

Text of Memo on Indian-Pakistan War

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—
Following is the text of a memorandum on a meeting of a National Security Council committee on Indian-Pakistani hostilities, made public today by the columnist Jack Anderson:

SECRET/SENSITIVE

THE JOINT STAFF
THE JOINT CHIEFS OF
STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301
8 DECEMBER 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR
RECORD

SUBJECT: Washington Special Action Group meeting on Indo-Pakistan hostilities; 8 December 1971

1. The N.S.C. Washington Special Action Group met in the Situation Room, the White House, at 1100, Wednesday, 8 December to consider the Indo-Pakistan situation. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Kissinger.

2. ATTENDEES

A. PRINCIPALS: Dr. Henry Kissinger, Mr. Richard Helms, C.I.A., Gen. John Ryan, J.C.S., Mr. Donald MacDonald, A.I.D., Mr. David Packard, Defense, Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, State.

B. OTHERS: Mr. Maurice Williams, A.I.D., Mr. John Waller, C.I.A., Col. Richard Kennedy, N.S.C., Mr. Samuel Hoskanson, N.S.C., Mr. Harold Saunders, N.S.C., Mr. Armistead Selden, Defense, Mr. James Noyes, Defense, Mr. Christopher Van Hollen, State, Mr. Samuel De Palma, State, Mr. Bruce Laingen, State, Mr. David Schneider, State, Mr. Joseph Sisco, State, Rear Adm. Robert Welander, O.J.C.S., Capt. Howard Kay, O.J.C.S.
Group 4 downgraded at 3-year intervals; declassified after 12 years.

3. Summary. Dr. Kissinger suggested that India might be attempting, through calculated destruction of Pak armored and air forces to render Pakistan impotent. He requested that the Jordanian interest in assisting Pakistan not be turned off, but rather kept in a holding pattern. He asked that Pak capabilities in Kashmir be assessed.

4. Mr. Helms opened the meeting by briefing the current situation. In the East, the Indians have broken the line at Comilla. Only major river crossings prevent them from investing Dacca. The Indians are advancing rapidly throughout East Pakistan. All major Pak L.O.C.'s in the East are now vulnerable. In the West, the Paks are now claiming Punch, inside the Indian border. However, the Paks are admitting fairly heavy casualties in the fighting. Tank battles are apparently taking place in the Sind/Rajasthan area. Mrs.

Gandhi has indicated that before heeding a U.N. call for cease-fire, she intends to straighten out the southern border of Azad Kashmir. It is reported that prior to terminating present hostilities, Mrs. Gandhi intends to attempt to eliminate Pakistan's armor and air force capabilities. Thus far only India and Bhutan have recognized Bangladesh. It is believed that the Soviets have held off recognition primarily so as not to rupture relations with the Paks. Soviet action on the matter of recognition, however, may be forthcoming in the near future.

5. Mr. Sisco inquired how long the Paks might be expected to hold out in East Pakistan, to which Mr. Helms replied 48 to 72 hours. The time to reach the ultimate climax is probably a function of the difficulties encountered in river crossings.

6. Assessing the situation in the West, General Ryan indicated that he did not see the Indians pushing too hard at this time, rather they seem content with a holding action.

7. Dr. Kissinger asked how long it would take to shift Indian forces from East to West. General Ryan said it might take a reasonably long time to move all the forces, but that the airborne brigade could be moved quickly, probably within a matter of five or six days.

8. Dr. Kissinger inquired about refugee aid. After a discussion with Mr. Williams it was determined that only a very small number of U.S. dollars earmarked for refugee relief was actually entering the Indian economy. Contrary to the sense of the last meeting, the Indians have actually lost foreign exchange in the process of caring for refugees. In any event, the entire relief effort is currently suspended in both India and Pakistan.

9. Dr. Kissinger then emphasized that the President has made it clear that no further foreign exchange, PL-480 commodities, or development loans could be assigned to India without approval of the White House. Mr. Williams stated there was no problem of anything sliding through.

10. Dr. Kissinger inquired what the next turn of the screw might be. Mr. Williams said that the only other possible option was taking a po-



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sition concerning aid material currently under contract. This however would be a very messy problem inasmuch as we would be dealing with irrevocable letters of credit. Mr. Williams further stated that we would have to take possession of material that was being consigned to the Indians by U.S. contractors and thus would be compelled to pay U.S. suppliers, resulting in claims against the U.S.G.

11. Mr. Packard said that all of this could be done, but agreed that it would be a very laborious and difficult problem. He further elaborated that all the items involved would have to be located, the United States would have to take ownership, settle with suppliers, locate warehousing, etc. Nevertheless, if such was desired it could be done. Mr. Williams said that in a very limited way this type of action had been taken against some Mid-East countries, but that it had taken years to settle the claims.

12. Dr. Kissinger asked how India was handling next year's development loan program, to which Mr. Williams responded that nothing was under negotiation at the present time.

13. Dr. Kissinger inquired about next year's [A.I.D.] budget. Mr. Williams stated that what goes into the budget did not represent a commitment. Dr. Kissinger stated that current orders are not to put anything into the budget for A.I.D. to India. It was not to be leaked that A.I.D. had put money in the budget for India, only to have the "wicked" White House take it out.

14. Dr. Kissinger suggested that the key issue if the Indians turn on West Pakistan is Azad Kashmir. If the Indians smash the Pak air force and the armored forces we would have a deliberate Indian attempt to force the disintegration of Pakistan. The elimination of the Pak armored and air forces would make the Paks defenseless. It would turn West Pakistan into a client state. The possibility elicits a number of questions. Can we allow a U.S. ally to go down completely while we participate in a blockade? Can we allow the Indians to scare us off, believing that if U.S. supplies are needed they will not be provided?

15. Mr. Sisco stated that if the situation were to evolve as Dr. Kissinger had indicated then, of course, there was a serious risk to the viability of West Pakistan. Mr. Sisco doubted, however, that the Indians had this as their objective. He indicated that Foreign Minister Singh told Ambassador Keating that India had no intention of taking any Pak territory. Mr. Sisco said it must also be kept in mind that Kashmir is really disputed territory.

16. Mr. Helms then stated that earlier he had omitted mentioning that Madame Gandhi, when referring to China, expressed the hope that there would be no Chinese intervention in the West. She said that the So-

viet had cautioned her that the Chinese might rattle the sword in Laddakh but that the Soviets have promised to take appropriate counteraction if this should occur. Mr. Helms indicated that there was no Chinese build-up at this time but, nevertheless, even without a build-up they could "make motions and rattle the sword."

17. Turning then to the question of military support of Pakistan, Dr. Kissinger referred to an expression of interest by King Hussein relative to the provision of F-104's to Pakistan, and asked how we could get Jordan into a holding pattern to allow the President time to consider the issue. Dr. Kissinger also asked whether we should attempt to convey to the Indians and the press that a major attack on West Pakistan would be considered in a very serious light by this country.

18. Mr. Packard explained that we could not authorize the Jordanians to do anything that the U.S.G. could not do. If the U.S.G. could not do it, we could not allow Jordan to do so. If a third country had material that the U.S.G. did not have, that was one thing, but we could not allow Jordan to transfer the 104's unless we make a finding that the Paks, themselves, were eligible to purchase them from us directly.

19. Dr. Kissinger suggested that if we had not cut the sale of arms to Pakistan, the current problem would not exist. Mr. Packard agreed.

20. Dr. Kissinger suggested that perhaps we never really analyzed what the real danger was when we were turning off the arms to Pakistan.

21. Mr. Packard suggested that another consideration in the Jordan issue is that if Jordan delivers this equipment we would be expected to replace it. Ambassador Johnson stated we do not have any more M.A.P. left.

22. Dr. Kissinger states that what we may be witnessing is a situation wherein a country [India] equipped and supported by the Soviets may be turning half of Pakistan into an important state and the other half into a vassal. We must consider what other countries may be thinking of our action.

23. Mr. Helms asked about our CENTO relationships with Pakistan. Ambassador Johnson stated we had no legal obligations towards Pakistan in the CENTO context. Dr. Kissinger agreed but added that neither did we have legal obligations toward India in 1962 when we formulated the air defense agreement. We must consider what would be the impact of the current situation in the larger complex of world affairs.

24. Dr. Kissinger said that we must look at the problem in terms of Security Council guarantees in the Mid-East and the impact on other areas. We must look at the military supply situation. One could make a case, he argued, that we have done everything two weeks too late in the current situation.

25. Mr. Packard stated that perhaps the only satisfactory outcome would be for us to stand fast, with the expectation that the West Paks could hold their own.

26. Ambassador Johnson said that we must examine the possible effects that additional supplies for Pakistan might have. It could be that eight F-104's might not make any difference once the real war in the West starts. They could be considered only as a token. If, in fact, we were to move in West Pakistan we would be in a new ball game.

27. Ambassador Johnson said that one possibility would be our reply to Foreign Minister Singh, in which we could acknowledge the Indian pledge that they do not have territorial designs. He also stated we must also consider the fact that the Paks may themselves be trying to take Kashmir.

28. After discussing various possible commitments to

Terms Used in Text

A.I.D.—Agency for International Development.
Azad Kashmir—Free Kashmir, name of Pakistani-held parts of Kashmir.
CENTO—Central Treaty Organization.
C.I.A.—Central Intelligence Agency.
F-104—Starfighter jet aircraft.
J.S.S.—Joint Chiefs of Staff.
L.O.C.—Line(s) of communication.
M.A.P.—Military Assistance Program.
N.S.C.—National Security Council.
O.J.C.S.—Office of Joint Chiefs of Staff.
Paks—Pakistanis.
PL-480—Public Law 480, governing surplus food sent abroad as aid.
S.S. Buckeye State—American vessel strafed in a Pakistani port.
U.S.G.—United States Government.
U.S.N.—United States Navy.

both Pakistan and India, Mr. Packard stated that the overriding consideration is the practical problem of either doing something effective or doing nothing. If you don't win, don't get involved. If we were to attempt something it would have to be with a certainty that it would affect the outcome. Let's not get in if we know we are going to lose. Find some way to stay out.

29. Mr. Williams suggested that we might now focus efforts for a cease-fire in West Pakistan. Ambassador Johnson stated this might, however, stop the Paks from moving into Kashmir.

30. Dr. Kissinger asked for an assessment of the Pak capabilities and prospects in Kashmir. He asked C.I.A. to prepare an assessment of the international implications of Mrs. Gandhi's current moves. He indicated that we should develop an initial stand on the military supply question. He reiterated that he desired to keep Hussein in a "holding pattern" relative to the latter's expression of support for Pakistan and that he should not be turned off. The U.S.G. should indicate to Hussein that we do not consider trivial his feelings in this matter.

31. Turning to the question of the blockade, Ambassador Johnson said that both India and Pakistan have taken blockade action, even though the Pak blockade is essentially a paper blockade. Dr. Kissinger said that we should also protest to the Paks. Ambassador Johnson indicated we do not have a legal case to protest the blockade. The belligerent nations have a right to blockade when a state of war exists. We may think it unwise and we may question how it is carried out. We have, in fact, normally expressed our concern. On the other hand we have no problem in protesting the incident of the S.S. Buckeye State.

32. Dr. Kissinger said that we are not trying to be even handed. There can be no doubt what the President wants. The President does not want to be even handed. The President believes that India is the attacker. We are trying to get across the idea that India has jeopardized relations with the United States. Dr. Kissinger said that we cannot afford to ease India's state of mind. "The Lady" is cold blooded and tough and will not turn into a Soviet satellite merely because of pique. We should not ease her mind. He invited anyone who objected to this approach to take his case to the President. Ambassador Keating, he suggested is offering enough reassurance on his own.

33. Addressing briefly the question of communal strife in East Pakistan, Dr. Kissinger asked whether anyone would be in a position to know that massacres were occurring at the time when they took place. Mr. Helms indicated that we might not know immediately, but we certainly would know after a massacre occurred.

34. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10.

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