

DECLASSIFIED
A/ISS/IPS, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
October 11, 2007
DEPARTMENT OF STATE



BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

S/S *Am*

February 26, 1975

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To: The Secretary

From: NEA - Sidney Sober, Acting *SS*

Indian Reaction to the Arms Supply
Decision - Chavan Postpones Visit

Official Indian reaction in Delhi to our February 24 announcement on arms policy became somewhat sharper on February 26. The Indians have informed us that External Affairs Minister Chavan was postponing his visit to Washington for the Joint Commission meeting scheduled March 13-14.

Prime Minister Gandhi also made some brief but critical remarks about the new U.S. policy in the Indian Upper House. She said the U.S. decision would "reopen old wounds and hinder the process of healing and normalization (with Pakistan) for which we have worked so persistently". It showed that the "policy makers of that great country continued to subscribe to the fallacy of equating Pakistan and India. It is a policy that has caused tension in the Subcontinent." With apparent reference to things the Pakistanis have said, she also declared it "dishonest" to assert India's nuclear program posed a danger to Pakistan and "specious" to argue Pakistan needs arms because India is developing self-sufficiency in defense production.

Indian press reactions February 26 prominently covered Kaul's remarks, your response, and Chavan's statement. Editorial comment was relatively balanced. The Times of India commented "In all fairness it cannot be said that the U.S. decision will gravely upset the status quo in the Subcontinent". The Hindustan Times warned against "hysterical denunciations or any cancellation of Mr. Chavan's projected visit to Washington".

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Drafted: NEA/INS: BWB *913* Brown: mmk
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Additional Clearance:

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