



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 26, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Humanitarian Assistance Policy
for South Asia

At the SRG meeting on January 19, 1972 the request was made for recommendations on our humanitarian assistance policy for South Asia. Joint State/AID recommendations follow (details in addendum):

BANGLADESH

Support for UN Efforts

-- Support a formal request from the United Nations for renewed relief assistance in Bangladesh when a relief program has been worked out by the UN and specific requests and priorities put forward.

-- Seek the broadest possible international support for this effort, including full Soviet participation.

-- Within this framework, begin by making available PL-480 foodgrain and oil, utilizing portions of the approximately 725,000 metric tons of such commodities (valued at about \$75 million) which were committed for relief efforts in East Pakistan under PL-480 agreements of August and September 1971, but not shipped because of hostilities. (These agreements, made originally with the Government of Pakistan, will need to be cancelled and new arrangements worked out with the UN before shipments could be made.)

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-- Defer any further commitments of funds, including any support of UN administrative costs, until the degree of international response to the UN appeal becomes apparent.

U.S. Share

-- U.S. support of the short range UN relief and rehabilitation effort should, under current circumstances, be in the range of 30 to 35 percent of the total actually made available by all donors. (Our contribution to the previous UNEPRO effort in East Pakistan was about 70 percent; our contribution to refugee relief in India is now less than 40 percent.) This means that we would withhold any substantial commitments until there was evidence of significant contributions being made available by other donors.

-- We should reserve the option of playing a larger role, depending on the trend of general relations in the area and the nature of Indian and other international participation in the relief and rehabilitation effort.

Role of U.S. Voluntary Agencies

-- We should not limit our assistance solely to a direct response to the anticipated UN appeal but be prepared to make available some resources, including cash, rehabilitation commodities, and special high-nutritional foodstuffs, to U.S. voluntary agencies which have a proven record of competence and acceptability in Bangladesh.

Red Cross and Minorities

-- We should be prepared to respond to an anticipated appeal from the International Red Cross for funds to support Red Cross relief efforts among Bangladesh minorities, but our response in this area should be timed to be part of our overall response to relief needs in Bangladesh.

Long-Term Reconstruction

-- Participate in UN (and possibly IBRD) discussion on longer range reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Bangladesh but defer making any commitment until our

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future political relationship with Bangladesh is clear. This posture should also apply to our presently suspended AID development projects in the former area of East Pakistan.

INDIA

Support for UNHCR Appeal

The UNHCR has just solicited renewed international support for Pakistani refugees in India, enclosing an Indian estimate of needs of \$122 million. We recommend that the U.S. respond positively to that appeal by deciding to contribute 30 to 35 percent of the requirements for these refugees in commodities to be provided through the UNHCR, and that we announce an initial commodity contribution of \$10 million. This will demonstrate once again the humanitarian concern of the President and would be in keeping with the leadership which the United States has consistently exercised in refugee assistance.

Support for Volags

-- Continue to support those U.S. voluntary agencies, which have established effective programs of relief aid to Pakistani refugees in India. We anticipate channeling \$1 to \$2 million in funds to the work of these agencies.

THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR
SOUTH ASIAN RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Beyond PL-480 foodgrains, the kind of U.S. participation in relief in India and Bangladesh that is outlined above will depend upon further favorable Congressional action on the President's request for a special \$250 million South Asian relief allocation under the Foreign Assistance Act (the House has authorized \$175 million). We are already drawing on the first \$100 million of such funds under authority of the Continuing Resolution. Of

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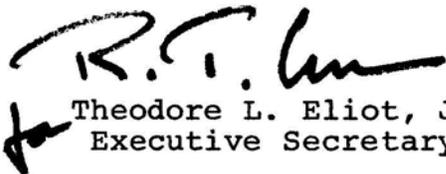
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this, \$20 million has been spent for earlier obligations for the refugee program in India and \$7.7 million for the earlier UNEPRO program in East Pakistan.

What further allocations of these funds, if any, we use to support the continuing UNHCR role among the refugees in India will depend upon such factors as the rate of refugee return, other international support for the UNHCR's effort, and our evolving relationship with India. As the refugees return, we would envisage the bulk of these funds to be required for immediate relief and resettlement of the refugees and other displaced persons in Bangladesh, and eventually for a longer-range rehabilitation effort there. In the short range, we anticipate continuing requirements for non-food commodities for the returning refugees, continuing support for U.S. voluntary agencies in the field, and possible contingency requirements to assist in transportation and resettlement of minorities in both Bangladesh and West Pakistan. (For a detailed analysis of postwar resettlement problems of the Biharis and other minority groups, see memorandum dated December 10, 1971, "India/Pakistan: Refugee Problems."

Longer-range requirements, and the nature and degree of our participation in such an effort, will depend upon the current UN assessment of rehabilitation needs in Bangladesh and on our future political relationship with the government in Dacca. UN Secretary-General Waldheim has told us that the UN envisages very substantial requirements of a kind that will require some kind of international Consortium approach.


Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Addendum.

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ADDENDUM

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HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AID TO SOUTH ASIA

Background and Rationale

BANGLADESH

1. Previous U.S. Role

Humanitarian relief committed to the UNEPRO-directed relief effort in Bangladesh since March 1971 totaled approximately \$180 million, of which about \$140 million was from the United States. Relief shipments, including those from the United States, were disrupted by the hostilities, and the net amount of relief assistance which actually arrived in the East was approximately \$90 million.

Some 725,000 tons of U.S. PL-480 foodgrain and edible oil worth approximately \$75 million remains unshipped.

2. Current UN Planning

The United Nations is now mobilizing a new field relief operation (UN Relief Operation Dacca - UNROD) and is conducting an assessment of relief and rehabilitation needs. Their findings have not been made known except in a most preliminary fashion. Any United States commitments to support relief programs in Bangladesh would necessarily be conditional upon a careful assessment of such estimates.

Mr. Paul Marc Henry, the resident director of UNROD in Dacca, estimates that the number of displaced persons in Bangladesh may total 20 million,

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including the refugees in India. Of the latter, GOI figures as of January 19 indicated that four million had already recrossed the border. The Department's Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs estimates the cost of offering minimal assistance, including food, to the returning refugees inside Bangladesh as about \$40 million for the next three months.

The UNSYG is expected to make a new international appeal for contributions to relief efforts in Bangladesh some time in early February. His appeal will be directed to all U. N. members, including the East Bloc, and apparently will encompass a one-year program of rehabilitation for U. S. FY 1973.

3. U. S. Response

We have not yet made any new commitment to the U. N. effort in Bangladesh. However, we told Bhutto when he was here in December that we would expect to be involved in any new international relief effort in the East. He said he understood but hoped we would do it in a way that would not complicate his own negotiation efforts with Mujib.

When the U. N. Secretary General's appeal is made, our response should be in conjunction with firm commitments of other contributors, including the Soviet Union, in order to ensure that we do not assume a preponderant share of the burden.

We will generally rely on the U. N. to establish, on the basis of its assessment, what constitutes bona fide humanitarian assistance in Bangladesh. This task is complicated by the fact that India and the Soviet Union will most likely be providing assistance to Bangladesh directly,

making it difficult to equate contributions made through the U. N. with what others are doing bilaterally.

There will be a distinct advantage in channeling some of our assistance to U. S. voluntary agencies which are continuing to work in Bangladesh. These activities are justifiable for their humanitarian content but can also assist in providing an interim American presence in the area until such time as an official relationship is feasible.

4. Immediate Relief Requirements

We estimate that Bangladesh will need to import one and one-half to two million tons of foodgrains on a concessional basis over the next 12 months. The requirements for other forms of relief assistance are not known but are bound to be enormous. It is not clear how much of the food requirement will be met from India and under what terms. We know that some food is now being shipped overland from Calcutta. This is encouraging because of the inability of Bangladesh ports to handle all of the import requirements. We can also expect Canada, U. K. and other countries to provide some food aid as they have done in the past.

A U. S. contribution of up to 725,000 metric tons of foodgrain and oil (valued at \$75 million) would meet an estimated one-third of the total import requirements of food over the next 12 months.

Food aid also has special relevance to the immediate rehabilitation requirements of Bangladesh. Commodities sold through ration shops generate the funds required for rehabilitation, labor-intensive public works projects, and increase the purchasing power which is at a precariously low level. The critical need for such employment-generating

rehabilitation projects has been underscored by U. N. representatives in the field.

5. Rehabilitation Program

Bangladesh is also faced with a pressing need to rebuild roads, bridges, ports, and other communication and transportation links requiring both local currency expenditures (which could be met in part by food sales as noted above), as well as commodity imports utilizing foreign exchange. India has announced a grant of the equivalent of \$35 million worth of cement, steel, and other commodities in addition to a \$12 million loan in sterling. The USSR has announced that it will supply cotton for the local textile industry and will assist Bangladesh to revive the jute industry upon which the economy largely depends for foreign exchange.

We will want to participate in U. N. (and possible IBRD) discussions on longer-range rehabilitation requirements in Bangladesh, but, under present circumstances, we should plan to hold our pledges of non-food aid to 30 to 35 percent of the verifiable total from all donors. At the time that our future political relationships in the area become clear, we should (a) first consider what actions we can or should take to resume our own presently suspended development projects in East Pakistan, and (b) then consider, if the policy framework is propitious, increasing our share commensurate with the level of needs and the amount of assistance given by other aid donors.

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INDIA1. GOI Planning

On January 20, the UNHCR received an aide memoire from the Government of India stating that as of December 31, 1971, the GOI had expended \$320 million on direct relief aid, exclusive of indirect support offered by voluntary agencies. (The U.S. contribution is approximately \$100 million, almost all of which has been shipped.) The note added that the GOI has already contributed \$6.7 million in foodgrains to Bangladesh and expects to have to make additional expenditures of about \$60 million primarily for food for the first three months of 1972 to take care of remaining East Pakistani refugees and to give returning refugees minimal support prior to departure from camps. This is in addition to the costs of repatriation which are estimated at another \$55 million. The total cost of what India has contributed to Bangladesh and expects to incur for food and repatriation is \$122.0 million.

2. UNHCR Soliciting Support

The UNHCR has again solicited international support for the latest program of relief for refugees still in India based on the GOI aide memoire. The U.S. will wish to make a positive response to this appeal. To do otherwise would disassociate the U.S. from a successful international humanitarian relief effort in which we have played a leading role. Our recommended position is that the U.S. plan to contribute 30 to 35 percent of the requirements for refugees in India in commodities to be provided through the UNHCR, and that we announce an initial commodity contribution of \$10 million.

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