

310. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State

New Delhi, July 16, 1963, 3 p.m.

246. Rangoon for Ambassador Bowles Only. Embtel 245.¹ Herewith full text of FonSec Desai's letter to me:

Begin text

[This letter has not been declassified by the Indian Government.]

Timmons

Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, India, General, 7/16/63-7/19/63. Secret; Operational Immediate; Limit Distribution. Repeated to London and Rangoon.

¹ In telegram 245 from New Delhi, July 16, Timmons reported that he had received a letter from M.J. Desai indicating that the Indian Government had decided to proceed with the proposed air defense arrangements. (Department of State, Central Files, DEF 1-4 INDIA)

311. Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)

Washington, July 17, 1963.

McGB:

I hear that USIB will press Special Group tomorrow to review our Pak/Indian policy, and at least give more MAP to Paks, for obvious reasons. USIB naturally runs perennially scared, but I find it hard to judge how much Paks running power play on us vs. how much real trouble is ahead.

I too feel we should be more active in both reassuring Paks and reminding them of how much they'd lose if they went too far. But I doubt whether another Iranian style panic offer of more MAP is the solution. Paying this blackmail would *not* be enough to stem the tide, yet get us in a costly ante-raising posture where every time we gave "X" to India Paks would expect "Y."

Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, Pakistan, General, 7/63. Secret.

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Much more interesting is WPB's idea of revealing privately to Paks our 3-year MAP intention, with strong caveat that this not a commitment *but assumes continued good alliance relationship*. This would do more to reassure Paks we weren't switching to India than anything else. Chief problem is that program includes two squadrons of F-5A's for 1965-68. If this leaked (as it would), it would fire Indian desire for supersonics. But Indians will try to get supersonics anyway sooner or later, if not from us then from Soviets. In fact, F-5's for Paks would help cover giving them to India.

I also feel need for revived high-level dialogue with Paks (McConaughy acts mostly as a mailbox). Perhaps JFK should write Ayub again; we ought to have a *public statement* too; I got State to whomp one up for today, but I see it got scrubbed.

In sum, I see many ways to handle Paks without being unduly defensive—which would only sharpen Pak appetite. And keep in mind that throughout recent strain on US/Pak relations, they've not raised even a finger about Peshawar.¹

Bob K.

¹ A handwritten note by Bundy on the source text next to the last paragraph reads: "OK. 5412 agreed."

312. Note From the British Embassy to the Department of State

No. 284

Washington, July 29, 1963.

Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy presents its compliments to the Department of State and has the honour, upon the instructions of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, to communicate the following in reply to the Department's Note of the 25th of April¹ proposing discussions by appropriate military and civil representatives of the two Governments about the possible strategic use of certain small islands in the Indian Ocean area.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, DEF 15 UK-US. Secret.

¹ Document 284.

FRUS, 1961-1963, S. Asia, Louis J. Sank, ed.
WDC: USC (P. 115) 1996

2. Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that the two Governments share a common concern for the effective defence of the whole area against Communist encroachment. In principle, therefore, they welcome the American initiative for exploratory discussions, as a first step, on the understanding that these do not commit either Government in advance to any particular course of action. In principle also Her Majesty's Government agree that high level talks might usefully follow these exploratory exchanges. However, in Her Majesty's Government's view these preliminary discussions should take political and economic as well as purely strategic considerations into account.

Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom therefore would be glad to welcome in London United States representatives for preliminary discussions with the aim of clearing our minds as to objectives, and in the light thereof to produce agreed terms of reference for the United Kingdom/United States Military Planning Group, which is already in existence and provides a convenient forum. Her Majesty's Government would be glad to welcome representatives of the American Government at any time but it would be appreciated if a paper could be communicated in advance giving the preliminary views and suggestions of the United States authorities.

313. Telegram From the Embassy in India to the Department of State

New Delhi, July 30, 1963, 10 p.m.

474. Mediation Proposal. The problem of Kashmir and the timing of the mediation proposal have been much on my mind since I arrived here, and as Department is aware I have been endeavoring to get a more intimate feel for this situation.

Prospect for mediation must be viewed in the light of current developments which in terms of US-Indian relations are now highly colored by uncertainty over VOA agreement, speculation on possible effects of such a reversal on US support for Bokaro, and current Chicom threat with possible Pak support which is now being highly publicized in Delhi press. The atmosphere here is profoundly unsettled, to put it mildly.

Source: Department of State, Central Files, POL 32-1 INDIA-PAK. Secret; Priority; Limit Distribution. Repeated to London and Karachi.

Before attempting to inject a mediation proposal into such an environment, we should be clear with regard to our intentions and expectations. The hard core question is this: do we seriously expect within a reasonable time to bring India and Pakistan into meaningful negotiations to resolve their difference over Kashmir, or are we simply playing out to its logical conclusion a theme we initiated several months ago? Put another way, does anyone believe that there are any predispositions on the part of the Indians and Pakistanis to reach a settlement at this time, or indeed to do anything more than attempt to secure a tactical advantage enabling one to embarrass the other?

My conversations with Indians, with country team in New Delhi and also with my British colleague, plus my own assessment of the possible effectiveness of a mediation proposal from us at this time, lead me to conclude that it would be futile for us to proceed with this venture now. The following factors are relevant:

1. FonSec told me informally on 26th that in his view any mediation proposal made in this highly charged period would hinder the future prospects for a settlement of the Pak problem rather than help them. Although Desai agreed on the value of mediation per se, and stressed that the suggestion had originated with GOI, he pointed out relations with Pakistan had sharply deteriorated since the original proposal as a result of Bhutto's speeches hinting at Sino-Pak mutual defense agreement, and that many sober Indians were now seriously persuaded Pak would join Chicoms should latter renew aggressive action against India. In short, Desai, a reasonable man, was as adamant as Gundevis on this question.

2. Gore-Booth, for whom I have the highest regard, is resigned to playing out our previous theme if this is deemed necessary by his Govt for some tactical reason, though in a frank discussion this morning he emphasized that at this juncture we are probably up against a stone wall.

3. In my opinion US interest would best be served by our reaching the following conclusions:

A. If we were unable to force a Kashmir settlement under the relatively improved circumstances of last year, we are even less likely to succeed now.

B. Under the best of circumstances our association with the British on this question gravely undercuts whatever effectiveness we might otherwise have on this issue and our capacity to shape Indian views will be limited until we operate more independently. The depth of suspicion which the GOI feels toward the British Govt in regard to Kashmir is not fully understood.

C. A serious effort to ease the Pak-India conflict must start with the key element of timing, and this is definitely not the moment. Indeed