

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Aziz Ahmed, Minister of State for Foreign
Affairs and Defense of Pakistan
Ambassador Yaqub-Khan
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, October 9, 1975
11:00 a. m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

[Photographers were admitted briefly. There was small talk about the weather and the UN session. The photographers left.]

Ahmed: This must be a very busy time for you.

President: Yes, but I think it is important to take advantage of opportunities like this.

Please give my regards to the Prime Minister. I think things have been moving well since February. I have looked over the military equipment -- the TOW, etc., -- that is being discussed, and I feel this carries out my determination which I conveyed to the Prime Minister in February. Your Air Force Chief of Staff is coming soon.

Kissinger: The Indians are sending a purchasing mission here to buy radios. I didn't want you to read it in the papers.

Ahmed: That's o.k.

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President: What about recent developments in Bangladesh?

Ahmed: It is a useful development. The Bengalees are very emotional people.

President: Was there any warning?

Ahmed: None whatsoever. They have been sending messages they want to get closer to us. We are telling them to be cautious; we don't want to upset India or the Soviet Union. But there are no problems and things will move forward.

With India, there was a lot of noise when your arms policy changed. Indira is making noises about Pakistan being a threat and being surrounded on three sides -- by us, China and Diego Garcia. Much of this is just posturing but we couldn't ignore it. Then came the emergency. We anticipated that would happen. But before and after we got hints from places like Australia and Japan that India might make a move against Kashmir this winter. Then came the emergency. But the rumors persisted. There isn't much we can do about it. We are grateful to Secretary Kissinger for his representation to the Soviet Union. About all we can do is build up our military. We wouldn't mind a conflict confined to Kashmir -- we would do o.k. But it wouldn't be restricted to Kashmir but would spread all down the border.

There still are vitriolic radio attacks against us. Our assessment is that if war happens -- and we think it will eventually

Kissinger: We are lucky the Indians are pacifists. [Laughter]

Ahmed: We think next time Afghanistan will join in. They kept out before -- and they claimed credit for it -- but we won't be so lucky a third time. Daoud is able but half-mad, cruel and ruthless. Things inside Afghanistan don't look too good.

President: Didn't I read about some governmental change in the last week or so?

Ahmed: I don't think so, but there is substantial opportunism. At one time Afghanistan indicated a willingness to talk with us and said they had no designs on our territory -- they only wanted the Pushtuns and Baluchis protected. He had agreed to come to Pakistan, but then one of our governors was killed by someone who fled to Afghanistan. We decided to ban

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that party. It had been bad for years and this was the last straw. Afghanistan then refused to talk with us until the ban was lifted and the leaders released. We couldn't do that. The case is now before our Supreme Court. So we refused, and that is where we are now. We can't accept such demands.

We don't consider the Afghan threat serious, but coupled with the Indian one and supported by the Soviet Union, it is a serious problem. We hope to get some defensive equipment from you before then.

President: What would China do?

Ahmed: We asked them and they haven't really answered. They said we would have to talk at the appropriate time. I said that is not helpful. Our military need to plan and must know now, not if a war starts. If they are going to move, we have only about 30 days within which China could help; after that the Passes are closed.

Kissinger: The Indians agreed to put back into the formal note the term "by peaceful means" which had been dropped from the earlier version.

Ahmed: Yes. They told us the same thing.

Kissinger: I think there isn't much chance of attacking you. I was worried about Bangladesh. What we might see is refugees from Bangladesh stimulated by India and then the Indians use the pretext of the refugees to intervene.

Ahmed: We told the Bengalees not to give them any pretext. To take care of the Hindus and not antagonize Indira or the Soviet Union.

The incalculable factor in the whole situation is the Soviet Union. Their strategy is inscrutable but we think their objectives are clear.

President: How would you characterize them?

Ahmed: The shortest way to the Gulf is through Pakistan. One way or another they want to get across and eventually to control the Gulf area. Iran has agreed to help us but they can be bypassed. They had been stalling but now are agreeing to fund some purchases. Without the Soviet green light, the Indians won't attack. The last time the Soviets did help India.

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Kissinger: With reconnaissance?

Ahmed: Yes, and actual help. During the night they would fly in, fire weapons and flee. So this is one problem. If you could help us and give us equipment from stocks and not make us wait 2-3 years. We know it is difficult, but we do need it right away.

President: You know, we do have a problem. Vietnam drew down our stocks badly but we'll do what we can.

Ahmed: Thank you. People tell us you are no longer interested in us and the region. We say that is wrong.

President: I can assure you it is.

Ahmed: On our economy, we have had bad breaks. We have had to drain the Tarbela Dam and this has cost us 2 million tons of grain. So we have jacked up our wheat deficit and think we'll need 1.5 million tons from outside. You have been kind giving us 50,000 tons, but anything you can do will be appreciated.

President: I have talked with Henry. We'll do what we can.

Ahmed: We appreciate your help and look forward to your visit at whatever time you come.

President: I am looking forward to it. I have a bad schedule for the foreseeable future, and I do have an election coming up, but I do want to visit when I can.

Ahmed: We understand. One other small point. We have to place commercial orders for some military things. I hope they won't be too hard on prices.

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