

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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INFORMATION

December 12, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
SUBJECT: Situation Report on South Asia

When Ambassador Farland asked for President Yahya's views on a ceasefire at midnight (EST) last night, Yahya said that he was prepared to do "anything reasonable under the circumstances." In response to Farland's question why Pakistan's first ceasefire proposal of Friday had been replaced later in the day by a less comprehensive one omitting political settlement, Yahya looked hard at Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan and said there had been a breakdown of communication and apparently some "general misunderstandings." He added that the Foreign Secretary was rectifying the situation. According to a press report from Rawalpindi, a Pakistani government spokesman said that major diplomatic moves outside the UN and in keeping with the protection of Pakistan's interests are underway to end the conflict.

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From the United Nations, Ambassador Bush reports that there are two main routes events there could take:

-- One would be to do as Bhutto is presently inclined to do, i. e. return to the Security Council to seek a resolution identical to the one adopted in the General Assembly. Bush feels that some members of the eleven who voted with us in the Security Council previously, including China, would not have much enthusiasm for simply provoking another Soviet veto. Bhutto regards one advantage of this course as further

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discrediting the USSR in the eyes of the 104 nations who voted for the Assembly resolution. Bush points out that the Paks could start down this track even if they are prepared (perhaps not overtly, to have a resolution amended to include the last paragraph of the Soviet resolution providing for following through the results of the December 1970 election in East Pakistan.

-- The alternative course would be to try through an intermediary to put together the essentials of a resolution which both parties would be able to live with prior to calling for a Security Council meeting. Bush reports that Bhutto's expressed dislike for Pakistan's first Friday proposal including political settlement suggests that Bhutto is more interested in mounting a public campaign against India and the Soviets. Yahya's comments to Farland, however, suggest that Bhutto may receive instructions to accept a ceasefire resolution with at least implication of a negotiated withdrawal and political settlement to follow.

There is, of course, a third approach. This would be (1) to launch Security Council debate calling for endorsement of the General Assembly resolution, as described in the first approach above but (2) to be prepared by pre-arrangement with key parties to divert the debate part-way through to a compromise resolution.

Bush also reports Foreign Minister Singh's view that the UN cannot take useful action at this time. If the UN does meet, he will insist that Bangla Desh representatives be present. He maintained that India's recognition of Bangla Desh had two purposes: (1) to make clear that India had no territorial ambitions in East Pakistan and (2) to establish the moderate, elected democratic group in an effort to control the Mukti Bahini.

Singh and India has no territorial aims in West Pakistan but cautioned that this commitment is not open-ended if Pakistan continues the war and tries to make gains in the west to compensate for losses in the east. Under questioning, Singh would not make the same unequivocal commitment on Azad Kashmir. Foreign Secretary Kaul said, "we have no major ambitions." Even in peacetime, Kaul said, India and Pakistan had talked about minor rectifications in the border. Both Singh and Kaul repeatedly said that they do not wish to prolong the war.

The evacuation of 300 foreign nationals from Dacca was completed this morning, including more than 100 Americans. Four British C-130's with UN markings completed the job.

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Yesterday there was [redacted] Yahya had told his prime minister designate that the Chinese ambassador in Islamabad had assured him that within 72 hours the Chinese army would move toward the Northeast Frontier Agency broder of India. [redacted] DIA report this morning that no information has yet been received on unusual activity by Chinese forces in Tibet.

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