

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Nixon
 Mustafizur Rahman Siddiqi, Bangladesh
 Major General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
 to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, May 17, 1973
 11:45 a. m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

Siddiqi: May I present this letter, Mr. President.

The President: I will get your pictures to you right away.

With your massive problems we want to help as much as we can. The problem is not only there but in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, to bring an era of peace for our children. Tell the Prime Minister we will cooperate to work for peace.

Siddiqi: You are aware of our problems. The United States has done so much. We have done what we could. We want to extend the hand of friendship to all countries, even to Pakistan. We have offered to exchange all the Pakistani prisoners we have, in exchange for all the Bengalis, except for the 195. Bhutto has shown concern over the Biharis and even the 195. We think that is a small number. This is not vindictiveness -- it will be an open trial, with defense counsel, and very humanitarian.

The return of the Biharis will not change the social problem because we will take back an equal number. There is no problem of assimilation.

It is unfortunate Bhutto holds the Bengalis hostage. He has threatened to try the senior ones.

This doesn't help get us together. Ours is not a political move, but we seek peace in all sincerity.

CLASSIFIED BY Brent Scowcroft
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5(b) (1, 3)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp. to det.

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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5
MSC MEMO, 11/2/00, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES state declass 3/9/04
BY da, NARA, DATE 3/31/04

I want to thank you for your message to Congress on the recognition of Bangladesh. We believe it should be settled this way: You take your people, we take ours.

The President: We want good relations with all the countries in the area. This is a delicate thing when we intervene, but you should talk with our experts. Joe Sisco should talk with you.

Siddiqi: We would appreciate your help.

The President: I don't mind if it will help, but only if it will.

Siddiqi: It is very difficult for our Prime Minister not to try some because of popular passions in a democracy.

The President: I am glad to have heard your side. We want to see the conflict settled. The three great states should live in peace.

Siddiqi: We are a small country.

The President: But you have lots of people.

Siddiqi: We want a small army.

I want to thank you for the material assistance you have given us for our development.

The President: We want to do what we can. Please give my greetings to the Prime Minister.



Sidchigi / Arab. Ali 17 May [1972]

1144

S Presented letter

P Will get pictures you might want w/ your manuscript published want to help as much as can
Peace is not only there but SEA, NIE, to bring you of peace for our children
TALLMAN we will cooperate to work for peace

S- We are aware of our problems

US has done so much. We have done what we could. We want to extend friendship to all, incl. Pakistan. ~~India~~ We have agreed to exchange all lakes in exchange for Bengalis - except for 195. Bhabha has shown concern over Biharis & since 195. We think that is small. This is not unconditional - open trial, discuss counsel, humanitarian.

Return of Biharis will not cause social prob because we will take back equal. No problem of assimilation.

Compromise Bhabha holds Bengalis hostage, threatened to try senior ones.

This doesn't help get us together. Ours not a political move, but for peace in all sincerity.

Thanks for msg to Congress on way of B.D. you take your people, we take ours

P We want good relations w/all. This is delicate thing when an intrusion, but you take we are experts. Joe Sisco should talk w/you.

S We would help you in your work

P I don't mind if it will help, but only if it will

S Very difficult for our PM not to try some because of public passion - in a democracy

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/88, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, state review 03/04

BY ll, NARA, DATE 3/31/04

P Collected & have heard your trials - are
want it settled. Ten 3 part states should
live in peace

S ~~and~~ small country

P but lots of people

S - want small country

Thanks for material assistance in reports

~~P~~

P We want to do what we can. Please
give my greetings to the P.M.