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By ST/VSW Date 3/20/88

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

Department of State

TELEGRAM



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AFTER NOVEMBER ELECTIONS. HE DID NOT INTEND TO PRESS US UNTIL AFTER ELECTIONS. ON OTHER HAND, BHUTTO WENT ON, THERE WAS REAL PROBLEM IN KEEPING OPERATIONAL THE OLD EQUIPMENT WHICH PAKISTAN HAD RECEIVED FROM U.S., AND HE HOPED THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO LOOSEN UP SOON IN SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS. (COMMENT: LATTER POSITION IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT TAKEN WITH ME BY GOP FONSEC DURING OUR LAST MEETING ON APRIL 1.)

3. AS FOR AZIZ AHMED, BHUTTO SAID THAT HE HAD COUNSELLED HIM NOT TO POINT HIS FINGER AND ADMONISH PEOPLE HE WOULD BE TALKING TO DURING HIS CURRENT TRAVEL ABROAD. BUT AHMED IS OVER 65 AND DOUBTLESS FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO CHANGE HIS GENERAL APPROACH AND METHOD OF OPERATIONS. BHUTTO SEEMED TO BE IMPLYING THAT WE SHOULD NOT TAKE TOO SERIOUSLY ALL OF WHAT AHMED HAD SAID TO US IN WASHINGTON.

4. BHUTTO REAFFIRMED HIS PRINCIPAL AIM IN RELATIONS WITH INDIA IS TO ACHIEVE HONORABLE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT THAT WILL OPEN WAY TO AN ERA OF PEACE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED CLEAR AWARENESS THAT GOP CANNOT MEET CUMULATIVE CLAIMS FOR MAINTENANCE OF MILITARY BUDGET AT ABOUT RECENT LEVELS AND ALSO PAY FOR COSTLY DOMESTIC REFORMS AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO WHICH HE IS COMMITTED. HE WANTED TO SEE A REDUCTION IN PAK MILITARY BUDGET. BUT IT WOULD DEPEND ON INDIA, HE ADDED, WHETHER SUCH A CUT WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

GP-3. SOBER

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