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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald R. Ford
Ambassador Triloki Nath Kaul of India
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and
Assistant to the President
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, August 21, 1974

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

Kaul: I know your time is precious. I want to thank you for seeing me.

President: It was nice of you to come.

Kissinger: The Ambassador has been in every important post in India's Foreign Service -- Moscow, Peking, Washington.

President: How many years have you been in the Foreign Service?

Kaul: Since Independence.

President: Were you in the Independence Movement?

Kaul: We have a tradition that the Foreign Service doesn't join a political party.

President: Please give Mrs. Gandhi my regards.

Kaul: I brought a letter. It came just last night. [Tab A]

Kissinger: The Ambassador was also helpful with the North Vietnamese.

President: We appreciate it.

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Kaul: It was our duty to help. We recently received a delegation from the families of the missing in action.

I want to say we appreciate Dr. Kissinger. The situation previously didn't permit much contact with your predecessor. Her letter about me is from the Prime Minister to President Nixon.

President: It was very nice about you. Secretary Kissinger has told me about the joint commission that we hope to set up.

Kaul: Our Parliament is very suspicious. They even complained that you didn't receive me the first day. The Prime Minister renews the invitation to come to India.

President: I got an invitation when I was Vice President and I was thinking of going in November. The time now has to be indefinite, but I would like to come.

Kaul: Maybe Dr. Kissinger can discuss this further when he comes. Our democracies should have good relations. Some times our Congressmen on both sides are outspoken. The IDA bill we feel was discriminatory against us.

President: Yes. I signed the bill but I expressed my reservations about it. I didn't approve that, but the legislation was vital.

Kaul: I was assured it could be removed on another bill.

President: We will do what we can.

Kaul: Our new President was just elected. He received over 80% in the elections.

President: What is his term?

Kaul: Five years.

Kissinger: It is a ceremonial job.

Kaul: The Prime Minister hopes for good relations with the United States. She knows that in the past there were personal and other problems, and hopes that won't interfere with our relations now.

President: We start with a fresh slate.

Kaul: We'll hope for passage of the Trade Bill. We would like to double our trade with the United States.

President: One of the first meetings I held was on this. I think we have a chance for good progress.

[The meeting then ended]

20th August 1974

Dear Mr. President,

I am desired by my Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to convey the following message from her to you:

New Delhi,
19th August 1974

"Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your letter of 10th August 1974 which must have crossed my own message to you. I appreciate your courtesy and sharing your thoughts about the future policies of the U.S.A. and your commitment to building a strong relationship between our two countries. Indeed it has been my sincere effort ever since I became Prime Minister to improve relations with your great country. But unfortunately our policy and even our motives have so often been misunderstood in the past.

2. We admire the American heritage. The U.S. and India are functioning democracies which have a common interest in promoting world peace in which democratic institutions and values can flourish and men and women will have full opportunity to work for the fulfilment of their aspirations. We look forward to a continuing dialogue between our two Governments on matters of bilateral and international interests. Our two countries can and should work together to promote understanding cooperation and peace, especially in this part of the world.

3. As you say, there has indeed been considerable progress in our relations in recent months. We share the wishes of the United States Government under your leadership to continue this process. May I assure you, Mr. President, of our earnestness in establishing a more positive and constructive relationship between our two countries.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sgd. Indira Gandhi

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances

of my highest respect