

Keating Held Not Unhappy Over Pakistan Cable 'Leak'

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NEW DELHI, Jan. 6—Sources close to Ambassador Kenneth B. Keating indicated today that he was not unhappy about the disclosure of his secret cablegram to Washington taking issue with American policy on the Indian-Pakistani war.

Asked to comment today on his policy views and on last month's cablegram, which was divulged in Washington yesterday by the columnist Jack Anderson, Mr. Keating would say only: "This is a matter I cannot discuss."

It is known in New Delhi, however, that from the time Pakistani troops in East Pakistan moved to crush the Bengali secession movement there last March, Mr. Keating campaigned privately against the Nixon Administration's pro-Pakistani stand. He even did so publicly until he was silenced by Washington in April.

In recent months, Mr. Keating's official posture has been rigidly correct. He has refused to discuss his views with newsmen, even in private. In his regular columns in a United States Information Service fortnightly newspaper that is widely distributed here, he has consistently defended the Administration policy. He has been criticized for doing so in the Indian press and elsewhere.

From the beginning of the India-Pakistan crisis, which culminated in India's victorious support of the East Pakistan separatists, the American Ambassador's cables to Washington have argued strongly for a different American policy. He pressed for a policy that would be based on what he views as the moral and political "realities" on the subcontinent.

Only a few days after the Pakistani crackdown in East Pakistan began, he sent a cable containing more than a hint of outrage. In it he referred to the killings of Bangalis as "selective genocide" and urged Washington to come down hard on the Pakistani military regime. The word "massacre" was also used.

After an April 15 news conference in Bombay at which he differed with the Administration's contention that the events in East Pakistan were an "internal affair," he was reported to have been rebuked by Washington and told to confine his public remarks to support of the Administration position.

"The phrase 'internal affair' should not be overdone," he said at the news conference. He added that the meaning of the phrase was "limited to the geographical fact that all of this is taking place in what is now Pakistan."

The Pakistan Government is

understood to have filed a protest with Washington about his remarks.

Mr. Keating continued to press his argument in his cablegrams to Washington. His view all along, according to confidants, was that Pakistan was an unstable, crumbling military dictatorship; that India was not only an increasingly stable democracy but also the dominant power on the subcontinent; and that East Pakistan seemed certain to emerge as an independent state. The Bengali separatists have proclaimed the establishment of Bangladesh (Bengal nation).

The Ambassador argued that the morality of the situation, a reference to "genocide," as well as the political realities should lead the United States to lean toward India rather than Pakistan.

Another point he reportedly pressed was that if the United States did not take this course, the Soviet Union would, and thus would pre-empt the position of the most influential great power on the subcontinent, an event that has come to pass.

By his determined dissent, Mr. Keating, a former Republican Senator from New York who is a political appointee of President Nixon and a former law partner of Secretary of State William P. Rogers, may have caused these two men considerable anguish and irritation over the last 10 months, but his arguments have had little obvious effect.

According to authoritative sources, Mr. Keating was present at the meeting in Washington in mid-June when a high Administration official told India's Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh, that no U.S. Arms had been shipped to Pakistan since March 25, and that none were in the pipeline. When the news about a post-March arms shipment broke a few days later, both Mr. Keating and Mr. Swaran Singh were said by those close to them to have felt personally deceived.

There have been periodic press reports that Mr. Keating has threatened to resign. But, though confidants say Mr. Keating realizes that the Administration might get annoyed enough at some point to oust him, the silver-haired Ambassador, a physically fit 71 years, seems perfectly relaxed and unperturbed.

His sense of humor is also unimpaired. Talking the other day about the Indian policeman assigned to him—reportedly because of threats linked to American policy toward India—Mr. Keating said jocularly: "He goes everywhere with me. But I don't let him sleep with me. I drew the line there."