delhi and to Bhutto in New York. (Telegram 12548 from Islamabad, December 14; *ibid.*) The Department was leery of being put into the position of facilitating negotiations between Indian and Pakistani military authorities. (Telegram 224564 to Islamabad, December 14; *ibid.*) The Embassy in New Delhi was instructed, therefore, not to deliver Niazi's cease-fire proposal to the Indian Government. USUN was instructed to give the message to Bhutto with the suggestion that he might want to pass it to the Indian Foreign Minister in New York, or pass it through the UN Secretary General. (Telegram 224925 to New Delhi, December 14; *ibid.*) Bhutto chose not to deliver the message. After confirming that Yahya wanted the message delivered, the Department instructed USUN to deliver the message to the Indian delegation with the caveat that the United States took no position on the contents of the message. (Telegram 225265 to New Delhi, December 15; *ibid.*)

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### **301. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 14, 1971, 1321Z.

12537. Subject: Discussion with Pres. Yahya re Ceasefire—Dec. 14. Ref: Dacca 5627; Dacca 5628;<sup>2</sup> Islamabad 12507;<sup>3</sup> and Islamabad 12538.<sup>4</sup>

1. Summary: President Yahya acknowledges that military situation in East Pakistan has hopelessly deteriorated. He provided me with

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Top Secret; Flash; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> See footnotes 2 and 3, Document 296.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 12507 from Islamabad, December 14, Farland reported that he had requested an urgent appointment with President Yahya in discuss the possibility of a cease-fire in East Pakistan. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 573, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/14/71–12/16/71)

<sup>4</sup> In his report to President Yahya on December 13, Governor Malik warned that, according to his information, the Indian army intended to kill all West Pakistanis in East Pakistan, both military and civilian. He and his cabinet felt that Pakistan had to accept any cease-fire terms dictated that would prevent a massacre in East Pakistan. (Telegram 12538 from Islamabad, December 14; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK)

Governor Malik's Dec. 13 report of chaotic conditions. Because military situation now irretrievable and for over-riding humanitarian reasons, Yahya is giving Bhutto widest possible latitude at UN to effect ceasefire and troop withdrawal. End summary.

2. At my request, I met with President Yahya in his residence at 1130 hours local, Dec. 14. The conversation ensued for an hour and 45 minutes. FonSec Sultan Khan was present during most of the meeting.

3. I informed President Yahya that a flash wire<sup>5</sup> from my Consul General in Dacca, Herbert A. Spivack, reported that he had this morning received a phone call from Governor Abdul Motaleb Malik saying that he and Maj. Gen. Rao Farman Ali were prepared to submit to him (Spivak) certain proposals for a ceasefire, saying that a ceasefire was absolutely necessary inasmuch as the situation had become hopelessly worsened. Malik had assured the Consul General that the proposals would carry their signatures and would have the approval of President Yahya. I went on to say that shortly thereafter I had received another flash message<sup>6</sup> from Consul General Spivack indicating that these proposals, according to Governor Malik, would not be forthcoming inasmuch as "General Niazi had stated that negotiations are taking place in Islamabad between the central government and Ambassador Farland, and that there was no need for me (Malik) to convey any proposals."

4. I then asked Yahya if the GOP had had further thoughts over and beyond our last conversation of Dec. 12 (Islamabad 12415)<sup>7</sup> during which he had informed me that, on the matter of ceasefire, he was prepared to do "anything reasonable under the circumstances"; and raised the question of whether or not GOP was now prepared to go beyond the UNGA resolution.

5. Yahya said that the situation in East Pakistan had continued to deteriorate, and this deterioration was taking place at a much [more] rapid rate than anticipated. Consequently, for humane reasons, it was necessary to minimize the bloodshed which was occurring, and that he wanted me to know that the bloodshed being inflicted both by the military and civilian populations was reaching "holocaust" proportions.

6. In our previous conversations, Yahya noted, the subject of ceasefire had been discussed only in general terms and without reference to

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is to telegram 5627 from Dacca, cited in footnote 2 Document 296.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to telegram 5628 from Dacca, cited in footnote 3 Document 296.

<sup>7</sup> The reference is in error; the correct citation should be to telegram 12414 from Islamabad, December 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-1973, POL 27 INDIA-PAK) Telegram 12414 is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 176.



specifics; however, current conditions now require USG be informed of specific determinations of GOP. Consequently, Yahya said that, when he received my call, he was in the process of instituting a request for me to come to see him this morning.

7. Also, he advised me that he had attempted to call Governor Malik this morning but the communication system was largely inoperative and no satisfactory conversation was concluded. He added that his call to Malik was predicated upon a communication from the Governor which he had received yesterday and which now prompted his (Yahya's) current evaluation and thinking. He read and then, at my request, gave me a copy of Governor Malik's report, asking that I send it to the Department. It is being dispatched separately by refel Islamabad 12538.

8. Because of his now firm decision that the military situation in East Pakistan was chaotic and irretrievable and that, for over-riding humanitarian considerations, he had decided to give Vice Prime Minister-designate and Foreign Minister-designate Zulfikar A. Bhutto the widest possible latitude in his approach to the United Nations to effect a ceasefire and troop withdrawal. Yahya went on to say that the Foreign Office had prepared and processed a communication to him spelling out his commission in detail. Yahya added that Bhutto would get in touch with Ambassador Bush at the USUN and would convey to him the substance of the reported message. At this juncture I asked Yahya if he would care to elaborate at this time upon Bhutto's commission. Yahya replied that the communication to Bhutto was couched in Foreign Office jargon but what it said in brief was "do the best you can under the circumstances."

9. Yahya concluded the conversation by telling me that he would advise Governor Malik of our meeting and of his decision to give Bhutto widest discretion. Also, he said he would be sending military instructions to General Niazi to continue moderate defensive activities during present diplomatic maneuvering, but with every effort being made to reduce loss of life.

**Farland**

302. Telegram From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)<sup>1</sup>

Lajes, Azores, December 14, 1971.

1. Here are my present thoughts on India-Pakistan.
2. We should move a ceasefire resolution soonest. It would be best if British resolution were introduced. But the Italian<sup>2</sup> would serve as a vehicle as well. The major objective should be to get a cease-fire resolution with vague political formula not mentioning Bangla Desh or East Pakistan. In this round we must make a record and get asked by Paks to do the political yielding. Make sure Paks keep Chinese informed and abroad. Put it hard to Vorontsov that vague formula is the bridge to our common objective on political side. It is imperative that they show good faith and stop stalling if they want serious dealing with White House.
3. Spivack is to stay away from Bangla Desh. See you soon.
4. Re Delhi 19203,<sup>3</sup> Keating is to give no such assurances. Many thanks.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 432, Backchannel Files, Backchannels To/From HAK. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only; Flash. The telegram is not numbered; it was received in the White House at 11: 51 a.m. A draft, found in another file, indicates it was transmitted at 1637Z. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 643, Country Files, Middle East, India/Pakistan)

<sup>2</sup> The texts of the Italian and British draft resolutions were transmitted to Kissinger on December 14 in White House telegrams WH 11159 and WH 11176, respectively. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 432, Backchannel Files, Backchannels To/From HAK) The differences between the two resolutions were summarized by Saunders in a December 15 memorandum to Kissinger as follows:

"The British is a simple ceasefire on all fronts. The Italian still provides, in addition, for 'disengagement leading to the withdrawal of all their respective armed forces from the areas of conflict.'

"The British tries to say enough about a political settlement to hint that it could be what the Indians want. The Italian provides for direct negotiations between the West and East Pakistanis without pre-conditions and could save some Pakistani dignity.

"The British sets up a UN special representative to help sort out political and humanitarian problems. The Italian leaves it to the locals." On balance, Saunders felt that the Italian resolution was preferable from the U.S. perspective. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 573, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/14/71-12/16/71)

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 19203 from New Delhi, December 14, Ambassador Keating reported that rumors of possible U.S. involvement in the Indo-Pak war were circulating in India. He asked for authorization to offer assurances that the United States did not intend to support Pakistan with U.S. arms or equipment. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

**303. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1971.

SUBJECT

Meeting with Minister Vorontsov on Tuesday, December 14, 1971

At 12:22 p.m., I summoned Minister Vorontsov to the White House in connection with the crisis in South Asia. He arrived at 12:40 p.m., and I covered the following points:

—I noted that Dr. Kissinger and the President had received and carefully considered the message<sup>2</sup> delivered by Minister Vorontsov from the Soviet leadership which was delivered by Mr. Vorontsov at 3:00 a.m. this morning.

—Dr. Kissinger and the President were somewhat concerned that the Soviet note was vague and imprecise in several major respects. The most important of these was the reference to India's plans not to seize West Pakistani territory. I stated that this issue was one of the utmost importance to the United States Government and that it was our assumption that the message meant precisely what it said; i.e., that there would be absolutely no change in the existing territorial lines between Pakistan and India—in other words, that there would be a precise return to the status quo ante with respect to Pakistan's and India's territories. Mr. Vorontsov stated that it was his personal understanding that this represented precisely the Soviet view.

—I pointed out that I would be less than frank were I not to emphasize the fact that the U.S. side was greatly concerned by the amount of time it took the Soviet Union to respond in detail on this issue following Mr. Vorontsov's initial message<sup>3</sup> of Sunday morning (December 12). I made the point that delays of this kind in times of crisis can only contribute to misunderstanding and a breakdown in confidence between the two governments. It can also result in the initiation of unilateral action by one party or the other which could further aggravate the situation.

—In this instance, it was hard for the United States side to understand, especially after reading the contents of the Soviet reply, what the cause might have been for the extensive delay, other than a Soviet

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. Top Secret; Sensitive.

<sup>2</sup> Document 295.

<sup>3</sup> Document 284.

desire to permit the situation on the ground rather than mutual consultation decide the issue.

—I emphasized that Mr. Vorontsov knew that conflicting interests involved in this situation were such that any acceptable formula which would promptly bring the fighting to a halt must be sufficiently vague so that all interested parties could support the formula. This would mean that the United States for its part would seek to insure that reference to political settlement be purposely vague and at the same time the United States Government would wish to urge good faith on the part of the Soviets that we had every intention of abiding by the principles outlined in the messages from President Nixon to the Soviet leadership as well as the discussions between Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Vorontsov.

—For our part, we intend to seek a formula for negotiation under the assumption that the assurances given by the Soviet leadership will be strictly adhered to by the Soviet Union.

—At this juncture and on the eve of most important discussions between the two Governments, it is the U.S. view that the Soviet Union must now move promptly to bring a halt to the fighting. If we are to experience the kind of delays from the Soviet side which have characterized their performance since the start of this crisis, it cannot have but the most serious impact on the relationships between the Government of the Soviet Union and the United States on the full range of issues which we are now discussing in other forums, both bilateral and multilateral.

After making the above points, Mr. Vorontsov asked if General Haig's statements represented the views of the President, Dr. Kissinger or General Haig. General Haig stated that these views were conveyed to him by Dr. Kissinger and that they are totally consistent with the President's personal views on the situation.

**Alexander M. Haig, Jr.**  
*Brigadier General, U.S. Army*  
*Deputy Assistant to the President*  
*for National Security Affairs*

**304. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in India<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1971, 1848Z.

224566. Subj: Carrier Deployment in Indian Ocean.

1. Indian Ambassador Jha called at his request on Assistant Secretary Sisco to express GOI concern over reported US deployment of nuclear carrier in Indian Ocean for evacuation purposes. Ambassador accompanied by First Secretary Verma; Van Hollen, Schneider and Quainton present from NEA.

2. Jha said he wished to raise subject which has arisen out of his talks with Under Secretary Irwin. Under Secretary had, he said, informed him that helicopters had been pre-positioned in Thailand for evacuation purposes. Impression which he had received was that they were in Bangkok. However, subsequent reports indicate that helicopters were on nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, equipped with "all kinds of devices and gadgets." In earlier conversations Jha said he had tried to make clear that GOI anxious to help in evacuation of foreign personnel and had made every facility available for that purpose. GOI is as anxious as before to insure safety of personnel in Dacca or their evacuation if necessary. In view of aircraft carrier report, GOI had instructed him to seek assurance from USG that there will be no evacuation operation without prior agreement with GOI or by force.

3. Sisco said he would report what Jha had said, but had nothing to add to December 13 statement by Secretary Laird re aircraft carrier.<sup>2</sup> He said he would be back in touch if he had anything to add.

4. Jha said he had also a report from New Delhi that USG had some plan or intention to establish a beachhead in some part of Bangla Desh for evacuation of US personnel or to facilitate transfer of Pakistani personnel to West Pakistan. Any such attempt would be a very serious matter and would endanger long-term Indo-US relations. It

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by Quainton, cleared by Van Hollen, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to Islamabad, London, Calcutta, Dacca, USUN, CINCPAC, and CINCSTRIKE.

<sup>2</sup> Laird was asked in a press conference at the Pentagon on December 13 to comment on reports that the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* had been ordered to sail to the Indian Ocean. Laird responded that he made it a practice not to comment on operational orders, but he noted that the government had contingency plans to deal with situations involving evacuation and he implied that the movement of the carrier was connected with those plans. (*Public Statements of Secretary of Defense Laird, 1971*, vol. VI, pp. 2262–2274)

might also have other implications and in any event would not have effect of bringing conflict to speedy end.

5. Sisco said he had seen report; while he was personally not aware of any such plan, he would take note of Ambassador's remarks and if he had anything further would be back in touch. Sisco said he felt constrained to say, in view of Jha's mention of possible impact on bilateral relations, that, although he did not wish to go into past history, we do see in GOI's actions things which not only reflect present strains in our relations but also which obviously could have implications for our long-term relations, which both sides will be looking at in the future.

**Irwin**

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### 305. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 14, 1971, 6-7 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

Meeting between Henry A. Kissinger, Soviet Minister Vorontsov, and Brigadier General Haig, Tuesday, December 14, 1971, 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Kissinger informed Minister Vorontsov that the President had asked him to meet with the Minister to again reiterate and expand on some of the items that General Haig had discussed with him earlier that day.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kissinger noted that when the crisis in the Subcontinent became acute, the U.S. Government delayed initiating unilateral action or action in concert with other governments with the hope that the US could work jointly with the Soviet Union in the established confidential channel in a search for a constructive and peaceful solution to the dilemma. It was specifically for this reason that the United States held up military moves and other actions which it might otherwise have undertaken in its own interest and in the interest of world peace. Despite this fact, the prolonged time that lapsed between Mr. Vorontsov's discussions with Dr. Kissinger on Sunday morning (December 12) and the receipt of a formal Soviet response<sup>3</sup> early Tuesday morning resulted

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. Drafted by Haig.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 303.

<sup>3</sup> Document 295.

in certain unilateral actions by the U.S. Government. These same delays were experienced following Dr. Kissinger's earlier discussions with Minister Vorontsov during the outbreak of the fighting.

Dr. Kissinger stated that he noted with satisfaction the Soviet Government's assurance that the Government of India had absolutely no territorial designs on West Pakistan, and he wanted it clearly understood that he was referring to a return to the status quo ante or the existing dividing lines between India and West Pakistan and that efforts would not be made to modify these dividing lines in the current crisis. Mr. Vorontsov replied that this was precisely the Soviet view and their understanding of the assurance provided to the United States Government; in other words, that there should be a precise return to the status quo ante which existed prior to the current crisis. Dr. Kissinger stated that Mr. Vorontsov may have noted the press reports<sup>4</sup> coming from Air Force One during the return of the Presidential party from the Azores. Mr. Vorontsov indicated that he was aware of those remarks. Dr. Kissinger stated that these remarks were somewhat overplayed by the press and they should be interpreted as confirmation of the U.S. view that there was no longer any justification for failing to settle the conflict on the Subcontinent. Further delays of the kind we have been experiencing constitute a temporary irritation in U.S./Soviet relationships and the remarks on the plane were designed to note the U.S.'s concern. Should the situation continue to deteriorate, it must have an impact on future U.S./Soviet relationships. Soviet actions thus far are not consistent with the United States Government's conception of joint U.S./Soviet action in search of an improved environment for world peace.

Dr. Kissinger noted that the United Kingdom now had a resolution before the United Nations.<sup>5</sup> While this resolution appeared to be changing hourly, it is in the general framework of the kind of resolution that the U.S. believes the Soviet Government and the U.S. Government should support. The United States Government is not aware of the view of the People's Republic of China on this resolution, but if all parties could get behind such a resolution then the situation on the Subcontinent could be settled tomorrow. If this is not the Soviet Government's view, how should the United States then interpret the communication from the Soviet leaders? Mr. Vorontsov asked why the United States Government would not be willing to go beyond a

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<sup>4</sup> *The New York Times* reported on December 15 that Kissinger told reporters that Nixon regarded the Soviet Union as capable of restraining India. He added that if the Soviets did not do so within the next few days, Nixon was prepared to reassess the entire relationship between Washington and Moscow, including the summit meeting that was scheduled for the following May.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2, Document 302.

resolution calling for a simple ceasefire since this was not adequate in the Soviet or the Indian viewpoint. Dr. Kissinger stated that the resolution might be expanded to include withdrawal since Indian forces have penetrated much Pakistani territory. Thus far, Soviet reactions have been slow and characterized by delaying tactics. The U.S. has observed the Soviet bureaucracy move with the greatest speed when it chooses to do so. Minister Vorontsov stated that the complication arose when the United States Government changed on Monday<sup>6</sup> the proposals it had made the previous week to the Soviet Government. This was a cause of great concern to the Soviet leaders. Of particular concern was the fact that the United States Government dropped reference to a political solution which was contained in the language given by Dr. Kissinger to Minister Vorontsov earlier. Dr. Kissinger stated that this was true but that the reasons that it was necessary to do so was the failure on the part of the Soviet Government to respond promptly to the U.S. proposal. Minister Vorontsov said the problem is obviously not a question of Soviet or U.S. ill will but one of the complexity of the problem. Dr. Kissinger stated that he was less concerned about the immediate handling of the situation but could not help but blame the Soviet Union for letting the situation develop in the first instance. For example, the provision of massive amounts of modern military equipment to the Government of India, and threats to China which served as a guarantee and cover for Indian action had to be considered as the cause of the difficulty. Minister Vorontsov replied that the Paks had U.S. armament, some Soviet armament and some Chinese armament. The real problem was the result of grievous errors made by Pakistan in the East. Dr. Kissinger stated that we are now dealing with reality which must receive urgent attention. The U.S. is prepared on its part to give up its demand for withdrawal and it has asked that the Soviets on its part give up its demands for a political settlement. This poses an obvious compromise. Minister Vorontsov noted that the U.S. departure from its earlier language is what has caused the problem. Dr. Kissinger reiterated that this was forced on the U.S. side because the Soviet Government gave no answer over a prolonged period. Thus, the U.S. was forced to move based on the principles to which it adhered. There was no Soviet response even after the President's departure for the Azores. Thus, the United States had no alternative but to adhere to the moral principles associated with the issue. Minister Vorontsov said it should be noted that when the United States dropped the three essential points contained in its initial proposal, Moscow was greatly disturbed. Moscow had originally been very pleased by the U.S.

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<sup>6</sup> Vorontsov was apparently referring to the message sent by Nixon to Brezhnev on Sunday, December 12; see Document 286.



move in Dacca which the President noted in his letter to Mr. Brezhnev but then a sudden departure from the political initiative caused great concern in his capital. The problem now is that it is time to prevent a bloodbath in East Pakistan. It is essential that all parties act now. A viable resolution can only transfer power to the Bangla Desh. Dr. Kissinger said that the U.S. Government cannot go along with this kind of resolution. Mr. Vorontsov replied that the question was now academic since he had seen on the news that the East Pakistan Government had already resigned. Dr. Kissinger stated that he would now like to summarize his understanding. This understanding was that:

—The Indians would not attack the West.

—The Indians would not seek to acquire Pakistan territory and would return to the territorial limits that existed prior to the crisis—in other words to a status quo ante.

Minister Vorontsov said that that would also be the Soviet Union's understanding. Dr. Kissinger stated the issue is now to get a settlement in East Pakistan. Minister Vorontsov agreed noting that a means must be found to prevent the bloodbath which will follow. Dr. Kissinger stated that the original U.S. statement was an objective one not suitable for a U.N. resolution. Minister Vorontsov agreed. Dr. Kissinger stated that continual haggling between parties in the Security Council could only lead to sterile results. If it continues, it cannot sit well with the United States Government. For this reason, something like the U.K. resolution, which the United States side does not like either, appears to offer the best compromise. On the other hand, if the Soviets continue to seek a *fait accompli*, then the U.S. Government must draw its own conclusions from this reality. Minister Vorontsov asked what Dr. Kissinger considered an ideal solution. Dr. Kissinger stated that the U.S. Government knows that East Pakistan will not go back to the West. On the other hand, the U.S. cannot legally accept an overt change in status at this moment, and efforts within the United Nations to force the U.S. Government to do so must be vetoed. The U.S. considers that a *fait accompli* has occurred in the East and the problem is to proceed from that point. On the other hand, India seeks not only to break East Pakistan away from the West but to do so under a mantle of legitimacy. This is more than the United States can accept. Just two weeks ago, Madame Gandhi said that the situation in East Pakistan was an internal Pakistani problem. Thus, steps from this point on should be to stop the fighting. Why should the United States struggle with the Soviet Union at costs in its relations with the Soviets on an issue like the Bangla Desh, especially when there are such great issues like the Middle East to be settled between the two sides? Furthermore, the United States is not anti-India as some would infer. Certainly, the Soviets know what the real problem is. Minister Vorontsov stated that the real problem in Moscow is concern that the United States continually airs its complaints

in the press. Statements like the Summit statement earlier in the day cause real problems in Moscow. Dr. Kissinger stated that General Haig had advised Minister Vorontsov that we had waited for an extended period for a Soviet response but none was forthcoming. The U.S. had informed the Soviet Government that we were prepared to take parallel action and was confident that the Soviets would join with us. There is no way that the U.S. could permit Pakistan to be dismembered officially in the United Nations framework. It was the U.S. view that an agreement could be worked out between the two governments quietly in the confidential channel. Certainly, the Chinese would oppose such a solution in the United Nations. President Nixon interpreted the Soviet response as a delaying action. Minister Vorontsov noted that the U.S. neglected to reiterate the West Pakistan concession made in Dacca. Dr. Kissinger stated that the President did not focus specifically on that issue. For that matter, Dr. Kissinger himself did not. The U.S. now appreciates this and therefore both sides could wind up the matter without further delay. Minister Vorontsov said that the Soviets would need some help with respect to the Summit statement as soon as possible that would tend to limit the damage in Moscow. Dr. Kissinger stated that the U.S. side would calm public speculation on the issue. Dr. Kissinger directed General Haig to insure that Press Secretary Ziegler modify the exaggerated play that was given to the statement on Air Force One. Dr. Kissinger continued that since Friday,<sup>7</sup> President Nixon had been concerned that the Soviet leaders were not doing all possible to arrive at a settlement. On the way to the Azores, he commented that it would have been most helpful if he could tell the French that the U.S. and the Soviets had concerted to arrive at a settlement. In the face of continued delays, however, the President began to believe that the Soviet Government was providing words only with the view towards letting events on the ground dictate the ultimate outcome. It is not President Nixon's style to threaten. Certainly he hopes that the U.S./Soviet Summit will work but in this context, President Nixon has long sought a genuine change in U.S./Soviet relations. Despite his desires, however, the Soviets proceed to equip India with great amounts of sophisticated armaments. If the Soviet Government were to support or to pressure other foreign leaders to dismember or to divide an ally of the United States, how can the Soviet leaders expect progress in our mutual relationships? This is the source of the President's concern. He has never questioned mere atmospherics but intends to make major progress in U.S. Soviet relations.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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<sup>7</sup> December 10.

**306. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1971, 2136Z.

224704. If and when Bangla Desh and or Indian forces occupy Dacca, you should not take any initiative to establish or encourage contact with them beyond that which may be required in emergency situations to protect American lives or to otherwise assure safety of your mission.

**Rogers**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by U. Alexis Johnson, cleared in the White House by Saunders, and approved by Johnson. Repeated to New Delhi and Calcutta.

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**307. Telegram From the Consulate General in Dacca to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Dacca, December 15, 1971, 0500Z.

5643. 1. Assistant Secretary General Paul Marc Henry has asked that I arrange to have following message (not verbatim quote) passed from him to SYG.

*Begin message:* I have been informed by Governor Malik and General Farman Ali that President Yahya Khan strongly desires to put a end to hostilities in EP. For this purpose he wishes to arrange with the Indian Govt an immediate cease-fire period of at least two hours in which discussions for this purpose can take place between the military commanders concerned. The President desires honorable conditions for Pakistani troops and protection of civilians. I pass this message to you for what it is worth, since I have no independent means of verification. *End of message.*<sup>2</sup>

**Spivack**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Repeated to Islamabad, New Delhi, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> USUN passed the message to the UN Secretariat at 11:30 a.m. on December 15 and the Secretariat passed it to Bhutto. Bhutto refused to credit the message without authentication from Islamabad. (Telegram 5044 from USUN, December 15; *ibid.*)

**308. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi, December 15, 1971, 1050Z.

Ref: State 225268.<sup>2</sup>

1. DCM called on Haksar, Secretary to Prime Minister, at 1410 IST, and handed him text of message from General Niazi as contained in Dacca 5637,<sup>3</sup> DATT simultaneously passed copy to General Manekshaw, Chief of Army Staff.

2. DCM explained that USG could take no responsibility for content of message nor express views thereon, and was simply transmitting the message at request of Foreign Minister Swaran Singh.

3. Haksar was also informed that Foreign Minister attempting to telephone him urgently. He said he had had difficulty getting call through but had managed disjointed conversation with Foreign Secretary Kaul.

4. Haksar expressed appreciation, then asked where our overall relations had gone off the track. He recounted at some length the discussions with the National Security Adviser, Dr. Kissinger, and with Assistant Secretary Sisco, during Prime Minister's visit in early November. He stressed that there could be no question of the integrity of Mrs. Gandhi's remarks to the President. He said he had a copy of the record of their talk, and that he had agreed in advance to accept the U.S. record as the official record.

5. Haksar stated that all human affairs were transitory and he was not so much concerned about the present, as it would pass, as he was about the future. He expressed concern about the relations our children would have and what we owed to them. Haksar became quite emotional, his eyes watering, and asked what we could do. DCM suggested letter from Prime Minister to President might be in order. Haksar said he would draft such a letter that afternoon.

6. U.K. HICOMer Sir Terrence Garvey called DCM as above being drafted and recounted that Niazi text had been passed back and forth between our respective UN reps. He asked if message had been delivered locally. DCM confirmed that it had.

**Keating**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 225268 to New Delhi, December 15, instructed the Embassy to comply with the request of Foreign Minister Singh to USUN to convey to Haksar the text of the message from General Niazi as contained in telegram 5637 from Dacca. The Embassy was also instructed to tell Haksar that Singh was attempting to reach him urgently by telephone. (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup> Document 300.

**309. Editorial Note**

President Nixon met with Henry Kissinger in the Oval Office of the White House the morning of December 15, 1971, to discuss the latest developments in the crisis in South Asia. Kissinger reported that “the Russians came in yesterday giving us their own guarantee that there would be no attack on West Pakistan.” (See Document 305.) Kissinger continued: “Now it’s done. It’s just a question of what legal way we choose.” Nixon said: “Well, what the UN does is really irrelevant.” Kissinger felt that a solution to the crisis might be formalized in an exchange of letters between Nixon and Brezhnev that would be made public. Nixon asked how the Chinese would react to a public accommodation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Kissinger responded: “Oh, the Chinese would be thrilled if West Pakistan were guaranteed.”

Kissinger drew on his conversation with Vorontsov the previous evening to expand upon the Soviet guarantee: “He said well, I just had a cable to tell the President we give him, that this letter means that the Soviet Government gives him the guarantee that there will be no attack on West Pakistan, no annexation of West Pakistan.” Nixon asked: “Vorontsov talking now?” Kissinger replied: “Yeah. He said no annexation of West Pakistan territory as of now. Don’t play any legalistic games with me. We consider the existing dividing line, and also that disputed territory cannot be taken. He said yes, that’s the guarantee. So now it’s just a question of how to formalize it.” Kissinger considered the anticipated outcome to be “an absolute miracle.” He said: “I have this whole file of intelligence reports which makes it unmistakably clear that the Indian strategy was to knock over West Pakistan.”

Nixon and Kissinger were concerned about efforts made by Ambassador Jha to influence public opinion in the United States during the crisis. Kissinger said: “After this is over we ought to do something about that goddamned Indian Ambassador here going on television every day and attacking American policy. Nixon asked: “Why haven’t we done something already?” Kissinger responded: “I’d like to call State to call him in. He says he has unmistakable proof that we are planning a landing on the Bay of Bengal. Well that’s OK with me.” Nixon agreed: “Yeah, that scares them.” Kissinger added: “That carrier move is good.” Nixon said: “Why hell yes . . . the point about the carrier move, we just say . . . we got to be there for the purpose of their moving there. Look these people are savages.” He added: “I want a word—put a word in for Scali to use . . . that the United Nations cannot survive and we cannot have a stable world if we allow one member of the United Nations to cannibalize another. Cannibalize, that’s the word, I should have thought of it earlier. You see that really puts

it to the Indians. It has, the connotation is savages. To cannibalize, and that's what the sons-of-bitches are up to." Kissinger interjected: "One thing we have done, if I may say so, rather well. We've put the Chinese into position where they're more eager to yield than we are." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, December 15, 1971, 9:05–9:11 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 638–4)

Kissinger returned to the Oval Office later in the morning to ask for Nixon's approval of the line he intended to take in a meeting he had scheduled within the hour with Vorontsov. Kissinger began: "And now Mr. President what I wanted to check with you just to make sure you approved. I am having Vorontsov in at 11:30. And I propose to tell him the following: Look, the Security Council thing can go on forever." Nixon concurred: "That's right." Kissinger continued: "What you and we have in mind, what you and we can do is—the President was very impressed by [unclear]." Nixon said: "By the letter of Brezhnev." Kissinger went on: "Well, that I told him already we weren't impressed with Mr. President. I told him that was just words, what we need is something complete." Nixon agreed: "Yeah, fine." Kissinger said: "He was very impressed with these assurances. That we could make peace formal. That the President writes you a letter and you respond. Or that you write us a letter and we respond. It doesn't make much difference who takes the first step, in which you'd say that you know that no military action [is] planned against West Pakistan." Nixon instructed: "Just put it in the letter." Kissinger said that the letters would then be published to "symbolize Soviet-American concern for peace." Nixon said: "Good, good." He added: "But tell him . . . it would only be beautiful if we do it fast." One of two things were going to happen, Kissinger predicted: "Either they will both vote for the British resolution in the Security Council, in which case they will take credit for it, or they will not vote for the British resolution and exchange these letters." Nixon felt that an exchange of letters would be good in any event and he instructed Kissinger to tell Vorontsov that. (Ibid., 11–11:03 a.m., Conversation No. 638–4) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. A transcript of the conversation is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 189.

**310. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 15, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* The proposal of the Pakistani commander in Dacca for a ceasefire<sup>2</sup> was passed to Delhi last night, but we are aware of no Indian response yet (8:00 a.m.). Consultations on the UK-French draft Security Council resolution are scheduled to continue this morning.

Foreign Minister Bhutto declined to pass General Niazi's ceasefire proposal to the Indians in New York, so our UN mission was instructed to communicate it to Foreign Minister Singh, and subsequently Ambassador Keating was instructed to pass its text to Mrs. Gandhi's secretary, Haksar. In this as in the negotiations on the Security Council resolution, Bhutto is apparently being careful to sidestep onus for the surrender of East Pakistan. Meanwhile, latest Indian reports indicate that Dacca is receiving heavy artillery fire, and three Indian columns have advanced to within a few miles of Dacca where they are preparing for attack.

Despite initially favorable reactions to the first UK draft Security Council resolution, positions on both sides hardened as they became aware of the rapid deterioration of the Pakistani military position in Dacca.

—The Indians are being tough on aspects of the transfer of East Pakistan governmental functions to a new civilian government. They have submitted their own draft which includes the following: "Recognizes that simultaneously with the ceasefire in East Pakistan power shall be transferred to the representatives of the majority party elected in December 1970."

—The Pakistanis have shown a new turn of attitude. They now seem to feel that, since East Pakistan is lost, a UN resolution which "legitimizes" the Indian seizure may be unacceptable. His [Bhutto's?] greatest concern now is a ceasefire in the West.

British consultations will continue this morning, but these views may set the stage for a simple ceasefire resolution which also calls on all parties to safeguard the lives of civilians and captured soldiers.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. A stamp on the memorandum indicates that the President saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 300.

On the West Pakistan military front, heavy fighting continues in Kashmir, but the principal Pakistani drive appears to have been blunted. According to a [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] report, one Indian reserve division was airlifted from the Calcutta area to an undetermined location on the western front.

[*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] a Chinese delivery of additional MIG-19's to West Pakistan may be underway. An undetermined number of MIG's were noted flying in the direction of an airfield that has been used in the past as a base for onward flight to Pakistan. In a separate development, [*1 line of source text not declassified*] the Pakistani UN representative has said that China would make "an important military move" on December 15. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] no evidence of Chinese troop deployments in preparation for military moves.

Since late November, there have been numerous reports that other Moslum countries had sent or were planning to send military equipment to Pakistan. The countries involved include Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Egypt. Most of the reports concern shipments of jet fighters and spare parts for these and Pakistani aircraft. There is no firm evidence [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] to corroborate any of the reports that this equipment has actually been transferred.

Our carrier task force is transiting the Straits of Malacca and should arrive at a point near the center of the base of the Bay of Bengal this (15 Dec) evening. Rumors about this move are already widespread in the area where they are being combined with stories that the US is considering military assistance to Pakistan. In this connection, Ambassador Keating reports that these stories are spurring increasingly anti-US rallies and press attacks. The Ambassador says that he would be "deeply concerned and anxious" about the lives and welfare of Americans in India if the US were directly or indirectly to support Pakistan with US arms or equipment and would want to recommend at least partial evacuation if this is under serious consideration.<sup>3</sup>

The British are also moving some naval vessels into the area—a commando carrier and a frigate off the southern coast of Ceylon. Soviet task force, consisting of a guided missile cruiser, an oiler and a diesel powered submarine continues to steam through the South China Sea toward the Indian Ocean where if it continues on that course it

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<sup>3</sup> In expressing his concern, Keating also asked for an assurance that the United States did not intend to support Pakistan with U.S. arms or equipment. (Telegram 19203 from New Delhi, December 14; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 573, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/14/71-12/16/71)



should arrive in about three days. The Soviets have 12 other naval ships in the Indian Ocean, but none of these is in or known to be heading for areas near the Indo-Pakistani conflict.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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### 311. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi, December 15, 1971, 1358Z.

19280. Subj: Indian Response to Niazi Ceasefire Proposal.

1. Haksar, Secretary to Prime Minister, called in DCM at 1800 hours local and handed him text of response from General Manekshaw to General Niazi.

2. Haksar said GOI was conveying response to Niazi through U.S. since we had been good enough to pass on original Niazi proposal. He described reply as a "carefully considered and sincere response" and called particular attention to cessation air attacks which took place at 1700 hours December 15.

3. Text of message which GOI requests be transmitted urgently to Niazi is as follows:

"For Lt. Gen. Niazi From Sam Manekshaw, Chief of the Army Staff India

Firstly—I have received your communication<sup>2</sup> re a cease fire in Bangla Desh at 1430 hours today through the American Embassy at New Delhi.

Secondly—I had previously informed General Farman Ali in two messages that I would guarantee (a) the safety of all your military and paramilitary forces who surrender to me in Bangla Desh. (b) Complete protection to foreign nations, ethnic minorities and personnel of West Pakistan no matter who they may be. Since you have indicated your desire to stop fighting I expect you to issue orders to all forces under your command in Bangla Desh to cease fire immediately and surrender to my advancing forces wherever they are located.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Repeated to USUN, Islamabad, Calcutta, and Dacca.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 300.

Thirdly—I give you my solemn assurance that personnel who surrender shall be treated with the dignity and respect that soldiers are entitled to and I shall abide by the provisions of the Geneva Convention. Further as you have many wounded I shall ensure that they are well cared for and your dead given proper burial. No one need have any fear for their safety no matter where they come from. Nor shall there be any reprisals by forces operating under my command.

Fourthly—Immediately I receive a positive response from you I shall direct General Aurora the commander of Indian and Bangla Desh forces in the Eastern theatre to refrain from all air and ground action against your forces. As a token of my good faith I have ordered that no air action shall take place over Dacca from 1700 hours today.

Fifthly—I assure you I have no desire to inflict unnecessary casualties on your troops as I abhor loss of human lives. Should however you do not comply with what I have stated you will leave me with no other alternative but to resume my offensive with the utmost vigour at 0900 hours Indian Standard Time on 16 December.

Sixthly—In order to be able to discuss and finalise all matters quickly I have arranged for a radio link on listenint watch from 1700 hours Indian Standard Time today 15 December. The frequency will be 6605 (6605) KHZ by day and 3216 (3216) KHZ by night. Callsigns will be CAL (Calcutta) and DAC (Dacca). I would suggest you instruct your signallers to restore microwave communications immediately.”

4. DCM assured Haksar message would be transmitted immediately.
5. Assume Department will authorize Dacca delivery.<sup>3</sup>

**Keating**

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<sup>3</sup> The Department instructed the Consulate General in Dacca to pass Manekshaw's message to Niazi immediately. The Consulate General did so, and the Embassy in Islamabad passed a copy of the message to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan. (Telegrams 225341 to Dacca, 5659 from Dacca, and 12593 from Islamabad, all December 15; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27-14 INDIA-PAK)

## 312. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 15, 1971, 11:30 a.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger  
Soviet Chargé Yuly Vorontsov

I met with Vorontsov at my request to hand him a draft letter to Kosygin (attached) on the need to put an end to hostilities.

Vorontsov said that I had to believe him that a major effort was being made to induce the Indians; however, they were not being very reasonable. I said that there was no longer any excuse; the President had made any number of personal appeals, all of which had been rejected, and it was time to move. Vorontsov asked me whether it could be dealt with in the United Nations. I told him yes, we were prepared to support the British Resolution<sup>2</sup> if the Soviet Union would. Vorontsov said that the British Resolution was not very agreeable; the Soviets were trying to promote the Polish Resolution.<sup>3</sup> I said I wanted him to know that we would not agree to any resolution that recognized a turnover of authority. There was a question of principle involved. It was bad enough that the United Nations was impotent in the case of military attack; it could not be asked to legitimize it. However, as I pointed out, we were prepared to work in a parallel direction.

Vorontsov said that the letter presented some difficulties. The Soviet Union was prepared unconditionally to guarantee the United States that there would be no Indian attack on the Western front or on Kashmir, and that when they referred to West Pakistan they meant the existing dividing line. However, to do this publicly would mean that they were in effect speaking for a friendly country. After all, India was not a client state. I said that the course of events was obvious: Either there would be a ceasefire soon in the West anyway through the UN or through direct dealings with us, or else we would have to draw appropriate conclusions.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 8. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House.

<sup>2</sup> UN doc. S/10455.

<sup>3</sup> UN doc. S/10453.

Vorontsov said, "In a little while we will go back to where we were." I said, "I have told you for two weeks now that this is not the case." On this note, we left.<sup>4</sup>

## Attachment

### Draft Letter From President Nixon to Soviet Chairman Kosygin

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Now that the military conflict in East Pakistan appears to be moving to a conclusion, the most challenging task to both our countries, as great and responsible powers, is to see to it that the bloodshed should promptly end and that fighting does not continue in the West.

Although the United Nations has been seized with this difficult problem, efforts in that body have so far not resulted in progress, partly because of the difficulties of resolving political issues. It is not therefore urgently desirable that our two countries should take prompt and responsible steps to ensure that the military conflict does not spread and that assurances be given against territorial acquisition by either side? I know that you will agree with me that when this has been successfully accomplished the dark cloud that now hangs over the international situation as a whole will have been substantially lightened. I hope therefore that we can cooperate to achieve an end to all the fighting, to remove the concern that the war will become one of conquest, and to eliminate the threat to peace that has arisen. This would, of course, not prejudice anybody's position with respect to an ultimate political solution.

I believe that efforts in the above direction must continue to be vigorously pursued.

Sincerely,

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<sup>4</sup> Vorontsov called Kissinger at 1:20 p.m. to say that when he returned to his embassy he found a cable from Moscow reacting to their conversation of the previous day. Vorontsov was instructed to: "Advise President and Dr. Kissinger that we are in consultations with Indian leadership including in the Security Council." The Soviet leadership promised to "inform President of substance of the matter." (Transcript of a telephone conversation, December 15; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

**313. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 15, 1971, 1436Z.

1096. Foreign Secretary called me to Foreign Office 1800 local 15 December. Said reports received from Bhutto indicate he highly pessimistic that any affirmative action will be forthcoming from Security Council. In addition, GOP intelligence indicates GOI upping offensive activity against West Pakistan and instigating subversive activity (presumably in Pushtun border areas) out of Afghanistan. He said that for West Pakistan to survive as nation it is necessary it be provided additional fighter aircraft. Present trickle MIG-19s and F-104s (he did not indicate origin) cannot stem the tide if India attacks—an attack which Pakistan now expects.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Exclusive; Eyes Only. A handwritten note on the message, in an unknown hand, reads: "briefed Haig." Copies were sent to Haig and Saunders.

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**314. Letter From the Indian Ambassador (Jha) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 15, 1971.

Excellency,

I have the honour to convey to Your Excellency the following message from Her Excellency the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi:

"Dear Mr. President,

I am writing at a moment of deep anguish at the unhappy turn which the relations between our two countries have taken.

I am setting aside all pride, prejudice and passion and trying, as calmly as I can, to analyse once again the origins of the tragedy which is being enacted.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). No classification marking.

There are moments in history when brooding tragedy and its dark shadows can be lightened by recalling great moments of the past. One such great moment which has inspired millions of people to die for liberty was the Declaration of Independence by the United States of America. That Declaration stated that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of man's inalienable rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, it was the right of the people to alter or abolish it.

All unprejudiced persons objectively surveying the grim events in Bangla Desh since March 25 have recognised the revolt of 75 million people, a people who were forced to the conclusion that neither their life, nor their liberty, to say nothing of the possibility of the pursuit of happiness, was available to them. The world press, radio and television have faithfully recorded the story. The most perceptive of American scholars who are knowledgeable about the affairs of this sub-Continent revealed the anatomy of East Bengal's frustrations.

The tragic war, which is continuing, could have been averted if during the nine months prior to Pakistan's attack on us on December 3, the great leaders of the world had paid some attention to the fact of revolt, tried to see the reality of the situation and searched for a genuine basis for reconciliation. I wrote letters along these lines. I undertook a tour in quest of peace at a time when it was extremely difficult to leave, in the hope of presenting to some of the leaders of the world the situation as I saw it. It was heartbreaking to find that while there was sympathy for the poor refugees, the disease itself was ignored.

War could also have been avoided if the power, influence and authority of all the States and above all the United States, had got Sheikh Mujibur Rahman released. Instead, we were told that a civilian administration was being installed. Everyone knows that this civilian administration was a farce; today the farce has turned into a tragedy.

Lip service was paid to the need for a political solution, but not a single worthwhile step was taken to bring this about. Instead, the rulers of West Pakistan went ahead holding farcical elections to seats which had been arbitrarily declared vacant.

There was not even a whisper that anyone from the outside world, had tried to have contact with Mujibur Rahman. Our earnest plea that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be released, or that, even if he were to be kept under detention, contact with him might be established, was not considered practical on the ground that the US could not urge policies which might lead to the overthrow of President Yahya Khan. While the United States recognised that Mujib was a core factor in the situation and that unquestionably in the long run Pakistan must acquiesce in the direction of greater autonomy for East Pakistan, arguments were advanced to demonstrate the fragility of the situation and of Yahya Khan's difficulty.

Mr. President, may I ask you in all sincerity: Was the release or even secret negotiations with a single human being, namely, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, more disastrous than the waging of a war?

The fact of the matter is that the rulers of West Pakistan got away with the impression that they could do what they liked because no one, not even the United States, would choose to take a public position that while Pakistan's integrity was certainly sacrosanct, human rights, liberty were no less so and that there was a necessary inter-connection between the inviolability of States and the contentment of their people.

Mr. President, despite the continued defiance by the rulers of Pakistan of the most elementary facts of life, we would still have tried our hardest to restrain the mounting pressure as we had for nine long months, and war could have been prevented had the rulers of Pakistan not launched a massive attack on us by bombing our airfields in Amritsar, Pathankot, Srinagar, Avantipur, Utterlai, Jodhpur, Ambala and Agra in the broad day light on December 3, 1971 at a time when I was away in Calcutta my colleague, the Defence Minister, was in Patna and was due to leave further for Bangalore in the South and another senior colleague of mine, the Foreign Minister, was in Bombay. The fact that this initiative was taken at this particular time of our absence from the Capital showed perfidious intentions. In the face of this, could we simply sit back trusting that the rulers of Pakistan or those who were advising them, had peaceful, constructive and reasonable intent?

We are asked what we want. We seek nothing for ourselves. We do not want any territory of what was East Pakistan and now constitutes Bangla Desh. We do not want any territory of West Pakistan. We do want lasting peace with Pakistan. But will Pakistan give up its ceaseless and yet pointless agitation of the past 24 years over Kashmir? Are they willing to give up their hate campaign posture of perpetual hostility towards India? How many times in the last 24 years have my father and I offered a pact of non-aggression to Pakistan? It is a matter of recorded history that each time such offer was made, Pakistan rejected it out of hand.

We are deeply hurt by the innuendos and insinuations that it was we who have precipitated the crisis and have in any way thwarted the emergence of solutions. I do not really know who is responsible for this calumny. During my visit to the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria and Belgium the point I emphasized, publicly as well as privately, was the immediate need for a political settlement. We waited nine months for it. When Dr. Kissinger came in August 1971,<sup>2</sup> I had emphasized to him the importance of seeking an early

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<sup>2</sup> Kissinger visited India in July rather than August; see Documents 90–94.

political settlement. But we have not received, even to this day, the barest framework of a settlement which would take into account the facts as they are and not as we imagine them to be.

Be that as it may, it is my earnest and sincere hope that with all the knowledge and deep understanding of human affairs you, as President of the United States and reflecting the will, the aspirations and idealism of the great American people, will at least let me know where precisely we have gone wrong before your representatives or spokesmen deal with us with such harshness of language.

With regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Indira Gandhi."

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.

L.K. Jha

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**315. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 15, 1971, 5:55 p.m.

K: Mr. President.

P: Henry, I was in the state of play. I just got out of the water.

K: Isn't that great. You certainly need it. I never had a chance to give you a report from Vorontsov. I gave him a draft letter<sup>2</sup> to Kosygin asking for joint action to stop the fighting. I told him we put it forward to not get any additional confrontations. I also said they could [*should?*] support the British Resolution which is really at the very edge, well beyond the edge of what is tolerable.

P: Oh, I see.

K: Now the Indians are unbelievable. The Indians are demanding the UN agree for the turnover of authority to the Bangla Desh. Now

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President traveled to Key Biscayne, Florida, on the afternoon of December 15 and remained there through December 16; Kissinger was in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> See the attachment to Document 312.



that would make the UN an active participant in aggression. I don't think we can agree to this.

P: No.

K: Now the Soviets have just told the British they would veto the British Resolution. If this plays out that way we may really have to ask ourselves what the Soviets are up to.

P: That could be. Although they just may have a very, very hot potato on their hands with the Indians.

K: That could be but the political outcome would be the same either way. They have already humiliated the Chinese beyond expression and they will humiliate us but we don't have to face that yet.

P: Yes.

K: We did get a message from the Germans urgently asking to examine the West situation and that fighting must be brought to a stop.

P: And now we have a veto of the British Resolution.

K: It hasn't been done yet.

P: Well, that lines up the British on our side.

K: Cromer showed me a message he sent to Mrs. Gandhi and it was really tough.

P: Good. We shouldn't be too discouraged in some sense.

K: John Chancellor<sup>3</sup> told me that he would feature the Pakistani side tonight. I think Bhutto made a very moving speech in the Security Council.

P: Yes, I heard about that.

K: Cromer is delighted by what we did in the Azores. He said it is one of the greatest steps forward we did. A great act of statesmanship.

P: He did. Good. Incidentally the meeting with the leaders went very well and they are all happy. They were totally acquiescent so Connally has a complete running room to negotiate over the weekend.

K: Well, you did a great job, Mr. President.

P: So the letter<sup>4</sup> to the Soviets really didn't settle the thing then as far as you are concerned?

K: No and that is what is so revolting; that is what we have to ask ourselves. Now I agree they may have a bear by the tail and that is what we have to be concerned about. All they promised is no attack on West Pakistan, but that does not include Kashmir. I talked to Maury

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<sup>3</sup> Chancellor was a correspondent for the National Broadcasting Company.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the draft letter cited in footnote 2 above.

Williams today who is South Asia for AID and who is on the Indian side, but he said if Pakistan loses its part of Kashmir and [sic] it is really the end.

P: Well, the Indians have got to consider very seriously now; they may take this but if they do they will have . . .

K: We cannot turn around.

P: Well, let's just wait now. We have no choice but to just wait. It is in the Soviets hands. We can do nothing with the details.

K: [2 lines of source text not declassified]

P: [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]

K: Yes, but that might be overtaken by events.

P: Well, we shall have to see but the thing is we have to assume it is never as bad or as good as it seems. But at this time you just wonder. When should there be an answer?

K: Tomorrow.

P: OK, Henry.

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**316. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 16, 1971, 9:30 a.m.

K: Mr. President.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

P: On the India-Pakistan thing, Dacca has surrendered and now the issue is . . .

K: Now, if in the next 24 hours the Indians don't agree to a cease-fire in the West we are in for it. Up until now it could be explained that Soviets wanted to wait until Dacca had surrendered.

P: Has the proposal been put up in . . .

K: No, it has been tabled and there will probably be a vote today. And that will be the test.

P: Well, they [the Soviets] will veto it.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington.

K: Well, I don't know. They aren't saying anything any more.

P: Then under the circumstances, would they just continue the war?

K: There are three possibilities: First, the British proposal carries; second, India-Pakistan ceasefire and third, the Indians continue the war until they smash the Pakistanis in Kashmir. Now we have had another appeal from the Pakistanis last night.<sup>2</sup> Action is picking up in the West and they are asking for American planes, but we cannot even consider this. If this isn't settled by tomorrow night we will know the Russians have put it to us.

P: The one thing I am disappointed about, really teed off at is that you were unable to get out that Indian cabinet meeting thing. We have got to get it out.

K: We will do it.

P: I know there are a lot of pro-Indian people in State and who are trying to delay this. But I want it. We ought to be pressing the Indians every day. Now that Dacca has fallen we have got to get that Ambassador<sup>3</sup> in here and tell him the President is outraged about what he has done using our television and radio facilities to do it. Second, someone has got to say something about the Indian aid. The figure they have been using is not correct. I want a report. I want everything in it: PL-480, unilateral and multilateral assistance because some pressures have got to go. The Russians will only go as far as the Indians want to go. The Indians have got to make a decision whether they want to be totally a Russian satellite or not. Also there have been these Indian cabinet meetings, we have to get reports on those.

K: Yes, Mr. President.

P: Actually with regard to the Indian aid thing, couldn't Javits<sup>4</sup> or one of the liberals on the Hill see if they couldn't stop this now . . .

K: The next thing we could do is there is \$123 million in goods that is moving to India. We could seize those but that would get us into endless litigation.

P: Goods of what type?

K: They have been part of the economic program. It has been paid for already. We can do it. It has been done before.

P: If the Indians continue the course they are on we have even got to break diplomatic relations with them. Don't you agree, Henry?

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 313.

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Jha.

<sup>4</sup> Senator Jacob Javits (D-New York).

K: I agree. There is already a strong victory statement and an unbelievable setback for the Chinese which is none of our business but they have certainly humiliated them.

P: And also let it be known they have done nothing.

K: That is right.

P: In the event they [omission in the source text] West Pakistan, is there anything more that can be done? Are they going . . .

K: They gave us flat assurances there wouldn't be. If that happens we will have to reassess our position with the Russians. We will have until Saturday morning to see that.

P: What are they doing?

K: I said to Vorontsov if you don't do it at the UN, do it as a bilateral exchange of letters.

P: And they have not responded?

K: No, it is a little early. They could have if they wanted to.

P: The question is . . .

K: Well, the question is—let's look at objectively. So they put it to us and they saw because you acted in such a [omission in the source text] way here, we are going to drop the summit . . .

P: Well, dropping the summit is not the first thing I would do.

K: Well, you have to look to see how much we are willing to pay in terms of where we are going.

P: To keep ourselves in perspective we have to realize the Russians have put it to us previously in other parts of the world so we have to just grin and bear it, right?

K: But not you, Mr. President.

P: No, but my point is we try everything that we can, but we have to realize the Russians—we have to let them know our options.

K: Our options are limited.

P: They are limited, but even with them we can't deal with those Soviets and continue to talk about sales and various other problems.

K: Our options are not all that good.

P: They are not good but they will get results. If after all these appeals and . . .

K: They are going to continue to butter you up.

P: My view is this: I won't let them do this. Did the Jordanians send planes.

K: 17.

P: Well, my point is so we have done a check of these little things. Now in the event we are going to end up by saying to the Russians

you proved to be so untrustworthy we can't deal with you on any issues. Let's use that card now.

K: We have pretty well told them that.

P: Well, we told them that privately, they may not believe that.

K: Well, if they don't believe the President of the United States in a private meeting . . .

P: You don't understand. We threatened it. Let's do it.

K: No, for that it is premature, Mr. President. That we cannot do because they still may get us a ceasefire. If they don't get a ceasefire, what do we do then?

P: Cut off the Middle East talks, pour arms into Israel, discontinue our talks on SALT and the Economic Security Council can go [to] the public and tell them what the danger is. It is a risk group but the right one. It is pretty clear. I would go further. We have to stop our talks on trade, don't let Smith have any further things on the Middle East and stop seeing Dobrynin under any circumstances.

K: That is right. Break the White House channel.

P: And be very cold in our public statements toward them. What I am getting at is if we are prepared to go and have the card to play where we would not talk at all. Another thing I would beef up the Defense Budget plans then.

K: The Defense Budget is being worked on.

P: You will have that done by Friday<sup>6</sup> night?

K: Yes.

P: Now, Henry, I am not yet satisfied and I am really mad that this assistance report is not down here. LDX it down here in two hours—Indian aid for next year and last, how much PL-480, how much economic assistance, unilateral assistance—I want to see it.

K: We have got it, but we will get it down.

P: I know the bigger game is the Russian game, but the Indians also have played us for squares here. They have done this once and when this is over they will come to us ask us to forgive and forget. This we must not do. If they want to be dependent on the Russians, let them be, but when the chips are down India has shown that it is a Russian satellite. What I am really saying here is and what I am proposing to do—if India pursues this course, then we will reevaluate their program of aid and cut it off. Has anybody told them that?

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<sup>6</sup> December 17.

K: We would, but remember you have got to realize everything is being done out of this office. We have a bureaucratic system to deal with. I think it would be better if State told them.

P: Call Sisco. He is to call in the Indian Ambassador and tell him that the U.S., under the circumstances, if there is not a ceasefire we will have no choice and all Indian assistance of all types will be taken out of the budget and call me in an hour.<sup>7</sup>

K: Yes, Mr. President.

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<sup>7</sup> Kissinger called Nixon again at 10:40 a.m. to tell him that India had declared a unilateral cease-fire in the west. He said: "We have made it." He credited the Soviet Union with exerting sufficient pressure on India to produce the desired result. Nixon said: "If Soviets have cooperated on this I think we have got to play on an arms-length deal." He reiterated that there was to be no economic assistance for India in the budget that was being prepared. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) The transcript is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 191.

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### 317. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 16, 1971.

Shortly after 10:00 a.m. this morning General Haig called on the secure line to say the following:

The President wishes Mr. Sisco to call in Indian Ambassador Jha immediately. Sisco should make the following three points forcefully.

1. With respect to India's earlier refusal to give assurances that it had no territorial ambitions without similar assurances from Pakistan, we are now giving him Pak assurances of no territorial ambitions. We wish to know immediately that India has no territorial ambitions on its side.

2. Now that East Pakistan has fallen, there can be no justification for continued fighting. If fighting continues, it will "have the most drastic consequences on U.S.-Indian relations." (Haig commented that we should be no more specific than that.)

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, NEA Files: Lot 73 D 69, Miscellaneous—SOA 1971. Secret; Nodis.

3. We consider it intolerable for the Indian Ambassador to use our media as a platform to make attacks on the U.S. Government.<sup>2</sup>

**RHM**

*Deputy Executive Secretary*

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<sup>2</sup> Sisco called in Ambassador Jha on December 16 as instructed and made the points outlined by Haig. The telegram reporting the conversation to New Delhi indicates, however, that Sisco took note of a press report received that India had proposed a cease-fire on the western front. Rather than convey the warning that continued fighting would impact upon U.S.-Indian relations, Sisco asked for conformation of the proposed cease-fire. (Telegram 226062 to New Delhi, December 16; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 578, Indo-Pak War, India Chronology, Dr Kissinger)

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**318. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 16, 1971.

**WSAG MEETING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1971**

The short WSAG meeting today discussed “Where do we go from here.”

*Security Council:* At the outset of the meeting it was agreed that we would support the British-French draft resolution, which, in turn, had been endorsed by Bhutto. However, when it was learned during the meeting that the UK-French resolution had been dropped it was agreed that we would stay loose in New York and be prepared to support a simple ceasefire resolution, assuming it also had Pakistani support.

*Reply to Mrs. Gandhi:* State was asked to prepare a reply to Mrs. Gandhi’s December 15 letter<sup>2</sup> to the President, setting forth our case strongly and explicitly.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, NEA Files: Lot 73 D 69, Memoranda to the Secretary, Nov–Dec 1971. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Van Hollen. No other record of this meeting of the Washington Special Actions Group has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 314.

*Contingency Papers:* The following five papers<sup>3</sup> were requested for next Monday:

1. U.S. policy regarding humanitarian assistance for South Asia.
2. U.S. policy regarding economic assistance for South Asia. (In this connection, Maury Williams was asked on an urgent basis to do a paper on economic assistance for Pakistan.)
3. U.S. policy toward the Bangla Desh regime—assuming that we would not be prepared promptly to recognize Bangla Desh.
4. Arrangements for restoring the territorial status quo in the West, including the Kashmir region, as of December 3.
5. U.S. military supply policy for South Asia.

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<sup>3</sup> Following the WSAG meeting on December 16 Kissinger sent a memorandum to the Departments of State and Defense, JCS, CIA, and AID in which he assigned responsibility for the preparation of the papers listed as follows: the first 2 papers were assigned to State and AID jointly, papers 3 and 4 were assigned to State, and the final paper was assigned to State and Defense jointly. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-083, WSAG Meeting, 12/16/71)

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### 319. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 16, 1971.

#### SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* The Pak military commander in the East has transmitted through UN channels his acceptance of India's "surrender terms" and according to Indian press reports an agreement has been signed. Indian troops reportedly have already entered the city. Fairly heavy firing, however, has started in the streets of Dacca, perhaps marking an uprising by the guerrillas who have been laying low in the capital city. The Pak forces are also destroying their POL and essential military supplies. In the West, land and air action was reported at several places, but there apparently are no important new gains by either side.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 37, President's Daily Briefs, Dec 1–Dec 16, 1971. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. Printed from an uninitialed copy.



Diplomatic activity at the UN was intense yesterday although very little, if anything, was accomplished. In the early hours, the British and French plodded along with consultations over their draft compromise resolution, but it became apparent by mid-day that a viable draft was still out of reach and that the Indians and Soviets were continuing to stall. Bhutto, nevertheless, insisted on a Security Council meeting after lunch, then, in a 40-minute emotional outburst, proceeded to castigate the Council's inability to act and to attack the Indians, Soviets, British and French before tearing up his papers and walking out. The immediate impact was to spur effects [*efforts*] by the Belgians and Italians to seek agreement on a simple cease-fire which seemed to reflect the mood of the Council as it adjourned. The Council convened again in the early evening but the debate was inconclusive and repetitive and only a strongly pro-India resolution was tabled by Poland. A final session was held late last night at which the latest UK/French effort was tabled along with new Soviet and Syrian resolutions.

In short, as Ambassador Bush reports, the situation at the UN remains fluid and no consensus is in sight. With the table groaning under the weight of five separate draft resolutions, it is likely that if the deadlock continues some of the Security Council members will give serious consideration to returning to the General Assembly. The Paks support this approach and have begun in fact to work in this direction.

Mrs. Gandhi has sent you a long letter,<sup>2</sup> which the Indians plan to make public this morning, explaining her position on the war with Pakistan. Writing "at a moment of deep anguish at the unhappy turn which the relations between our two countries have taken," Mrs. Gandhi makes the following major points:

—The war could have been averted if the "great leaders of the world" had paid some attention to the "reality of the situation and searched for a genuine basis for reconciliation."

—War could also have been avoided "if the power, influence and authority of all the states, and above all the United States, had got Sheikh Mujibur Rahman released." Instead, Mrs. Gandhi contends, India was told that a civilian administration was being installed which everyone knew was a "farce."

—"Lip service" was paid to the need for a practical political solution in East Pakistan, but "not a single worthwhile step was taken to bring this about."

—While the U.S. recognized that Mujib was a core factor and the trend was toward greater autonomy for East Pakistan, arguments were advanced to demonstrate the fragility of the situation of Yahya Khan's difficulty. Was, she asks, the release or even secret negotiations with Mujib more disastrous than waging war.

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 314.

—The rulers of Pakistan got the impression they could do what they liked because no one, not even the U.S., would choose to take a public position that “while Pakistan’s integrity was certainly sacrosanct, human rights and liberty were no less so.”

—War could have still been prevented if Pakistan had not launched a “massive attack” on India. But India does “not want any territory of what was East Pakistan and now constitutes Bangla Desh.” India also does “not want any territory of West Pakistan.” India does want “lasting peace with Pakistan” but questions whether Pakistan will give up its “perpetual hostility” toward India.

Mrs. Gandhi closed by noting that India has been “deeply hurt by the innuendos and insinuations” that it had precipitated the crisis and had “thwarted the emergence of solutions.” But, be that as it may, it is her “earnest and sincere” hope that you will “at least” let her know “where precisely they have gone wrong before your representatives or spokesmen deal with them with such harshness of language.”

We have the following recent indications of Soviet intentions and attitudes:

—Three separate [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] sources report that the Soviets are pressing for decisive Indian action to end the fighting in East Pakistan. One source alleges that the Soviets are disappointed by the pace of the Indian offensive in the East, but the other two suggest that in general Moscow is satisfied with the way the Indian armed forces are acquitting themselves. Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov is also reported to have advised the Indians to “liberate Bangla Desh in the shortest possible time.”

—As of last Monday, the Soviets apparently were neither encouraging or seriously discouraging possible Indian territorial objectives in the West. In a talk [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] Soviet Ambassador Pegov reportedly said that there is no need for India to launch an offensive in the West because of [the] Pak military machine has already been crushed. Pegov reportedly added, however, that if India decided to ignore Soviet advice and take Pak-held Kashmir, it should be done in shortest possible time and the USSR “would not interfere.”

—Both Pegov and another Soviet diplomat on Monday also discounted the possibility of U.S. or Chinese intervention. Pegov asserted the Soviet fleet was also in the Indian Ocean and would not allow the Seventh fleet to intervene. If the Chinese moved in Ladakh, Pegov said, “the Soviets would open a diversionary action in Sinkiang.”

—Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov is reported to have [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] that the Soviets will not recognize “Bangla Desh” at least until Dacca has fallen and the country is “liberated” from Pak forces because they want to retain whatever small influence they still have in Islamabad. Kuznetsov also put off India’s request that the USSR sign a treaty with “Bangla Desh” by claiming that he needed special instructions from Brezhnev.

According to a late Peking NCNA broadcast, the Chinese have sent a note to India lodging a “strong protest” against the crossing of the China-Sikkim boundary and intrusion by Indian armed personnel into

Chinese territory for reconnaissance. This is called a “grave encroachment” and a “demand” is made that it “immediately stop.” This could be the prelude to limited Chinese military actions along the border with India to divert Indian attention from the West Pakistan front. This at least has been the pattern in the past.

Our carrier task force is now east of Ceylon at the base of the Bay of Bengal. Our missions in India report that this move is generating considerable anti-American sentiment. The situation is particularly bad in Calcutta where the general mood is described as “angry”. Our Consul General in Calcutta reports that unless suspicions of U.S. intervention are laid to rest there will be increasing hostility, and perhaps violence, directed at U.S. officials, installations and private citizens. There have been demonstrations at our embassy in New Delhi and the consulate in Bombay. In Pakistan, the media has begun to focus attention increasingly on speculation of possible U.S. assistance or intervention via the Seventh Fleet.

[Omitted here are summary reports of foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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### 320. Editorial Note

On December 16, 1971, at 2:30 p.m. local time in New Delhi, Prime Minister Gandhi announced to the Lok Sabha that the Pakistani forces commanded by General Niazi had surrendered unconditionally an hour earlier in Dacca. She hailed Dacca as “the free capital of a free country.” At the same time, the Indian Government announced a cease-fire on the front between India and West Pakistan to take effect the following day. In making the announcement a government spokesman stated that India had no territorial ambitions in the conflict. The announcement concluded that India expected there would be a “corresponding immediate response” from Pakistan. (Telegrams 19337 and 19340 from New Delhi, December 16; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27–14 INDIA–PAK)

**321. Backchannel Message From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the Ambassador to Pakistan (Farland)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 16, 1971, 2244Z.

WH 11189. I have just learned from British that Indians intend to keep their ceasefire offer open for only 24 hours. I have also learned that Soviets may move a formal resolution in the UN Security Council tonight which could be the source of extended controversy. For this reason I believe it is essential that Yahya move as quickly as possible to publicly accept Indian ceasefire proposal on a purely bilateral basis which would deprive Indians of any pretext for claiming Pakistani delays have justified continuation of fighting in the West. A unilateral announcement by Pakistan would then allow sufficient time to hammer out an acceptable UN resolution which would formalize the bilateral agreement between the two governments. In his unilateral acceptance Yahya could also recommend a formalization of the procedure within the UN forum.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

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**322. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

December 16, 1971, 5:15 p.m.

P: . . .<sup>2</sup> update on everything okay.

K: Everything is now falling into place. The Soviets are tabling a resolution;<sup>3</sup> it's better than the old one but we still can't accept it. We

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking. The President was in Key Biscayne, Florida; Kissinger was in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> The transcription begins at this point in the conversation.

<sup>3</sup> Vorontsov called Kissinger 35 minutes earlier and read the text of the Soviet draft resolution. (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 395, Telephone Conversations, Dobrynin File, Sept 1971-Apr 1972)

can't let it get settled on a Soviet resolution and secondly it is still very one-sided. Now the British are withdrawing theirs.

P: Are they going to support the Soviets?

K: That is unthinkable to me; that they wouldn't do. We have a good resolution with the non-permanent members and I have given Bush urgent instructions to get it tabled and told Vorontsov we wouldn't accept theirs but hoped it was negotiable and he said it probably was. He said let the people in New York talk about it.

P: What about the exchange of letters?

K: That's obviously off. It's just as well as far as the Chinese are concerned. We cannot support a Soviet resolution.

P: There is a unilateral cease-fire [omission in the source text].

K: Yes, but we have a problem getting Yahya to accept it. The Indians told the British our [their] offer is good for only 24 hours. She may figure Yahya can't move that fast. I have sent a cable<sup>4</sup> urging Yahya to accept it at least until the UN acts. This is all tactical maneuvering in the last 24 hours. It is aggravating for the people concerned, but nothing you need to follow step by step.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

P: But you feel good about India–Pakistan?

K: Barring total treachery . . .

P: On the part of the Indians.

K: And the Russians. The real problem now is cosmetics.

[Omitted here is discussion largely related to dealing with the press.]

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<sup>4</sup> Document 321.

### 323. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 17, 1971, 0008Z.

226610. 1. Indians have agreed to a ceasefire both in East and West. Its announcement<sup>2</sup> today included following phrase: "It is our earnest hope that there will be a corresponding immediate response from the GOP."

2. This statement has been repeated in the Security Council by the Indian Foreign Minister. In New York, we are seeking to get a resolution adopted to which Government of Pakistan can respond affirmatively. This resolution has just been tabled by Ambassador Bush<sup>3</sup> and it calls for a ceasefire on both fronts to remain in effect "until operations of disengagement take place, leading to prompt withdrawal of armed forces from all the occupied territories." Paks want such resolution since apparently they find it less difficult to respond to such a UN resolution than to the statement in the Indian announcement today. This is consistent with Yahya's speech today, in which he reiterated GOP's willingness "honor any decision of the United Nations to bring about an honorable solution of the crisis, consistent with our national interests."

3. However, kind of Security Council resolution we are trying to get adopted has run into continuing delay tactics from both the Indians and the Soviets. Danger is that longer Yahya delays responding directly to the Indian ceasefire announcement today, the greater the risk that this could be used by the Indians as a pretext to continue the war against Yahya in the West.

4. Farland should discuss the current situation immediately with Yahya with a view to bringing up the risks and hopefully getting him to take a decision on his own to respond affirmatively and on a bilateral basis to the Indian ceasefire announcement of today. If he needs UN fig leaf in his response, he can always justify it on ground he accepted the ceasefire contained in GA resolution adopted other day.<sup>4</sup> We

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Flash; Nodis. Drafted by Sisco, cleared by Haig, and in substance by Rogers, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to New Delhi, Dacca, USUN, London, and Moscow.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 320.

<sup>3</sup> The draft resolution introduced by Bush on December 16 was cosponsored by Japan and circulated as UN doc. S/10459. The text was transmitted to the Department of State on December 17 in telegram 5108 from USUN. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 11, Document 248.

recognize that it would be preferable from his standpoint to be in a position to respond affirmatively to a Security Council resolution, but we believe that the likelihood of this kind of a resolution being adopted promptly is rapidly diminishing because of Soviet-Indian delay tactics.<sup>5</sup>

**Rogers**

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<sup>5</sup> When Farland saw President Yahya on the morning of December 17 and urged him to accept the Indian cease-fire offer, Yahya took the position that he had previously indicated his willingness to accept a cease-fire in accepting the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on December 7. He did not see the necessity to reiterate that position and respond to what he referred to as Mrs. Gandhi's dictates. Upon further urging from Farland, he agreed to consider responding to the Indian offer. (Telegram 12681 from Islamabad, December 17; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK) In taking leave of Yahya, Farland said that if Yahya decided not to accept the Indian cease-fire offer, he felt it would be imperative to arrange for the evacuation of all U.S. citizens in Pakistan who were not essential to the minimal operation of the Embassy. (Telegram 12682 from Islamabad, December 17; *ibid.*) At 3 p.m. local time on December 17, Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan brought Farland the news that Yahya was prepared to accept the Indian offer publicly. (Telegram 12700 from Islamabad, December 17; *ibid.*)

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**324. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 17, 1971, 10 a.m.

K: Mr. President.

P: Hello, Henry, what's the topic today?

K: It looks like we are in business. The Paks have accepted it [the Indian cease-fire offer].

P: Does that mean she (Mrs. Gandhi) won't break it?

K: Well, she has no pretext to break it. Oh, they are bringing me in a flash cable.<sup>2</sup> The Celanese want us to put some of our ships in the Indian Ocean into Colombo.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to telegram 3516 from Colombo, December 17. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 6–3 US)

P: Why do they want them?

K: They would like to show our presence.

P: I see.

K: But at any rate, Yahya has accepted it now. The Security Council in essence killed the Soviet resolution last night. What we did after you and I talked—the British were horsing around with this nonpermanent residents resolution and the Soviets were running around with one. We just took the resolution of the others as ours.<sup>3</sup> We had to because the Soviets were going to. . . . As it was the Soviet one was killed—never got to a vote. They adjourned and this was better for us. It means both sides have accepted the ceasefire.

P: As far as the Security Council is concerned, what will they do?

K: Well, my view is that if the fighting flares up again the attacker will be violating a UN order—this is the only advantage. The disadvantage is that it legitimizes aggression. Our position is if anyone wants to vote for our resolution we will be delighted to let it pass.

P: Yes, I think that is a good point. Now at the present time the Paks are satisfied, the Chinese are satisfied and the Russians. That is fine.

K: We have come out of this amazingly well and we scared the pants off the Russians. One shouldn't give somebody who drops a match into a fire credit for calling the fire department.

P: Are you going to do a background thing?

K: I talked to Scali. I will have a backgrounder with two or three groups of two each and in a general way explain our strategy. I think it is too early to put out the details.

P: Yes, I think that is very important. What will we get out of it?

K: Well, Henry Hubbard called me yesterday and he said the President did it again. We were all screaming at him and he was vindicated by events. And Kleiman was in from the *New York Times* this morning, but I didn't do too much with him.

P: He must be pretty pleased with the Azores trip.

K: The Azores he was delighted with but the *Post* had a grudging position.

P: I see. [1 line of source text not declassified]

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<sup>3</sup> In a conversation with Kissinger the evening of December 16, Bush described the U.S. draft resolution as "the Italian draft with just a slight change." He said it was the text that Pakistan wanted and that China was prepared to accept. (Transcript of a telephone conversation; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 370, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)



K: [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] What we can get out is that they were planning to attack but not say how.

P: Well, now if the question is raised about aid to India, I would be just completely . . . I wouldn't tell them anything. The thing to do is to do it but don't tell them anything. But on the other hand, it is what we do not what we say.

K: Mrs. Gandhi has written a letter<sup>4</sup> which has been leaked to the press.

P: That is outrageous.

K: We are drafting a reply and I think we ought to release it.

P: Release it before she gets it.

K: Right, because that gives us another chance to make our case.

P: Now, what points . . . Does Scali think it is important for you to do the background thing?

K: Yes, he thinks it is essential.

P: What points are you going to get across basically?

K: The point that I want to get across . . .

P: What I mean is to bring on the details.

K: We have to let them know this was not a war just between India and Pakistan, but whatever are the initial reasons.

P: I think you ought to make the point very strongly that if we hadn't used our influence as strongly as possible, it never would have come out the way it did. The word would have been carried on from one UN member to another. I think that is the point.

K: Well, that is a good point and also that it would have had a very serious impact if the Soviet Union had . . .

P: And in other parts of the world it would have been resisted.

K: Your whole strategy from the beginning was to bring about what in fact we did. There are many who heard me talk about this last week.

P: That is right so they are prepared for it.

K: Even Henry Hubbard said for a few days we thought we had to change our evaluation a little bit, but you have come out right again. But what I will not do is put out all the exchanges. That is premature.

P: Yes, and I suppose we should stay away from any interagency bickering and all of that. I should think everyone is happy.

K: No, now they (State) want to take credit for it.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 314.

### 325. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 17, 1971.

#### SUBJECT

Information Items

*India-Pakistan Situation:* President Yahya has agreed to a ceasefire in the west by saying that Pakistan's earlier acceptance of the UNGA resolution indicates its willingness provided "other provisions" are also observed. He has ordered his forces to stop firing at 9:30 a.m. EST, the time India proposed.

Ambassador Bush at the end of last evening's consultations reported that agreement on a Security Council resolution seemed closer than at any time previously. The focal point of discussion was the U.S./Japanese draft which:

- demands that a durable cease-fire be observed until disengagement takes place leading to "prompt withdrawal of the armed forces from all the occupied territories";
- calls on all members to refrain from aggravating the situation;
- calls for protection of civilians and soldiers;
- calls for international assistance in the relief, return and rehabilitation of the refugees and strengthening the UN staff to assist.

Negotiations on wording will continue this morning. The Security Council is scheduled to convene at 10:30 a.m. In the course of consultations in response to a specific question by Ambassador Bush on Kashmir, Foreign Minister Singh stated categorically that India "has no intent to alter the cease-fire line,"<sup>2</sup> except for minor rectifications for geographic reasons to which each side agreed.

Singh also said that in the east India planned to install a civilian government of officials elected in 1970. He asked whether the U.S. could get Mujib released to head it, but he did not press the point. The Indian army will stay in the barracks. India is not interested in occupation but cannot withdraw under present conditions and leave chaos behind. India will withdraw as soon as practicable and wished the UN resolution to reflect the need for flexibility in timing.

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 38, President's Daily Briefs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. Printed from an uninitialed copy.

<sup>2</sup> The exchange between Bush and Singh, which included this assurance, was reported to the Department in telegram 5110 from USUN, December 17. (Ibid, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 27 INDIA-PAK)

[*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] the Indian army in the East has been instructed to isolate radicals within the Mukti Bahini. New Delhi is reportedly insisting that Bangla Desh have a government that includes political elements other than the Awami League. The multi-party consultative committee set up earlier in the fall, including some Communists, will apparently form the nucleus of the new government.

There is talk in West Pakistan that Yahya will be replaced, but so far these reports remain speculative.

Prior to the scheduled cease-fire this morning, heavy fighting apparently continued on the western front with India claiming gains inside Pakistan in the area south of Kashmir. Major Indian progress there would have put an end to Pakistani hope of sustaining a major campaign in Kashmir.

An analysis [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] indicates the continuation of Chinese air transport activity of the type previously associated with Chinese aircraft and supply deliveries to West Pakistan.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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### 326. Letter From President Nixon to Indian Prime Minister Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 18, 1971.

Dear Madame Prime Minister:

I have received your letter of December 15, 1971,<sup>2</sup> in which you seek to place the responsibility for the war in the subcontinent on others and in particular the United States. In the light of the many exchanges over the past year it cannot surprise you that I reject this view.

I will write you soon at greater length in confidential channels where this discussion belongs. But I cannot let your statement that “not

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 755, Presidential Correspondence File, India (1971). No classification marking. Sent to Eliot on December 18 under a covering memorandum from Haig in which he indicated that President Nixon wanted the letter delivered to the Indian Ambassador prior to the President's meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Bhutto that day. Haig also noted that the President had directed that his letter should be released to the press. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 314.

a single worthwhile step" was taken to bring about a political solution remain without response on the public record. It is a matter of judgment what is "worthwhile." The U.S. made efforts extending for nine months to take steps to assist the refugees and to provide the worthwhile basis for political negotiation.

When we met in Washington you were assured of our intention to continue to carry the main financial burden for care of the refugees. You were informed of the Government of Pakistan's willingness to take the first step of military disengagement if it could be assured that India would reciprocate subsequently. You were also informed of various ways which could be used to get talks started between the Government of Pakistan and Bangla Desh representatives. We asked your Ambassador to work out with us a specific timetable for political evolution. You said that India wanted a peaceful solution. We accepted this statement at face value.

We never made any claims that our proposals met India's position fully. They were proposals which would have started the process of negotiations. I had thought that this was one of those times when statesmanship could turn the course of history away from war.

If there is a strain in our relations, and there is, it is because your government spurned these proposals and without any warning whatever chose war instead. The subsequent disregard by your government of repeated calls of the United Nations for ceasefire and withdrawal—adopted by overwhelming majorities—confirms this judgment.

The stand taken by the United States in recent days has not been taken against India. It has been taken against the practice of turning to military action before all political resources are exhausted.

We recognize that India is a major Asian power and that we share the common values of genuinely democratic government. No act has been taken with a desire to damage the relationship between our two great countries. We would hope that the day may come when we can work together for the stability of Asia, and we deeply regret that the developments of the past few months in South Asia have thrust the day of stability farther into the future.

Sincerely,

**Richard Nixon**

### 327. Memorandum for the President's Files<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 18, 1971, 1:36–2:06 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

President's Meeting with Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister designate Z.A. Bhutto, Saturday, December 18, 1971 at 1:30 p.m.

#### PARTICIPANTS

The President  
Prime Minister Bhutto  
Pakistani Ambassador Raza  
Brigadier General A.M. Haig

The President opened the meeting by informing Deputy Prime Minister Bhutto that he was very pleased to have an opportunity to speak to the Prime Minister prior to his return to Pakistan. He noted that this meeting was set up hastily and would have to be brief and less formal than the President would have desired due to the press of monetary business and a Group of Ten meeting occurring in Washington at that very moment. Mr. Bhutto responded that he understood completely and was most grateful that the President had agreed to see him on such short notice.<sup>2</sup> He stated that Pakistan was completely in the debt of the United States for its support during the recent trying days. In the past he had been referred to as a "Yankee Hater" but his recent experiences with the United States in the Indo-Pak conflict assured him that relationships between United States and Pakistan must be built on mutual confidence and an improving dialogue.

President Nixon observed that he had admired the fine showing the Deputy Prime Minister had made in the United Nations. He noted

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 1, Memoranda for the President, Beginning December 12, 1971. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for information. Drafted by Haig. The meeting was held in the Oval Office. The time of the meeting is from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files) The conversation was tape recorded; parts of the tape are difficult to understand, particularly when Bhutto is speaking. From what can be gleaned from the tape, Haig's memorandum appears to be an accurate summary of the conversation. (Ibid., White House Tapes, Recording of conversation between President Nixon and Deputy Prime Minister Bhutto, December 18, 1971, 1:36–2:06 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 639–11)

<sup>2</sup> Bhutto also met with Secretary Rogers shortly prior to his call upon the President. During that conversation, Bhutto made at greater length many of the same points that he made with the President, and he received similar assurances. (Telegram 227784 to Islamabad, December 18; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 PAK) Telegram 227784 is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 193.

especially the Deputy Prime Minister's reference in his speech before the Security Council to the letter from his son. In that speech the Deputy Prime Minister had stated that his son had told him not to return to Pakistan with a surrender.

The Deputy Prime Minister then commented that it was an alarming situation which was widely misread by many people. He noted that President Nixon, however, had always had his feet on the ground and grasped the realities of the situation in their precise terms. He recalled that he knew President Nixon earlier when he was a student at Berkeley and when at that time he represented an opposing point of view. President Nixon recalled that he had met the Deputy Prime Minister's wife while in Pakistan some years earlier but that on that occasion the Deputy Prime Minister was not there.

Mr. Bhutto stated that the strategic significance of events in South Asia was of importance to the entire world. In effect what was occurring was that one nation was trying to turn to the internal difficulties of a neighbor and rectify the situation through the use of armed force. More importantly, however, Mr. Bhutto stated, the real significance of recent events was the fact that the Soviet Union was able to neutralize Chinese flexibility and to vastly improve its influence in the area at the expense of Communist China. This would mean that Indian appetites for further aggression could be whetted. President Nixon replied that this was precisely his view as Mr. Bhutto knew.

The President then asked Mr. Bhutto what he thought the future would hold for Pakistan. Mr. Bhutto answered that in the long run he hoped to re-establish good relationships with the Indian people; however, this would depend largely on Indian actions in the weeks ahead. If they were intent on crushing Pakistan, there would be a permanent animosity which would prevail for decades. On the other hand, from his point of view, he felt it was essential that he return to Pakistan immediately and take about 30 days to assess the will of the people. In doing so he and his party, which was the majority party in Pakistan, could move immediately to establish the kinds of reforms that were essential for the future growth and stability of Pakistan. The Deputy Prime Minister was critical of past policies in Pakistan which he claimed were the result of the will of a clique of military leaders who were no longer in touch with the people of Pakistan. All of this contributed in large measure to the calamity which befell his nation. On the other hand, he noted that in East Pakistan the situation would be very fluid and that in the long run it might be that India had bitten off more than it would be able to successfully digest. For this reason, he hoped that the United States would avoid immediately recognizing the Bangla Desh as this would cause big difficulties for the Government of Pakistan.

President Nixon stated he did not feel that this was the time to address the question of recognition of the Bangla Desh. He added that

the United States would do all within its power to help the rebuilding of Pakistan after this tragic setback. He noted that for obvious domestic reasons, reflected most sharply in Congressional attitude, the United States would be able to do more in the economic and humanitarian area. Military assistance was of course a more difficult problem. Nevertheless, the United States would do all that it could within existing restraints to help Pakistan.

Mr. Bhutto again thanked President Nixon for his personal leadership and support for the Government of Pakistan at that critical time and added that he looked forward to improving relations with the United States despite his reputation for being less than friendly in the past. Those problems he noted were the results of U.S. policies at the time. Now the situation had changed and it was essential that the United States, China and Pakistan all work together to insure stability in the area. This he stated was a problem of worldwide interest and importance and not purely a local continental problem.

As the meeting concluded Mr. Bhutto informed the President that he looked forward to seeing him again and jokingly added that he might be willing to return to manage the President's 1972 campaign. President Nixon asked the Deputy Prime Minister to extend his best wishes to President Yahya and to reassure him that the United States would continue to do all that was possible within existing constraints.

The meeting concluded at 2:00 p.m.

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### **328. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, December 20, 1971, 1420Z.

12821. Subject: Meeting With Bhutto, Dec. 20. Ref Islamabad 12804.<sup>2</sup>

1. Summary: Met with Pres. Bhutto at his request. He expressed deep and sincere appreciation courtesies received New York and Washington and said he was fully satisfied with US assistance during eventful

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 15–1 PAK. Secret; Flash; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 12804 from Islamabad, December 20, reported that Bhutto had assumed the leadership of Pakistan on December 20 as President and Martial Law Administrator. (Ibid.) President Yahya resigned in Bhutto's favor on December 19 following a day of nationwide demonstrations critical of his handling of the crisis. (Telegram 12798 from Islamabad, December 20; *ibid.*)

period. Asked for USG continuing aid. Explained transfer of power was effected soonest by Yahya's resignation both as President and as Chief Martial Law Administrator in his (Bhutto's) favor. Indicated a possible trip to China since China had not fulfilled obligations promised. Still hopes to keep the two wings together in some loose federation. Agreed to bear down hard on law and order and fully protect AmCits. Concluded by asking that closest liaison be maintained. End summary.

2. At the request of President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, I met with him in his residence at the Pucgab House (annex) in Rawalpindi at 1630 hours local, Dec. 20. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes.

3. The conversation began, after a minimum of social amenities, with Bhutto's statement to me to the effect that I was the first Ambassador who had been called to see him. He said that this choice was predicated upon the fact that he wished to indicate to me his personal high regard, and his deep appreciation for the extensive courtesies he has received while in New York and Washington. He said that, in his meetings with the Secretary and with the President, he had found cordiality and understanding beyond that which he could have reasonably expected; this, he wanted me to know and, through my messages to Washington, to reiterate his deep and sincere appreciation.

4. After an extended contemplative pause, Bhutto then said succinctly, "We are in one hell of a mess." Agreeing with that assertion, I replied that his job was not an enviable one and that labor which he was now undertaking on behalf of his nation would try the strength of any man. In a most solemn and measured tone, he went on to say that Pakistan had a real reason for coming into being; that this very reason justified its survival; and that he sincerely trusted "with all my heart" that the United States would do that within its capacity to assist in the monumental effort which lay ahead. In answer I told him that he had more recently than I talked to the President and the Secretary and I was certain that, from their conversations with him, he could find reason to sustain him in this crucial period.

5. I then asked him how the chance of power had come about. Bhutto said that, following his arrival in Rawalpindi, he had called upon Yahya soonest. In a short but dramatic exchange, Yahya had (a) resigned as President in favor of him (Bhutto), and (b) also resigned in the [his] favor as Chief Martial Law Administrator. Therefore, Bhutto continued, he was operating under martial law authority, but he had no intention of maintaining the MLA concept for any length of time, this being completely contrary to his character. In answer to my question concerning what interdicted the promulgation of the constitution which was promised for Dec. 20, Bhutto said that it had been superseded by events and that a new constitution had to be written; this would be done soonest.



6. Referring again to the need for aid and assistance to Pakistan, Bhutto said that it was quite possible he soon would go to Peking and, he declared, there was need for such visit inasmuch as “China had not fulfilled its obligations to Pakistan as promised.” Contrariwise, Bhutto was effusive in his expression of appreciation for the assistance to Pakistan which was rendered by the United States, with specific references to that period of time from December 3 to date.

7. In conjunction with the subject of U.S. assistance and the obvious need for rehabilitation of his country, Bhutto not unsurprisingly addressed himself to the theme of unity between the wings. (See State 227784,<sup>3</sup> para 10—Secretary’s conversation with Bhutto.) Rhetorically Bhutto asked aloud, “Can the two wings even yet be held together?” I pointed out to him that my conversation with Bengalis indicated that religiously and historically the bond was strong but that the events which had caused strains from 1947 onward and the untoward happenings of March 25 and subsequent thereto were matters which he as a Pakistani and a Muslim could best judge. Bhutto acknowledged the historic errors and disasters of the more recent past, but said that, if at all possible, his would be an effort to reconcile and reunite, holding the wings in some loose federation. I wished him well in what I termed “an awesome task.”

8. I took the occasion which the meeting offered to stress my concern for American citizens in Pakistan and the need to maintain and strengthen the forces of law and order. Bhutto assured me that this subject was of primary importance to him since he could not rebuild Pakistan into a nation or establish its viability if lawlessness were allowed to generate. He added that he was going to speak by radio and TV tonight at 2200 hours local, giving a detailed report to the nation, appealing to all Pakistanis in all walks of life, and trying to instill in them both hope and courage for the days ahead. He added that he would hit hard on the subject of law and order in a way which he felt would meet with my entire satisfaction. He added that, during his talk, he would legalize once again the outlawed National Awami Party (WALI) and would release any people who were presently detained for political reasons<sup>4</sup> (He was unable to specify names or numbers.)

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 10 of telegram 227784 to Islamabad, cited in footnote 2, Document 327, reported that Bhutto asked that the United States not act in haste in recognizing the “so-called Bangla Desh.” He was convinced, he said, that sentiment in both wings was still overwhelmingly in favor of maintaining the union.

<sup>4</sup> Farland used this opening to ask whether Bhutto also intended to release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bhutto said that he wanted to do so, but key supporters had warned him that the release of Mujib at that time would be tantamount to Bhutto decreeing his own imprisonment. Bhutto intended to condition the people of Pakistan to the need to release Mujib. He anticipated that Mujib might be exchanged for the thousands of Pakistani prisoners India held following the surrender in East Pakistan. (Telegram 12822 from Islamabad, December 20; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 29 PAK)

9. In concluding our conversation, Bhutto said that it was essential that we maintain the closest possible liaison and that he would be available to see me at any time and at any hour. I assured him that I fully reciprocated his offer and that the need of the moment and for the foreseeable future was for the closest cooperation. As I was leaving, I suggested to him that, in addition to our personal relationship, I felt it would be advisable to set up a secondary contact and that my Deputy Chief of Mission was ready to effect such an arrangement with whomever he would designate. This met with Bhutto's accord.

Farland

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**329. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 21, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

*India-Pakistan Situation:* Several hours after taking over as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan, Bhutto went on the air yesterday for a "heart-to-heart talk to my people." In an apparent bid to rally the country around his leadership, Bhutto announced that:

—Yahya and several other senior officers had "retired" and Lt. General Gul Hassan had been named the new Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

—"East Pakistan is an inseparable and indissolvable part of Pakistan." He was, however, prepared for talks with East Pakistani leaders within a Pakistan that could be a "loose arrangement", but that first "Indian troops must vacate my motherland . . . and East Pakistan."

—A new constitution will be promulgated and democracy will be restored.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 38, President's Daily Briefs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword.

Prior to the broadcast, Bhutto called in Ambassador Farland.<sup>2</sup> He succinctly characterized the situation by saying: "We are in one hell of a mess." Bhutto went on to say he sincerely trusted that the United States would do all within its capacity to assist him with the monumental effort which lay ahead. If at all possible, he would attempt to reconcile and reunite both wings of Pakistan within some loose federation. Bhutto also revealed that he might soon travel to Peking, since "China had not fulfilled its obligations to Pakistan as promised."

Meanwhile, there is still considerable public resentment about the way the war ended. In Karachi, for example, bands of demonstrators have been roving in and out of the major business and residential areas setting fires and causing disruptions. Many educated Pakistanis are still openly attacking Yahya and saying that the people will never allow the return of a military government under any circumstances. At the same time, even those who oppose and distrust Bhutto seem inclined to give him a chance.

The situation is still fluid in the East. The Indian Army seems to be gradually restoring a minimum of law and order in Dacca and reorganizing the administrative apparatus. The "Bangla Desh" cabinet, however, has still not arrived from Calcutta, although there are reports that it may proceed to Dacca by mid-week. The Bangla Desh "Prime Minister" is quoted by Dacca Radio as saying that there is a great need for foreign aid but that they will "not touch" any part of U.S. aid because of the "hateful and shameful" policy that the U.S. has followed toward the Bangla Desh "freedom struggle."

There are also reports that the Indians have removed the two top Pak military officials in the East to Calcutta and are making preparations to move all Pak POWs and civil servants to detention camps in India. What could be shaping up is protracted bargaining between the Paks, Indians and Bangla Desh representatives involving repatriation of the POWs, the release of Mujib (Bhutto said nothing about him)<sup>3</sup> and the transfer of the Bengali population in West Pakistan and minority groups in the East.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 328.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 4, Document 328.

**330. Letter From Pakistani President Bhutto to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Islamabad, undated.

Excellency,

It is with a very heavy heart that I address this, my first message, to you for your assistance to alleviate human suffering. The news from Dacca is grim. Reports from independent sources, which must have reached you by now, speak of inhuman atrocities and mass murders of innocent people in a part of Pakistan which is now under India's military occupation. To say that these killings and atrocities are being perpetrated by the so-called "Mukti Bahini" does not, and cannot, absolve India of its responsibility to ensure the safety of life and property of the people. The Commanding General of India has publicly stated that the "Mukti Bahini" and all other forces now in East Pakistan are under his effective command.

What is happening in Dacca is by no means an isolated affair. Reports of similar incidents are being received from other cities in East Pakistan also. News of this indiscriminate carnage has been received with the gravest concern in Pakistan, and cannot but be viewed with horror throughout the world.

I am, therefore, addressing this earnest appeal to you on behalf of the people of Pakistan and on my own behalf to use your influence with India most urgently to prevent further carnage. Otherwise that Province might soon be engulfed in a widespread blood-bath.

My Government has already approached the International Red Cross, who have sent some personnel and supplies to Dacca. The need of the hour, however, is for Red Cross presence in greater strength, for assistance by way of medicines and field hospitals in a more massive form. Apart from requesting the International Red Cross to do the needful, and in particular, to ensure compliance of the Geneva Convention, my Government has also enlisted the support of other friendly governments to lend their weight in moving the Red Cross and also to take action themselves through humanitarian organizations.

An urgent appeal to India by all permanent members of the Security Council and action by them individually in pursuance of these humanitarian objectives would go a long way in bringing peace to that strife torn land.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 760, Presidential Correspondence File, President Bhutto. No classification marking. The letter was delivered to the Department of State on December 21 under a letter of transmittal from Ambassador Raza to Secretary Rogers. (Ibid.) The text of the letter was transmitted to Islamabad in telegram 233015, December 30. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 573, Indo-Pak War, South Asia, 12/17/71-12/31/71)

I would, in particular, impress on you immediately to approach the Government of India to take effective measures, with all the means at their command, to ensure that this carnage stops without loss of time.

I avail of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

**Zulfikar Ali Bhutto<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

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### 331. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Bermuda, December 21, 1971, 2:35 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

India–Pakistan

#### PARTICIPANTS

*British Side:*

Prime Minister Heath  
Sir Alec Douglas-Home, State Secretary  
Mr. Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Lord Cromer, Ambassador to U.S.  
Sir Denis Greenhill, Permanent Under Secretary in the Foreign Office  
Sir Burke Trend, Secretary of the Cabinet  
Mr. Donald Maitland, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
Mr. John Graham, Private Secretary to Sir Alec Douglas-Home  
Mr. Peter James Moon, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
Mr. Clive Rose, Assistant Under Secty. for Science and Technology, Foreign Office  
Mr. Hugh Overton, Head of the North American Department, Foreign Office

*American Side:*

The President  
Secretary Rogers  
Ambassador-at-Large Kennedy  
Ambassador Annenberg  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Exec. Office of President  
Asst. Secty. Hillenbrand  
Mr. Ronald L. Ziegler, Exec. Off. of President  
Treasury Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs Volcker  
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Senior Member, NSC Staff

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 27 INDIA–PAK. Secret; Nodis. Drafted on January 13, 1972, by Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Martin J. Hillenbrand. The meeting was held at Government House. The conversation, part I of VIII, was one of a number of exchanges December 20–21 among Prime Minister Edward Heath, Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home, various advisers and members of the British Cabinet, and a U.S. team headed by President Nixon that included Rogers, Connally, Kissinger, and Haldeman.

The President and Prime Minister called upon the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State to summarize the results of their conversations of December 20 and the morning of December 21. Sir Alec began by saying that on India-Pakistan there was no fundamental difference in assessment between the United States and the United Kingdom, although there had been a difference as to UN tactics. In the British view, the trouble really began historically when the Pakistan Government moved to align itself with the People's Republic of China, opting out of SEATO and loosening its ties with CENTO. India considered this a real threat to the security of the sub-continent. Eventually this led to what was essentially a treaty of convenience between India and the USSR. The British were doubtful that India wanted to go over completely to the Soviets, for example, to the extent of granting formal base rights. It was now essential that the United Kingdom and the United States come together in dealing with the new problems of the future. This would require adequate response to three aspects of the situation: (1) keeping West Pakistan afloat; (2) meeting the humanitarian requirements in the face of inevitable famine in Bangla Desh; and (3) finding a way of coming to terms with India as the most powerful country in the sub-continent.

In the UN, Sir Alec continued, the United States felt it had to register its disapprobation of Indian action. The British wanted to keep a looser position and therefore abstained on the various UN votes. It was unrealistic to think any further in terms of a united Pakistan. We must now deal with the fact of three countries in the sub-continent. He and Secretary Rogers had agreed to keep in close touch in connection with future developments, beginning with the question of some sort of a signing-off resolution in the UN.

The Secretary said he thought the prospects for such a resolution were not too good. The UN might close up tomorrow and India and Pakistan had not yet agreed on any formulation. He had pointed out to Sir Alec the difficulties the United States will have with the Congress in getting any assistance for India, although this might not apply so much to purely humanitarian aid. There might be some difference on timing between the British and the United States as to establishing relations with Bangla Desh. It was difficult to tell what Bhutto was going to do except that one could be fairly certain that he would exploit the situation for his own political benefit. He would probably release Mujib in due time and try to blame the Pakistan military for not having turned over control to civilians sooner. Home observed that there would soon be a meeting of the consortium which would be faced with the problem of keeping West Pakistan afloat. Here there was scope for British-American cooperation.

The President asked for British views on the Soviet interest in the current situation. Would Russia pick up the tab for India or would they

want the Western countries to participate? Sir Alec said he thought the Indian nonalignment tradition would prevail, at least for quite a time. The Indians were obviously worried about possible growing Chinese influence in Bangla Desh and would want moderate Bangla Desh leaders to be in control.

The President asked for the British judgment as to whether, if this Chinese danger arose, the Indians would try to get help from us or the Soviets, or both. He noted the sentiment in Congress and elsewhere that our considerable aid to India in the past 25 years—a total of some ten billion dollars—had led only to our being kicked in the teeth. The question was being asked whether such aid was in the United States interest if we remained totally without any influence. The argument was made that such money could be used better at home. Sir Alec said we had to assume that there would be no gratitude on the part of Indian politicians. India, however, would not want to be totally dependent on the USSR. It was worth keeping those contacts with India which we enjoyed, and he thought the Indians would want this. It was for this reason that the British had found the apparent US attitude during the past month worrying. He thought enough good will remained in India to enable the United States to recover its position. The Secretary commented that Mrs. Gandhi resents our even mentioning aid as a factor in our relations. The Congress simply would not approve any program under these circumstances. Sir Alec asked whether anyone ever thanked the United States for its aid. The Secretary said not all countries had acted as had the Indians. We hoped, of course, that the United States could recapture some of its influence with India.

The President said the United States was not simply interested in receiving a “thank you very much” from the Indians. We do what we do in our own interest and must be able to justify our action in those terms. If it were simply a matter of the United States’ getting back in the good graces of India, we would do something to achieve this, but he doubted whether this was the right way of looking at the problem. He was inclined to think we should be patient. India has to make an important decision “whether to become like Sadat or not”. He wondered whether it was desirable simply to accept the Indian position that they are automatically in the right on every issue and we are in the wrong.

Sir Alec reiterated how important it was to realize what Pakistan did when it lined up with China. Mrs. Gandhi has gambled that Chinese influence would not get out of bounds in Bangla Desh. It was in the Western interest that the new Bangla Desh should be basically India-oriented rather than China-oriented.

The President observed that there was no question as to our goal of insuring that India did not fall into the Soviet bag. There were some five hundred million Indians trying to make it with a non-totalitarian

society. How could our influence best be used? British advice would be welcome. We frankly had to admit that our dealings with India were a historic failure, registered, for example, in the fact that India had voted contrary to our position on 93% of all UN issues that mattered. Pragmatically we may have to accept the Indian way, and it was necessary to explore the possibility of moving in a more measured pattern in our relations with India. The Secretary commented that not only has India voted against us in the UN, but it has missed no opportunity to be vocal in its opposition to us.

Sir Alec said you must start with the assumption that you will get nothing from the Indians in the way of support, but you must also look at the basic Western interest in India. He agreed that the West should move pragmatically in the new circumstances.

The President said that it was far more important to keep India from Soviet than from Chinese domination under current circumstances, although in the long run it might be different. We can agree that we want to keep India independent. Our long-term goal was the same as that of the British, although we might differ on tactics. The Secretary noted that if India does grant facilities to the Soviets this would reinforce negative US opinion. The President concluded that the closest cooperation on this question should take place between the United States and the United Kingdom. We must give Bhutto time to achieve a settlement before we move definitively on Bangla Desh.

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### 332. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 22, 1971.

#### SUBJECT

Information Items

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

*India-Pakistan Situation:* In West Pakistan, Bhutto is moving to consolidate his position. The list of generals "retired" along with Yahya includes virtually all of his close inner circle and the only top officers

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Box 38, President's Daily Briefs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword. Printed from an uninitialed copy.



remaining—Acting Commander of the Army Gul Hassan and Commander of the Air Force Rahim Khan—both had lines out to Bhutto before the war and have not been seriously tainted by the outcome. Bhutto, however, is keeping the Defense portfolio for himself. Bhutto is also retaining the External Affairs portfolio and has appointed a man he trusts over Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan.

On the political front, Bhutto has said that Mujib will be released from prison soon and put under some form of house arrest. This is, of course, only a gesture but it could be important for setting the tone for the dialogue that must soon ensue with the Indians and Bangla Desh leaders involving Mujib's release and the fate of the POWs and other West Paks in Indian custody.

There is a great deal of speculation in New Delhi about the shape of the emerging India-Bangla Desh relationship. Our Embassy has been able to confirm that a treaty has been signed providing for economic assistance, especially aimed at helping the refugees return, and that planning is going forward in the trade field. There may also be provisions for security arrangements along the lines of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty.

At the UN, the Security Council was finally able to agree on a resolution last night by a vote of thirteen to nothing with the Soviet Union and Poland abstaining.<sup>2</sup> The operative paragraph in effect formalizes the cease-fire and demands that it "remain in effect until withdrawals take place, as soon as practicable, of all armed forces to their respective territories and to the cease-fire line supervised by UNMOGIP." This latter clause on the UN Military Observer Group for India and Pakistan is intended to imply full withdrawal in Kashmir and we have made it clear in our explanation of the vote that this is our understanding. This is not everything that we initially wanted, but it is the lowest common denominator that both the Indians and the Paks will agree on and as such the only alternative to a continuing Security Council deadlock. It provides a firm basis for strong multilateral démarches for full Indian withdrawal.

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>2</sup> The resolution adopted by the Security Council on December 21 was sponsored by Argentina, Burundi, Japan, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Somalia. (UN doc. S/RES/307 (1971))

### 333. Telegram From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Islamabad, December 23, 1971, 1025Z.

12934. Subj: Conversation with Pres. Bhutto Wednesday Evening, Dec 22.

1. Summary: Breaking protocol, Pres. Bhutto called upon me at my residence Wednesday evening, December 22. Said his action was strongly to signal new period of relations between GOP and USG. Expressed need for influx of capital, and avowed private capital would be well treated. Indicated desire to establish political government soonest. Further hoped to have Pakistan's primary problems settled within six months. Criticized Security Council's ineptitude and indicated he would test Russia's intentions re its position in Security Council since he (Bhutto) now agreeable to dealing with elected representatives East Pak people. Indicated he was not anxious for Yahya to be placed on trial, and hopeful demand therefore might lessen. Convinced that it was not only India's desire to break two-wing concept but also India's definite intention (till time of ceasefire) to liquidate West Pakistan. Gave personal assurance USG and American personnel would not be subject to untoward instances of public outcry or physical harm. Hoped for early return American personnel convinced that ceasefire would hold. End summary.

2. Surprisingly and quite unexpectedly, I received a phone call late afternoon of Wednesday, Dec 22, from the President's office asking if I could receive the President at my residence in the evening. Pres Bhutto arrived at 2130 hours local and conversed with me for 35 minutes. He was accompanied by Mustafa Khar, recently announced Governor and Martial Law Administrator of Punjab (Islamabad 12875).<sup>2</sup> Khar took virtually no part in the conversation which ensued.

3. After exchange of social amenities, and after noting that his call upon me was most unusual from the standpoint of protocol, Bhutto said that he was so acting to signal strongly his reaffirmation of a whole new period of close and effective relations with the United States. He said whatever criticism the United States may have had regarding his past posture, he now hoped that it would be forgotten as our two coun-

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Repeated priority to Dacca, Karachi, Lahore, Moscow, and New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 12875 from Islamabad, December 22, reported on the changes in government effected by President Bhutto on December 21. (Ibid.)

tries “with mutual interests” came closer together in common cause. He said that he again wished to express his appreciation for the assistance which the United States had extended to Pakistan during its greatest crisis, and added that it would not be forgotten.

4. With this as a point of departure, Bhutto declared that, if Pakistan is to rise from its present destitute economic straits, it was necessary that there be a substantial influx of capital into the country, and by capital he meant both private and on a government-to-government basis. He went on to say that he wished to assure the USG that private US capital would be well received in Pakistan and that he intended to do everything necessary to make investment in Pakistan both “convenient and worthwhile to the investor.” In reply, I told him I felt that I had been attempting [garble] of the need for private capital ever since my arrival in Pakistan, and I would, at a convenient time, talk to him about certain ideas for economic development which I felt might be productive and in furtherance of his stated objective.

5. Referring to his role as Chief Martial Law Administrator, Bhutto said he wanted to re-establish a thoroughly political government as soon as possible, and made numerous references to the need for the people to become a part of the political climate of Pakistan “otherwise there would be no peace here, ever.” He avowed it was his hope that he would have the pressing problems of Pakistan “cleaned up or on the way to settlement” within six months. This included, he said, agreement on East Pakistan as well as West Pakistan “local problems.” I told him that the program of action which he had taken upon himself would require Herculean effort and that I and my government wished him well.

6. Making mention of the Security Council’s ineptitude and lack of viability on solutions, he said he was going to try to ascertain whether Russia was sincere in the proposal which it had sponsored in the Security Council. He said he would do this by testing, on the basis of his position of dealing with the “elected representatives of the people” in East Pakistan. He declared that, most certainly, the problem involved was one in which other countries should not interfere. This problem—a problem of staggering magnitude—had to be worked out by the people of the two wings. He added that, since Pakistan had come into being as a Muslim state and since the people involved were Muslims this was the thread upon which negotiations would hang.

7. As the conversation moved into other fields, I noted that the local press was giving considerable play to the demand that General Yahya be placed on trial, and wondered aloud whether this was a salutary move at a time when the climate called for reconciliation and a

play-down of emotions.<sup>3</sup> Bhutto agreed, saying that he most certainly did not want "Yahya's head" nor was he vindictive. This, he said, was proven by the fact that he had not "gone after Ayub." He added that there was a great deal of public clamor which he was finding it difficult to stifle. He observed, however, that with the passage of time this clamor might be expected to lessen.<sup>4</sup>

8. On the subject of India's intentions toward Pakistan since March 25, Bhutto said India's posture had been blatantly patent; it desired not only to break up the two wings, but he was convinced that India had, at least up to the ceasefire offer, nurtured the definite intention of liquidating West Pakistan. India, he said, had never truly recognized the 1947 partition nor, in fact, had been reconciled to it. He said that, consequently, the future of Pakistan was closely tied to two great powers: China and the United States. Nevertheless, he said he hoped that his negotiations with India would provide a harmony which would allow Pakistan to exist in peace.

9. As the conversation was drawing to a close, I noted my concern regarding outbreaks of lawlessness which had occurred in various cities of West Pakistan and the rumors of planned processions against the USG for alleged failure to meet GOP's needs during the crisis. Bhutto assured me that there would be no untoward incidents adversely affecting the US or American personnel, specifically stating that he had given orders that none such would occur, and offered me his personal guarantee to this effect. He said that his confidence in this regard was such that he could ask me, without hesitancy, to plan for an early return of American personnel; this, he said, he would greatly appreciate because it would add to the atmosphere of normalcy which he was trying to generate.

10. In concluding the conversation and as he was taking his departure, I asked Bhutto whether or not he felt the ceasefire would hold. His answer was a categorical "yes." But he noted that there had been a number of minor violations along the line, including an unfortunate one which had occurred the night before at Burki.

## Farland

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<sup>3</sup> On December 22 Kissinger sent a backchannel message to Farland in which he took note of reports that Yahya might be brought to trial. He instructed Farland to inform Bhutto that it would be difficult for the United States to understand a decision to do so. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 426, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages 1971, Amb. Farland, Pakistan)

<sup>4</sup> Farland also referred to Bhutto's decision to release Mujibur Rahman from prison and put him under house arrest. The move enhanced the possibility of negotiations with Mujib and Farland applauded the timing of the move as "most propitious." (Telegram 12938 from Islamabad, December 23; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK)

**334. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 27, 1971.

SUBJECT

Information Items

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

*India-Pakistan Situation:* Ambassador Farland has sent in his assessment of the first few days of Bhutto's regime. He concludes that Bhutto has moved with extraordinary speed to solidify his control of West Pakistan and to set the stage for launching his political and economic reform program. He has been aided in this effort by the widespread demoralization both within the military leadership and the populace as a whole, who seem prepared, at least for the moment, to give him a free hand. The early signs suggest that Bhutto's domestic program will feature social reform and populist assaults on the establishment, while he builds a highly personal, somewhat authoritarian regime. On the international front, Bhutto has taken the first steps toward a new relationship with India with hints of some flexibility on the Bangla Desh issue and Mujib. On relations with the great powers, he seems to be keeping his options open. In sum, Farland says that Bhutto has taken over West Pakistan "lock, stock, and barrel," probably saving it from internal collapse in the process. On the other hand, it is not clear whether Bhutto will be able to rise above his reputation for unscrupulousness, vanity, and intense personal ambition to become a real statesman.

From New Delhi, Ambassador Keating reports that Mrs. Gandhi's domestic political stock has soared while the opposition's has declined in the wake of India's military victory. Personal adulation of Mrs. Gandhi has gone to the extremes with even the opposition leaders hailing her as India's Joan of Arc and the incarnation of various Hindu deities. At the same time, Mrs. Gandhi appears to have retained her cool, calculating manner and is moving to capitalize on her popularity by scheduling new elections in several states.

In other developments over the weekend, U Thant has named Vittorio Winspeare-Guicciardi, Under Secretary General and head of the UN's Geneva office, as his special representative in India and Pakistan

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 38, President's Daily Briefs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Codeword.

to go to the subcontinent to help deal with humanitarian problems as called for in the Security Council resolution.<sup>2</sup>

Bhutto is reported to have announced plans for a judicial inquiry into the causes for Pakistan's defeat. It is not to submit its findings for three months and may be Bhutto's effort to satisfy public opinion with a minimum move.<sup>3</sup>

[Omitted here are summary reports on foreign policy issues unrelated to South Asia.]

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 332.

<sup>3</sup> Nixon underlined Bhutto and added a handwritten note that reads: "K—he must be *strongly* informed—RN will be *very* opposed to trial of Yahya." Kissinger noted in the margin that he had done so.

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### 335. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 30, 1971, 1927Z.

233072. Subject: President Bhutto's Letter to President. Ref: State 233015.<sup>2</sup> For Ambassador Farland.

1. Septel contains text letter to President from President Bhutto delivered Dept by Ambassador Raza December 21.

2. You should make oral response to letter, indicating that President has received it and is deeply appreciative of concerns raised in letter. You should put your response in context our own concerns which we have expressed publicly and privately on several occasions in recent past, in UN and elsewhere, regarding general humanitarian problems growing out of hostilities East Pakistan. You will want to point out what we have already done in support of Pak approach to ICRC and Swiss Government concerning West Pak and civilian officials East Pakistan. We have also made clear to Indian Government our view that

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK. Confidential. Drafted on December 27 by Laingen; cleared by Schneider and Davies, in substance by Orson Trueworthy (S/R), in IO by Deputy Assistant Secretary George A. Von Peterfly and Director of the Office of United Nations Political Affairs John A. Armitage, in AID by Williams and MacDonald, and at the White House by Saunders; paragraph 5 was cleared with Agriculture and OMB; and approved by Acting Secretary Johnson. Repeated to New Delhi, Tehran, London, Calcutta, Dacca, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 330 and footnote 1 thereto.

Indian Army has heavy and continuing responsibility help insure security of minorities and others East Pakistan in current unsettled security situation there.

3. You should then go on to say that we stand ready to assist ICRC and other international organizations in whatever ways that might be practicable in alleviating present human suffering East Pakistan. In doing so you will want to recall a) Bhutto's indication to Secretary December 18<sup>3</sup> that he understood why US would wish to provide humanitarian assistance in East (subject to understanding that this not be done in way there be any implication of recognition Bangla Desh); and b) call in Security Council Resolution adopted December 21<sup>4</sup> for international assistance in relief of suffering and rehabilitation of refugees and authorization for Secretary General to assist in this regard.

4. You should say to Bhutto that in view of these considerations we are indicating to UNSYG that USG stands ready to assist in such humanitarian relief operations as may be requested of UN in the East Pakistan area and which it feels it has the capacity to undertake.<sup>5</sup> We want Bhutto to understand, however, that our doing so will depend on a broad range of international support, pursuant to the SC resolution, and that we will look to the UN for leadership in such an effort. FYI: What we have in mind for our part is the considerable amount of foodgrains previously in pipeline for East Pakistan in tranches appropriate to situation as it develops. We intend hold up any commitments on administrative costs at this time. End FYI.

5. You may also inform President Bhutto that President has authorized that negotiations begin with GOP for a new PL-480 Title I Agreement of 300,000 tons wheat and 25,000 tons edible oil (these authorizations having values of approximately \$25 million and \$10 million respectively). These actions reflect not only awareness of pressing food requirements West Pakistan but also are evidence of desire this Government to assist GOP in difficult tasks overall it now faces in beginning lengthy process of recovery from tragic events of recent weeks.<sup>6</sup>

6. PL-480 negotiating instructions will follow septel.

**Johnson**

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 327.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 332.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram 232870 to USUN, the mission was instructed to inform the United Nations that the United States was prepared to participate in humanitarian relief operations in East Pakistan subject to the conditions outlined in this paragraph. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, SOC 10 BANGLA DESH) Telegram 232870 is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972, Document 197.

<sup>6</sup> Deputy Chief of Mission Sober conveyed the U.S. response to Bhutto's letter to Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan on January 3, 1972. (Telegram 61 from Islamabad, January 4; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 15-1 PAK)

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