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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

February 21, 1973

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MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: President Bhutto's Allegation of Soviet
Subversion

As requested, I attach a study prepared in the Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research concerning President Bhutto's allegation of Soviet subversion in his letter of February 14 to the President. A proposed reply to Bhutto's letter will be transmitted under separate cover.

R. L. Miller for
Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

As stated

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THE SOVIET "PINCER" AGAINST IRAN
AND PAKISTAN -- MYTH AND REALITY

The Pakistani and Iranian Governments frequently assert that the USSR is engaged in subversive activities in their countries designed to encircle them, cause them internal security difficulties, and in fact to dismember Pakistan as a nation. Such a deliberate covert political action program would call into question the sincerity of Moscow's dedication to detente with the West and stability in Asia through collective security arrangements. Of course, the Soviets maintain contacts with opposition figures and conduct intelligence collection operations in both countries which can be termed "subversive" in the narrower sense, but there is no evidence of any kind that in either country Moscow is presently undertaking the kind of subversive effort alleged by Pakistan. All available information indicates that Moscow hopes to maintain good relations with both governments and to this end has been willing to accept occasional frictions in its relations with India and the Arab world.

Contrary to President Bhutto's assertions, it is highly unlikely that the Soviets were even aware of the smuggling of weapons into the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad. Bhutto's extravagant reaction to the incident was tactical; he exploited it in an effort to justify moving against his domestic opposition and to reinforce what amounts to his appeal for a reaffirmation of the US security commitment. Intelligence reports indicate that the Pakistan Government has no evidence to support any Soviet connection with illicit arms shipments. However, there is a general Pakistani suspicion, bordering on paranoia, of India and the USSR, to which Bhutto is by no means immune.

The Myth

Since taking office last year, Bhutto has ascribed Pakistan's 1971 defeat and dismemberment, not to Yahya's mismanagement, but to the Soviets' alleged desire to punish an ally of China and the US and to regain some of the ground they lost in Asia as a result of the Sino-US detente which Pakistan had helped to realize. More recently, in coping with opposition in the provinces, Bhutto has been contending that the Soviets now intend to destroy the remainder of Pakistan by supporting separatist movements and instigating internal disorder.

The Shah has not alleged direct Soviet involvement with Iranian dissidents, but he appears to have accepted Bhutto's version of Soviet intentions in South Asia. Since his January meeting with Bhutto, the Shah has made a strong presentation to the US in favor of the resumption of military assistance to Pakistan.

The Pakistani Rationale

In their obsession about the threat from India, the Pakistanis are highly suspicious of the Indo-Soviet relationship, and they customarily interpret Soviet activities in paranoid terms. Thus, the vaguely worded security clauses in the Soviet bilateral treaties with India and Iraq constitute for the Pakistanis prima facie evidence of Soviet willingness to support these two countries against Iran and Pakistan. The Pakistanis believe that Moscow encouraged New Delhi to attack in 1971 and saw its interests served by the dismemberment of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh. More recently, the Pakistanis saw devious motives in the presence of a Soviet consul from Karachi among the foreign diplomats seen at Quetta during the visit of Iranian Princess Ashraf, and they seem convinced of Soviet complicity in the Iraqi arms-smuggling incident.

The Reality

The evidence indicates that the USSR regards its treaties with Iraq and India as a basis for long-term consolidation of bilateral relations, and that it has actively discouraged their interpretation as evidence of Soviet support of either country against third parties. The Soviets have given assurances to this effect to Iran and Pakistan. There is good evidence that the Soviets have advised the Iraqis on several occasions to refrain from subversive activities in Iran. Moreover, Moscow has supplied both Iran and Pakistan with military equipment suitable for internal security and national defense. Intelligence reports indicate that Moscow later discontinued weapons deliveries to Pakistan, not because of Indian protests of Pakistani ties with China, but because Pakistan's Air Chief of Staff insisted with Marshall Grechko that India was the only possible target for the Soviet arms.

As for the 1971 Indo-Pakistani crisis, the evidence suggests that the Soviets would have preferred a united Pakistan and urged Yahya to reach an agreement with Mujib which would

save the union. Moscow exercised restraint on India in the pre-war phase, urged India to make no further advances into West Pakistan during the war, and kept the door open for a united Pakistan even after the war had begun. Moscow did not recognize Bangladesh until January 25, 1972. When King Zahir went to Moscow during the height of the war to explore Soviet support for Afghan claims to Pushto areas of Pakistan (in the event West Pakistan were dismembered) he was reportedly told that Moscow favored the restoration of peace with no further territorial changes.

During the past year, the Soviet Union has attempted to heal the breach with Pakistan caused by the war: Moscow has urged New Delhi not to pressure Islamabad, has received Bhutto and -- only two weeks ago -- one of his closest cabinet members for high-level discussions, and has resumed negotiations with Pakistan on economic assistance. Although neither the Pakistanis nor the Soviets have told us anything about these meetings, they appear to have gone well, and there is no sign of confrontation or hostility in the current relations between the two countries.

The facts behind the Iraqi arms incident will probably never become known, but the Government of Pakistan has not yet produced any evidence to connect it with either Moscow or the domestic opposition in Pakistan. The probability is that Baghdad was solely responsible, and that it intended the arms for dissidents in Iran rather than Pakistan.

Bhutto's Current Strategy

The previous administration in Islamabad found it convenient to divert attention from domestic problems by publicizing the threat perceived from India. This tactic is denied to Bhutto, who has publicly abandoned the confrontation strategy in favor of negotiation, as exemplified in the Simla agreement. Instead, he seems to have fixed on the Soviet Union as Pakistan's new bogeyman. By alleging Soviet subversion, he can hope to strengthen the case for resumption of US military assistance. Simultaneously, he seems to be using the subversion thesis with good effect against his domestic opposition. Outright suppression of the provincial political opposition might have provoked resistance leading to further fragmentation of Pakistan, whereas charges of collusion with the Soviet Union will strengthen domestic and foreign support for the moves against the provincial opposition which Bhutto has recently taken.

EXEMPT

per sec 3.3(b)(1), E.O. 13526
per ltr. 3-18-2011

MR Case Number NLN 06-80/80, pages 5-7.

MLH
7/12/2011