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By

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NARA Date

1/28/08

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A/ISS/IPS, Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

October 11, 2007

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[Redacted]

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

CLASSIFIED BY FRANK WISNER
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO-
YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON
DECEMBER 31, -----

Date and time:

December 17, 1976; 3:45

Place:

The Secretary's Office

Participants:

- U.S. Secretary Kissinger
- Ambassador Byroade (U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan)
- Deputy Secretary Robinson
- Mr. Alfred Atherton, Assistant Secretary for
Near East and South Asian Affairs
- Mr. David Passage, notetaker

PAKISTAN

- Ambassador Yaqub Khan
- Iqbal Riza, Minister
- Amir Usman, Counselor

Subject:

Pakistan Reprocessing

[Redacted]

Distribution:

S, S-RWAherne, NSC-Peter Rodman

KISSINGER: Mr. Ambassador, welcome. I wanted to talk about our favorite subject. Do you want to do it in a group this large or would you prefer a smaller group.

YAQUB: This will be alright, I suppose. Atherton represents the "New York Times."

RIZA: And I represent "Le Monde."

KISSINGER: Do you still have "Dawn?"

YAQUB: Yes.

KISSINGER: They used to take me apart until some order was restored. I went to India in the 1960's as an advisor to the last Democratic administration. It was at a time when India had Galbraith as the American Ambassador and Pakistan had a career man. So the Pakistanis felt aggrieved as it was.

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Galbraith, of course, was having heart attacks at the thought of my wandering around unescorted. The first time I had a press conference, I was asked whether or not I thought Pakistan would attack India in order to resolve the Kashmir dispute. I said I didn't think Pakistan would be so foolish as to do anything like that. Notwithstanding the fact that it was complimentary to Pakistan, the fact that I mentioned Pakistan and foolish in the same breath lead to an uproar in the Pakistani press. So I travelled the remainder of the time in India as a national hero while the Pakistan press was beating me to death. Three days later I was with Ayub Khan and I said: "I didn't think you'd receive me after the scandal in the press." He smiled. Then at dinner later that evening when I got up to give the toast, I forgot momentarily that the Ayub/Kennedy letters were secret and I mentioned them saying that they represented an example of the best of diplomacy. Ayub almost dropped his glass. But I give them great credit. Not a peep appeared in the Pakistani press. A day later I was touring in Kashmir and I received a message from Bundy saying that the President had ordered him to wire me: "If you open your mouth once more, I will push the recall button."

Well, I wanted to talk very briefly, Mr. Ambassador, about the subject you and I know so well. Hank will be going back on Monday. The message he will carry is one that your Prime Minister can think about. Frankly, I can't add to our last conversation. It is very important, I think, however, to stress that the French would not be heartbroken if there were a cancellation or a delay in the implementation of the nuclear reprocessing agreement. I think I can assure you that the new American administration will make a massive effort toward this end, and they would like nothing better than to have somebody to make an example of. There is no leader to whom I feel personally more attached than your Prime Minister.

YAQUB: (murmurs suitable reciprocity)

KISSINGER: (continuing) Therefore, what we need to do is find a formula which avoids causing him a personal problem and yields him the greatest possible tangible benefit. I would like to note at this point that we have given no publicity to the matter and we will give no publicity to it; we will not cause a public issue which will embarrass the Prime Minister. If cancellation is a problem for you, let me suggest that perhaps delay or postponement be used as an explanation. On our side, I can assure you that we will come up with a military package including A-7's, perhaps a reactor -- even a French reactor -- possibly with United States credit. I would also pledge to you to make an effort to get Carter

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and Vance signed up before this comes about. I know you have no instructions and I also assume that we agreed that if we both knew two years ago what we now know, we would not be meeting here. But when you see an express train coming down the track, it seems only prudent to get out of its way. I would hate very much to see Pakistan become the first object of a desire by a new Administration to score something. But I want to make absolutely clear, if the Prime Minister turns us down, we will do nothing and I emphasize nothing to embarrass Pakistan. There will be no big headlines. We will not use this to build public pressure against you.

YAQUB: Well, Mr. Secretary, I know you appreciate the sensitivity that this causes us. I would like to suggest that perhaps we try to defer this (referring to trying to find a solution) until after Pakistan's elections.

KISSINGER: When will they be?

YAQUB: Before August. Perhaps before April. The Prime Minister's thinking is that this is on the verge of becoming a major political problem for him and he wants to avoid that type of situation.

KISSINGER: I'm sure Carter would be delighted if we handed him a package in March.

YAQUB: The Prime Minister can say: "let's take a look at it. Let's look at a formula"...mind you I'm surmising now...we could only give a response after our elections.

KISSINGER: I'll give you my phone numbers for after January 20.

YAQUB: We are also particularly sensitive with respect to the French reaction. I know you have always honored this and I want you to know we appreciate it. Now that I have a fifth columnist in our Paris Embassy (nodding toward Riza -- who will be going off to Pakistan's Embassy in Paris) ...

KISSINGER: Well, I want you to know we're talking about the two leaders with whom I have the best relations. We have told the French exactly what I agreed with your Prime Minister. At some point, if it would be helpful, in response to a proposal from us, if both of you could accept ... no, that might make it worse.

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YAQUB: Yes, that could only make things worse. The Prime Minister's reaction is very clearly that postponement would be virtually tantamount to cancellation. Therefore, it is not likely. Islamabad will answer your question. The Prime Minister will speak but we have always appreciated your concern for our differences.

KISSINGER: We have no complaint.

YAQUB: The personal dimension of course is so important. It is very delicate. As you rightly said my government will want to consider carefully your proposal.

KISSINGER: You could consider holding action or a package. My own view is that the problems will only become more and more evident as time goes on.

YAQUB: Yes, I have so wired my government. When does your new Congress convene?

KISSINGER: Early in January and it will be a new administration which was elected on a plank of non-proliferation. And I think I can assure you that it won't avail itself of escape clauses, or Symington amendments.

YAQUB: We're locked into a pretty firm position. We can't cancel.

KISSINGER: How about joint cancellation.

YAQUB: If the French were to break their agreement, I'm afraid we just wouldn't understand.

KISSINGER: What should we announce to the press?

YAQUB: I will simply say that I came in to discuss a variety of matters with you.

(At 4:00 p. m. the Secretary indicated the others should leave the room while he and Yaqub Khan met privately for five minutes.)

[REDACTED]