

April 9, 1979

Memorandum for the Secretary of State from Gerard Smith with Enclosed Telegram from the American Embassy, Islamabad

Citation:

"Memorandum for the Secretary of State from Gerard Smith with Enclosed Telegram from the American Embassy, Islamabad", April 9, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, NARA, RG59, Records of Warren Christopher, Box 56. Contributed by Malcolm Craig. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/280735>

Summary:

This document has two parts. The first is a memo addressed to the Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, that focuses on the increasing immediacy of the Pakistan nuclear situation. The second part is a telegram that details the growing pushback from U.S. political leaders after the Carter Administration decided to invoke the Symington Amendment towards Pakistan.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AMBASSADOR AT LARGE
WASHINGTON

Pakistan

SECRET

April 9, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Cy:

The ~~attached~~ ^{with instruction for} telegram ~~instructing~~ Ambassador Hummel was not cleared with me -- although it deals with the most important nonproliferation issue yet faced by President Carter. I urge reconsideration of the "straddle" policy which it adopts. This policy attempts the impossible -- to keep proliferation separate from Pakistan security -- by dealing with these issues on "two levels."

The Eisenhower doctrine which the 1959 agreement implemented never contemplated security guarantees for a prospectively nuclear armed Pakistan.

We have been willing to put sharp strains on relations with the Federal Republic, Japan and other allies in efforts to get them to alter their clearly peaceful nuclear programs. We even embargoed the European Community for a short period. Here, we have discovered a Pakistani covert weapons program based on stolen designs. Our reaction seems mild by comparison. Even the aid cutoff seems cast as an action which we have to take because of Congress and we are even willing to discuss with the Pakistanis "the question of the strategic value of a nuclear weapons capacity." Our nonproliferation policy thus becomes in the language used in the instruction a matter of "degree," not principle.

I think our best chance to turn the Pakistanis around -- and to sustain Congressional and domestic political support for a U.S. role in Pakistan -- is to make clear that in the last analysis its nuclear policy puts our whole relation at stake. I recommend that Ambassador Hummel's instructions be changed accordingly.

Gerard Smith
Gerard Smith

cc: - D - Mr. Christopher
P - Mr. Newsom
NSC - Dr. Brzezinski

State 85585

SECRET
GDS

DECLASSIFIED
Authority *NND 52947*

UNCLASSIFIED

SSA058

PAGE 01
ACTION NEA-87

ISLAMA 04171 01 OF 02 091455Z

INFO OCT-01 EOR-12 ADS-00 NIAE-00 ACDA-12 CIAI-00
 INR-10 IC-10 L-00 NSAI-00 FI-00 NRC-02 CES-09
 SOF-02 DCDE-00 DOE-10 SS-10 SP-02 CEQ-01 FM-05
 SAS-02 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAI-00 INEE-00 PA-02 AID-05
 TRSI-00 OME-01 LOEE-00 H-02 /131 W
 -----129177 091526Z /50

C R 091320Z APR 79
 FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2382
 INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
 AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
 AMEMBASSY DACCA
 AMEMBASSY JIDDA
 AMEMBASSY KAEUL
 AMCONSUL KARACHI
 AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
 AMCONSUL LAHORE
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
 AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
 CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 4171

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

I.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: FEFR, FAID, MNUG, PINT, PE, US

SUBJ: GOP REACTS TO US AID DECISION: MORE POLITICAL LEADERS
ATTACK US MOVE

REF: ISLAMABAD

UNCLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 52947

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02

ISLAMA 04171 01 OF 02 091455Z

1. SUMMARY: GOP ADVISOR ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGHA SHAHI (AS "MFA SPOKESMAN") HELD EXTENSIVE PRESS BRIEFING APRIL 8 ON GOP REACTIONS TO THE US DECISION TO INVOKE THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT STOPPING ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN. SHAHI CHARGED THAT THE US DECISION IS "DISCRIMINATORY, BASED ON FALSE CHARGES," AND DESIGNED TO KEEP NUCLEAR POWER OUT OF THE HANDS OF MUSLIM COUNTRIES. HE REITERATED THE GOP'S CONTENTION THAT PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS FOR "PURELY PEACEFUL PURPOSES." SHAHI REFUSED TO ADMIT OR DENY EXISTENCE OF CENTRIFUGE PROGRAM.

2. MORE NATIONAL POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE ALSO JOINED THE FRAY, CONTINUING, IN THEIR STATEMENTS, TO FOCUS ON THE WEST'S ALLEGED ANTI-ISLAM BIAS AND THE NEED FOR A "REPROCESSING PLANT" TO MEET PAKISTAN'S GROWING ENERGY REQUIREMENTS. END SUMMARY.

3. FOREIGN ADVISOR AGHA SHAHI -- DESCRIBED IN APRIL 9 PAK PRESS AS AN MFA "SPOKESMAN" -- HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 8 TO DISCUSS THE GOP'S REACTION TO THE US DECISION TO STOP DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN IN RESPONSE TO INFORMATION ON PAKISTAN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD.

ACCORDING TO ONE WESTERN REPORTER WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE MEETING, IT WAS "VINTAGE SHAHI;" ALL WESTERN NEWSMEN STILL IN CAPITAL AREA ATTENDED, INCLUDING NYT, WASH. POST, NBC, EPC, AND AP.

4. AS REPORTED IN PAKISTAN TIMES APRIL 9, THE "MFA SPOKESMAN"

-- "CATEGORICALLY DENIED" US ASSERTION THAT "PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM HAS BEHIND IT THE INTENT OR PURPOSE

UNCLASSIFIED

S/S-O

S/S-O

1

GOP REACTIONS TO THE US DECISION TO INVOKE THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT STOPPING ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN. SHAHI CHARGED THAT THE US DECISION IS "DISCRIMINATORY, BASED ON FALSE CHARGES," AND DESIGNED TO KEEP NUCLEAR POWER OUT OF THE HANDS OF MUSLIM COUNTRIES. HE REITERATED THE GOP'S CONTENTION THAT PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS FOR "PURELY PEACEFUL PURPOSES." SHAHI REFUSED TO ADMIT OR DENY EXISTENCE OF CENTRIFUGE PROGRAM.

2. MORE NATIONAL POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE ALSO JOINED THE FRAY, CONTINUING, IN THEIR STATEMENTS, TO FOCUS ON THE WEST'S ALLEGED ANTI-ISLAM BIAS AND THE NEED FOR A "REPROCESSING PLANT" TO MEET PAKISTAN'S GROWING ENERGY REQUIREMENTS. END SUMMARY.

3. FOREIGN ADVISER AGHA SHAHI -- DESCRIBED IN APRIL 9 FAX PRESS AS AN MFA "SPOKESMAN" -- HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 8 TO DISCUSS THE GOP'S REACTION TO THE US DECISION TO STOP DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN IN RESPONSE TO INFORMATION ON PAKISTAN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD.

ACCORDING TO ONE WESTERN REPORTER WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE MEETING, IT WAS "VINTAGE SHAHI;" ALL WESTERN NEWSMEN STILL IN CAPITAL AREA ATTENDED, INCLUDING NYT, WASH. POST, NBC, BBC, AND AP.

4. AS REPORTED IN PAKISTAN TIMES APRIL 9, THE "MFA SPOKESMAN"

--"CATEGORICALLY DENIED" US ASSERTION THAT "PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM HAS BEHIND IT THE INTENT OR PURPOSE UNCLASSIFIED

S/S-O

S/S-O

1

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 04171 01 OF 02 091455Z

OF DEVELOPING A NUCLEAR WEAPON;"

-- "REJECTED THE FALSE CHARGE" THAT THE GOP IS DEVELOPING "ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM WITH THE ASSISTANCE OR PARTNERSHIP OF LIBYA OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY;"

-- SAID THAT THE US DECISION TO INVOKE THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT IS "DISCRIMINATORY" SINCE THE US STILL AIDS AND ARMS COUNTRIES WHICH MAINTAIN "COMPLETELY UNSAFEGUARDED NUCLEAR PROGRAMS;"

--SAID THAT PAKISTAN IS "READY TO ACCEPT FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS TO COVER ITS PEACEFUL PROGRAM OF NUCLEAR RESEARCH IF THE US IS "WILLING TO ENSURE" THAT THE SAFEGUARDS ARE APPLIED "WITHOUT PREFERENCES AND EXCLUSIONS" TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE EITHER ACQUIRED A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY, OR ARE ON THE "THRESHOLD OF DOING SO."

--SUGGESTED THAT IF THE NON-PROLIFERATION PROBLEM IS GLOBAL, AS THE US SUGGESTS, IT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED NOT IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT BUT RATHER IN THE UN, WHERE PAKISTAN "HAS ALREADY PROVEN," BY SPONSORING RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER ACTIONS, THAT IT SUPPORTS THE "GOALS OF NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT."

5. IN ANSWER TO A SPECIFIC QUESTION ON PAKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENT OF A GAS CENTRIFUGE, SHAHI SAID THAT

PAKISTAN IS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY ENGAGED IN A RESEARCH PROGRAM ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY." SHAHI RESPONDED TO A QUERY BY A BRITISH CORRESPONDENT ON THE POSSIBLE USES IN PAKISTAN OF ENRICHED URANIUM, BY ASKING THE REPORTER IF HE IS "AWARE OF ALL OF THE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF HIS COUNTRY," OR OF ITS PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP "CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS."

UNCLASSIFIED

TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE EITHER ACQUIRED A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY, OR ARE ON THE THRESHOLD OF DOING SO."

--SUGGESTED THAT IF THE NON-PROLIFERATION PROBLEM IS GLOBAL, AS THE US SUGGESTS, IT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED NOT IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT BUT RATHER IN THE UN, WHERE PAKISTAN "HAS ALREADY PROVEN," BY SPONSORING RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER ACTIONS, THAT IT SUPPORTS THE GOALS OF NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT.

5. IN ANSWER TO A SPECIFIC QUESTION ON PAKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENT OF A GAS CENTRIFUGE, SHAHI SAID THAT

"PAKISTAN IS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY ENGAGED IN A RESEARCH PROGRAM ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY." SHAHI RESPONDED TO A QUERY BY A BRITISH CORRESPONDENT ON THE POSSIBLE USES IN PAKISTAN OF ENRICHED URANIUM, BY ASKING THE REPORTER IF HE IS "AWARE OF ALL OF THE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF HIS COUNTRY," OR OF ITS PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 ISLAMA 04171 01 OF 02 091455Z

6. SHAHI ALSO SAID THAT HE WAS "NOT INFORMED" ON THE QUESTION OF PAKISTAN'S IMPORT OF SOME NUCLEAR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT; HE SUGGESTED THAT "MANY COUNTRIES" IMPORT THIS TYPE OF TECHNOLOGY, HOWEVER, AND DENIED THAT PAKISTAN HAS IMPORTED ANY ENRICHED URANIUM.

NOTE BY CC/T: REFERENCE AS RECEIVED.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 52947

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SEACOR

PAGE 01
ACTION NTA-BV

ISLAMA 24171 02 OF 02 001011

INFO OCT-01 FUR-10 ADS-00 NEAR-00 ACDA-10 CIAT-00
 INF-10 IC-10 L-00 NSAI-00 EB-00 NRC-00 CED-00
 SCI-02 DDE-00 DOE-10 SS-10 SP-02 CTO-01 PM-05
 SAS-02 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAR-00 INRI-00 PA-02 AID-05
 TST-00 CMB-01 DOIT-00 R-02 /101 V
 -----1294VB 0010202 /50

O R 0010202 APR 79
 FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2383
 INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
 AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
 AMEMBASSY DACCA
 AMEMBASSY JIIDA
 AMEMBASSY KABUL
 AMCONSUL KARACHI
 AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
 AMCONSUL LAHORE
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY PESHAWAR
 AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
 CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 52947

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 4171

CINCPAC FOR POLAI

7. SHAHI SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHY THE US HAD TAKEN THIS ACTION TO WINDDOWN ITS AID PROGRAM. HE SPECULATED THAT "IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT PAKISTAN IS AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY." THE ADVISER SAID THAT THE STOPPAGE OF US AID WILL AFFECT US-PAK RELATIONS, SINCE "IT SEEMS AN IMPEDIMENT IN AREAS OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO US." SHAHI
 UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02

ISLAMA 24171 02 OF 02 001011Z

SUGGESTED ALSO THAT "DOMESTIC PRESSURE ON THE US GOVERNMENT" MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE US MOVE, SINCE THE "ZIONIST LOBBY AND OTHERS PROPAGATE THAT IF PAKISTAN ACQUIRES SOPHISTICATED NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY, IT WOULD PASS IT ON TO THE PLO AND OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES TO THE DETRIMENT OF ISRAEL." IN SPITE OF THE US DECISION, SHAHI CONCLUDED, THE COP "CANNOT SURRENDER OUR NATIONAL INTEREST AND SUGGEST TO PRESSURE."

8. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE, SHAHI SPENT A LONG TIME DISCUSSING THE ANTI-MUSLIM NATURE OF THE US MOVE, AND STRONGLY MAINTAINED THAT THE WEST HAS "FALSE APPREHENSIONS IN THIS REGARD." SHAHI RELATILY ASKED THAT ALL OF HIS COMMENTS ON ZIONISM BE PLACED ON BACKGROUND. THE REPORTERS TOLD HIM THAT THIS WAS IMPOSSIBLE, AND THE WESTERN PRESS MAY HAVE FILED STORIES WITH SHAHI'S COMMENTS DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO HIM. LOCALLY, HOWEVER, THE SHAHI COMMENTS WERE ATTRIBUTED TO "POLITICAL CIRCLES IN ISLAMABAD." THE RESULT APPEARS IN A SEPARATE ARTICLE IN THE PAK TIMES APRIL 9, WHICH IS BASICALLY A MORE PERVENT RESTATEMENT OF THE ANTI-ISLAM THEME AND THE DISCRIMINATORY NATURE OF THE US POSITION.

9. THE APRIL 9 PRESS ALSO CARRIES TWO STORIES FROM THE US. IN ONE, PFI MAINTAINS THAT THE US DECISION ON AID CAME "OUT OF THE BLUE TO THE PAKISTAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON," AND THAT ICM HAYAT MEHDI WAS NOT INFORMED OF ANY SUCH DECISION WHEN HE WAS CALLED INTO THE DEPARTMENT ON APRIL 6. THE PFI STORY SUGGESTS THAT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN CARTER DID NOT PROVIDE SATISFACTORY ANSWERS TO A PARRAGE OF QUESTIONS, AND THAT HIS PERFORMANCE LEFT US REPORTERS "UNCONVINCED." IN THE OTHER STORY, THE PAKISTAN STUDENTS FEDERATION IN NEW YORK IS SAID TO HAVE PROTESTED
 UNCLASSIFIED

S/S-O

S/S-O

1

S/S-O

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 04171 02 OF 02 091511Z

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 52947