MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Nixon
Muhammad 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.
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.
Prepared letter

P. Will get patient to go up to New York

Where more professional work

to help as necessary

This is not only slum but S.E. to bring some influence for our children

could have some religious to work

to gain

5. Write to mayor of our province

As you have no much, we have done what we could. We went to offered prayer to all, and United States. Where

Have offered to exchange all taken in Bughra for Bhit for 195

Bhit to improve our economy and Bughra

taken on 195. We think that is correct.

This is not circumstances - open flood.

difference unusual circumstances.

Return of Bughra will not cause any delay but

because we would make such special

We problem of assimilation.

They think it Bhit to hold Bughra similar,

then still the time to take care.

This cannot help get any advantage. Only

with political means, but peace in all

Similarly

Then to bring to Congress an idea of B.D.

Very much people are 

P. We want good relations as all. This is definite

using within an autonomic, but even taking my

an effort for some should take

unfavor

5. We would keep patient your help

P. I don't mean fight, I will help, but only if it did

Very difficult stream for with A. They seem because

From the perspective - in a summary

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.5
Date: 12/24/48

By: [Signature]
Date: 12/24/48
Central & have heard from... We
want it settled, I'm afraid states should
be in control.
Small country
Not a lot of people
Want security
Thank you for material assistance in Algeria

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