

MEMORANDUM

Your most recent
meeting with Jha

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
L. K. Jha, Indian Ambassador to the
United States
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff (Notetaker)

DATE & TIME:

Friday, September 22, 1972
4:20 - 4:55 p. m.

PLACE:

Mr. Kissinger's Office
The White House

[The notetaker joined the meeting shortly after it had begun.]

Ambassador Jha: The big question in the Indian mind is: We have a sorry experience coming back from the past. There was no question of the U. S. taking a particular attitude toward ^{us} but it was the result of a more global strategy.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Ambassador Jha: But how can we be assured that our future relations will not reflect a repetition of the past? Could there be in the future a similar occurrence?

Dr. Kissinger: If you attack a neighbor with Soviet arms, then there will be a repetition. But how often do you do that? Every twenty years?

Ambassador Jha: No, every twenty-five years! You would prefer that we be attacked with your arms rather than we attack someone else with Soviet arms?

Dr. Kissinger: I told you last time the framework of our arms policy. There will be no massive re-equipping.

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DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005

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Ambassador Jha: That is the arms question. But the other problem is: China has a certain attitude toward the Subcontinent. We hear that it is China's view that the Soviet Union is seeking the encirclement of China.

Dr. Kissinger: That is their view. They have told us that.

Ambassador Jha: And you, for your own reasons, are cultivating China.

Dr. Kissinger: Well --

Ambassador Jha: You would use different words. But in any event, we are concerned to know, to what extent will this encourage China to conduct a certain policy detrimental to our interests?

Dr. Kissinger: That's a fair question.

Ambassador Jha: This is not the question of Indian-Pakistani relations or the arms question, but it is our question anyway.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes. It is no secret that China is terrified of a Soviet attack, so that any country with Soviets arms that attacks someone else -- no matter how provoked -- raises in the Chinese mind its fear of the Soviets. And particularly where you have this contentious border problem with them.

Our concern in the India-Pakistan war was with the precedent that the use of force might set for other areas, for example, the Mideast, that could be seen by the Chinese as foreshadowing the use of force elsewhere.

Obviously, we would not do something deliberately to affront China when China feels its security directly threatened. But in the normal conduct of diplomacy, we see no reason to coordinate our policy with China. What you and I are concerned with, the improvement of our relations, is totally independent of China. If there were an Indian attack on China -- which of course is highly unlikely -- we would be concerned. If China engaged in military adventures against India, we would not support it at all. Our attitude on that has not changed at all.

Look, L.K., when I go to Moscow and conclude all sorts of deals, Peking is unhappy. If we can do it with Moscow, we can do it with New Delhi.

Ambassador Jha: But the global interests of the U.S. can be cited to justify anything. A signed agreement on aid has been gone back on - your role

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in the Consortium, etc. -- all these things need to be explored in some depth. I would much rather have a dialogue with you than have someone coming out there.

Dr. Kissinger: We're sending Maury Williams as an act of good will. If he's better off here, we'll keep him here.

Ambassador Jha: Williams' going will be effective only if there is some prior understanding reached. Otherwise it might be counterproductive. When he comes, he will be asked what has happened on aid. There will be questions in Parliament. If there is nothing to say, it will do more harm than good.

More positively, I. G. Patel is coming here tomorrow. It will be more constructive to have a dialogue between I. G. and Maury here. And then we can take a second look at Maury's coming.

Dr. Kissinger: You should handle it from the point of view of whatever makes the most contribution to better relations. If you want our dialogue here to continue, that's fine.

Ambassador Jha: Consortium rescheduling is one of the specifics. It is not our birthright to get aid from you, but a signed agreement is something different. It is a very different situation in relations between governments. I have enough political sense of the atmospherics here to see that the President cannot just get up and say he's changed his mind.

Dr. Kissinger: Particularly in an election year.

Ambassador Jha: That I can understand.

Dr. Kissinger: Frankly, we can't do it before November. It would bring up the whole debate again; it looks like an admission that we treated you badly. And it is not in your interest either that it looks like we did it for electoral reasons.

Ambassador Jha: I understand.

Dr. Kissinger: I can tell you for that reason Maury wouldn't be able to say anything. Maybe Maury should go in November.

Ambassador Jha: Yes, maybe.

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Dr. Kissinger: If we can keep our dialogue going here, and -- to the extent we can control it -- moderate the press campaign

Ambassador Jha: There is another item: P.L. 480 rupees. We know that a solution, which will require Congressional approval, will take time. After Saulnier's visit to India two years ago to study this, nothing has happened.

Dr. Kissinger: What do you want us to do?

Ambassador Jha: It was buried.

Dr. Kissinger: I frankly don't know the technical problem. I will look into it. You want those balances abolished?

Ambassador Jha: Well, we will have to discuss some ways to handle it. There are many ideas.

Dr. Kissinger: We will approach a solution to this problem with a constructive attitude. If we approach it this way, our problem of last year can be used in a very salutary way. In many ways our two countries had a love affair. We took each other's criticism too seriously. We forgot that we were both great powers and that great powers have to make policy and consider their interests. For this very reason we perhaps rubbed each other more than countries that did not have this relationship. We need a new basis now. This is our attitude.

The aid business, it will occur. This is not a commitment, just my personal judgment of how it will develop.

Ambassador Jha: One thing: Bangladesh in the UN General Assembly. You want ways of being more forthcoming.

Dr. Kissinger: Our attitude is this: We will agree to have it put on the agenda. We will not want it given any special treatment or attention, but we will support its inscription on the agenda -- which is not the view of your Chinese friends.

Ambassador Jha: We want to know, is it something you're just reconciled to because it has majority support, or are you actively in favor? I sent my number two to talk to Van Hollen. His answer was, he could not communicate.

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Dr. Kissinger: I will see to it that there is somewhat easier communication.

Ambassador Jha: We should just start to do business with each other again as governments usually do business with each other.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly. And this is a topic we should be discussing anyway.

Ambassador Jha: How do you see the culmination of our dialogue?

Dr. Kissinger: First, we should continue it. Second, we should begin discussing removing some of the inequities that came out of last year. And then we should discuss the more general issues -- such as, what should be our economic relationship -- on which we have really no settled view.

It is still in our interest to have India as a useful member of the international community.

Our relations with the Soviet Union have improved somewhat, and to the extent you're seen as a Soviet client, even that is not a problem. But you didn't gain your independence to be anyone's client.

Ambassador Jha: Right.

Dr. Kissinger: And this will take care of itself in the normal evolution of diplomacy.

On the grain thing, our information is that you loaded 30,000 bags (1,300 metric tons) on a Soviet freighter for North Vietnam. This runs afoul of some law. There are legal consequences according to which we can't give aid, and there was a discussion about whether debt rescheduling is a form of aid. There was no ammunition.

Ambassador Jha: I thought we had none of that kind of relationship with North Vietnam. There was a trade ban on North Vietnam and China since the time of the Chinese attack; this was abolished last year.

Dr. Kissinger: At any rate, it raised unshirted hell here.

Let's talk about the more long-term problems. Let's see what we can do to normalize our relationship and then go from normalization to our

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traditional friendship. I will see Sisco next week, and we will see what we can do to let you feel there is a warming up of personal relations.

On Maury, why don't you let me know after he sees Patel whether this is the best time or whether we should wait until November?

Ambassador Jha: Let's let them talk. I won't put anything into I.G.'s head about waiting until November. Then we can see.

Dr. Kissinger: But between us, let's plan tentatively on November. Just confirm it to me next week. We don't want -- either of us -- to have it look like an election maneuver.

On the grain deal, my recollection is that countries that trade with North Vietnam are ineligible for aid. And the question was, is debt rescheduling a form of aid? We frankly are taking the position that it is not.

Ambassador Jha: I hope the Vietnam problem won't be with us long. I mean I hope you settle it.

Dr. Kissinger: What do your North Vietnamese friends tell you?

Ambassador Jha: [Laughs] They don't tell us anything!

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