

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald R. Ford
His Excellency Sardar Swaran Singh,
Foreign Minister of India
Triloki Nath Kaul, Indian Ambassador to the
United States
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, September 19, 1974
5:30 p. m. (30 minutes)

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

Singh: I know you have had a very busy day. I feel guilty to impose on you.

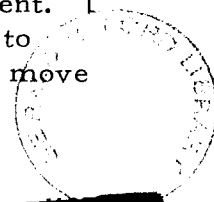
President: Not at all. We will have a photo session and then talk.

[The press is admitted briefly, then dismissed.]

President: When will you be going back home?

Singh: By the 28th. The Shah is coming to India on the 2nd and I have to be there.

President: I am grateful for the message the Prime Minister sent. I am looking forward to working with her and making a big effort to improve relations between the United States and India. We will move in the right direction.



CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines
By wt, NARA, Date 1/18/00

NSA, Mem Cons, Box 5

9/19/74

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Singh: The Prime Minister appreciated your warm greetings. She is looking forward to an improvement of relations. Ambassador Kaul's task when he was called from retirement was to see to this. Secretary Kissinger also works at this with characteristic enthusiasm.

Ambassador Moynihan is a very effective Ambassador. He is becoming very popular in India.

President: I'm glad to hear this. I thought he made a big improvement to the previous Administration.

Kissinger: Don't tell him, Mr. Minister.

Singh: In India your remarks have been greatly appreciated. Your idea of applying fresh thoughts. In India we don't brood--but we couldn't understand why there should be differences when there is no clash of interests. We thought the United States should want an island of stability in this one populous region, without outside influence or interference. So we were confused when we found we didn't see eye to eye with the United States.

Kissinger: It is dangerous to cross India--they control half our press.

President: I am looking forward to Secretary Kissinger's visit to India. It is indicative of our wish to move closer together. I visited India in 1959 or 1960 for ten days. It was the TWA inaugural. I took a two-day train ride. I saw the Taj in the moonlight.

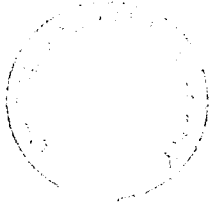
Singh: I hope it was not in June or July or you had a poor impression.

President: Then we drove to Jaipur.

Singh: You have said what I wanted to. We too are looking forward to Secretary Kissinger's visit and we hope it will advance our relations. What we want to discuss is not to dwell on the past, but the future of our relations. It should be possible to have understanding between us.

We are trying in an earnest effort within our own region to solve the problems of the colonial past. Once it was all India under Britain. It takes time to resolve, but we are trying to bring about good relations among us. There were some problems with the Shah. With Pakistan

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we are trying very hard under the Simla formula not to use force. If Pakistan responds favorably, there is a good chance for a durable peace. Compared to other bilateral areas, the two sides have got together themselves to settle the borders, prisoners of war, and other problems. In no other area have the parties themselves been able to do this. The benevolent interest of the United States has been helpful. In the past, others have looked over our shoulders and that tends to make the will to compromise evaporate.

President: Your way should lead to a more permanent solution.

I enjoyed my visit to the UN.

Singh: Let me give my congratulations on your speech, which touched upon basic and burning issues. You rightly said the details would be spelled out by Secretary Kissinger.

President: I discussed the controversial issues, but I didn't want to duck them.

Singh: Some things have to be said. Platitudes would not have done justice to the United States or the United Nations.


President: I hope we can work together on some of the problems of Vietnam.

Singh: I will discuss this with Secretary Kissinger because I think there should be cooperation. We would like to disabuse anyone of any ideas that we are committed to any country. We are committed to principles--and if we agree with the Soviet Union, it is because it is a point of our principle. The United Nations has been dominated for the past ten years on African and Middle East problems and we have strong views on these issues. But we judge our views on all matters.....

President: We are trying to solve the Indochina problem as constructively as possible.

Kissinger: Ambassador Kaul was helpful during the negotiations in passing information.

[REDACTED]



President: We are grateful for that. It was harmful to the world. I would hope that if it is within your principles at the UN, if you could help to postpone the Khmer credentials issue.

Kissinger: We prefer to have a study done and then defer it to a later time.

Singh: Secretary Kissinger's tenacity and brilliance in negotiations has helped your country to get out of a difficult situation. It took brave decisions. Our big worry about Cambodia is that--unlike other states--there is no dialogue or even identification of negotiating parties.

Kissinger: We have some ideas for movement.

Singh: We appreciate the bold decision that it took for your extrication from Vietnam. We support the Paris Agreement. You phased out Laos but we are worried about Souvanna's health. We are worried about Cambodia because nothing is in sight. The Cambodian situation is different from Vietnam. But I will discuss this in detail with Secretary Kissinger.

We are looking forward to strengthening our bilateral relations, particularly in the economic field. We are hard hit by the oil prices. If we have to pay cash for crude oil, it will cut into our development program. We, as you said, have to keep ahead of the population increase. We don't want to depend on aid for long. We hope the progressive policies in trade which the United States supports will happen. If we can have some period of respite in payments... this is new for the oil-producing countries; they tend to want the cash in hand. But feeding over 500 million people is a big problem. We made, with American help, great progress in the production of grain. But if there is a shortfall, even if it is a marginal shortfall, its effect is disproportionately hard.

President: You mean a bad crop?

Kaul: If we fall short of rain and fertilizer.

Singh: A shortage of 5% is what we have. Any help you can give would help. Fertilizer would help.

President: We want to help. We are short of fertilizer, but we don't need as much as you. We will try.

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Singh: Let me raise a small point--the Long amendment. We have been assured you won't push to invoke it, but it's a public relations issue.

President: This was offered by Long on legislation we couldn't veto. We fought it, but we had to have the legislation.

Kissinger: There are two things we can do. Our representatives don't have to vote, and we may be able to get it removed.

Singh: It's a public relations problem. For a friendly country, why have this discrimination? As long as it's on the books, that would remove the discrimination.

President: We will try to remove. We fought it.

Singh: The Prime Minister says you will be very welcome if you could visit. She suggested October to March as the best time. It would be good if you could address the Parliament.

President: They probably would treat me better than our Congress!

Kissinger: They treat their Foreign Minister rough. I appreciate your kind words.

Singh: Secretary Kissinger has done an amazing job with all his exploits.

President: He is the most popular figure in the US.

I would like to visit India. I had a great time ten years ago. After Secretary Kissinger's visit, perhaps we can see about a visit.

Singh: Perhaps in March.

President: At least there is no election next year.

Singh: Ours will probably be in March 1976.

President: When Secretary Kissinger returns, we will discuss it.

Kissinger: February 1975 might be a little early in view of other trips.

Singh: There is great appreciation of the way you have tried to settle Watergate--with magnanimity, compassion and statesmanship. You have been very wise.

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