

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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

INFORMATION

July 14, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

SUBJECT: Indian Views -- Your Meeting with
Secretary Connally

With reference to the South Asian portion of your meeting with Secretary Connally, we have received two interesting and reliable clandestine reports on Indian thinking following the Moscow summit and the Secretary's visit to Delhi. Read together, they provide an interesting picture of how Indian thinking may have evolved in recent weeks.

One is a report on an Indian foreign ministry study of your visit to Moscow which reflects sensitivity to how the summit affects less powerful states. The study judges that the undoubted prospects for improving the international climate are partly offset for India by apprehension that great power accommodation will occur at the expense of third countries. It notes, for instance that assumption of "special responsibility" by the two superpowers for preventing conflicts is "questionable" if one accepts the sovereignty and independence of smaller states. Later it notes that the net impression is of two great powers desiring to stabilize the status quo in a manner meeting their interests. It concludes that, while ruling out "unilateral advantage" is a significant expansion of the concept of peaceful coexistence, as far as third countries go a balance of bilateral advantage is not much better than two superpowers pursuing unilateral advantage.

The main point to be seen in this report is the great sensitivity to the idea of the superpowers taking on themselves what is seen as the responsibility for ordering the world. That Indian sensitivities to what happens to small states when large states agree is a useful backdrop to another intelligence report just received in the wake of the Connally visit. According to the source, official India:

-- realizes it can't live with the combined hostility of two of the three superpowers (U. S. , China) and notes even the USSR

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is moving towards detente with the US to avoid the same situation;

--had partly based its decision to have full ties with North Vietnam and to condemn US bombing and harbor mining on the assumption the Soviets would cancel your visit to Moscow;

--was shocked when the visit went through;

--thinks in the absence of improved Indo-US relations, the US will improve ties with India's South Asian neighbors and thereby "surround" India;

--recognizes Bangladesh will be a long-term burden which the USSR is not alleviating and what it has done has been at India's expense;

--found the Connally visit a "face-saving" gesture which Mrs. Gandhi appreciated and felt that all such gestures will be "fully reciprocated" by India to help it out of the Soviet clutches;

--sees the US as currently "amicable" towards improving relations but if they fail to materialize, India will try something to improve ties with China.

Comment: These reports may be self-serving, but the picture that emerges seems worth testing. It is clear that Mrs. Gandhi on her European trip lashed out on several occasions at the tendency of the superpowers to try to arrange the world's affairs. We have reports that the Soviets reacted sharply to Indian comments in this view which minimized the importance of the summit. It could be that against a backdrop of suspicion about major power accommodation at the expense of third states, India is thinking again about the advisability of relying exclusively on Indo-Soviet solidarity.

We do not want to jump at this thesis. I shall send you separately a paper suggesting a strategy for the next six months designed to go slow while giving any such change in Indian thinking a chance to mature.

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