

FSE 083/1

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OFFICER

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CALL ON MR P H MOBERLY BY INDIAN DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER  
AT 12.30PM ON 13 NOVEMBER

1. Mr Singh said he had come to talk about the annual Pakistani UNGA resolution on the South Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. India's conceptual and political difficulties with this resolution had been augmented in the last year in particular by Pakistan's search for a nuclear weapon capability. India had seen a lot of information on this and there had been no categorical denial by the Pakistanis. The Indians had tried to meet Pakistan's concerns over the South Asian region and gone so far in 1977 as to abstain on the SANWFZ resolution, but this had done them no good. They were pleased to note the changing pattern of voting last year: the UK's switch to abstention was a qualitative as much as a quantitative change. The Indian Government felt it must urge HMG to maintain last year's stand.
2. Mr Moberly said he would like to consider the wider context as well as the resolution. As far as the resolution was concerned, he understood it to be identical to last year's and therefore expected that we would think abstention to be the right course again. There were conflicting factors. The UK had many times said that Nuclear Weapon Free Zones were in principle a good thing. Yet we recognised the particular problems in the sub-continent where the SANWFZ idea did not contribute to non-proliferation. We felt we could not support or oppose the SANWFZ idea, and thus abstained.
3. Mr Moberly then said he would like to consider the wider problem. The Pakistani search for a nuclear weapon capability caused concern in the UK. In the early stages Pakistan had denied the existence of nuclear facilities. Now they said they were for peaceful purposes. Yet the facilities remained unsafeguarded. We had suggested that the Pakistanis should open them for inspection to demonstrate their good faith, just as we had made similar suggestions to the Indians. We continued to see the Pakistani problem as related to Indian concern with nuclear matters. Ideally we would like to see India and Pakistan accept the NPT or, short of that, safeguards. Mr Singh explained the Indians had suggested to Pakistan a step-by-step approach. India had declared on many occasions that she would not develop nuclear weapons but Pakistan had not given equivalent assurances. President Zia had not shown interest lately. Yet the Indians wanted genuine negotiations. When the Pakistanis had hinted they wished to see a reduction in Indian conventional arms, India had responded, only to be told the climate was not right for talks. After the recent intervention by Soviet forces, the Indians had renewed their assurances that Pakistan could if it wished remove all forces from the border with

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India, since India represented no threat. Again the Pakistanis had not responded. The Pakistanis needed to accept that India was a bigger country and, additionally because of China, needed to retain a certain size of armed forces. There could be no parity with Pakistan. Recently India's relations with China had improved and there were hopes of further improvements. Perhaps the opportunity would arise to further decrease Pakistan's suspicions. Mrs Gandhi had recently told the Pakistanis it was a vital interest for India that Pakistan's integrity be preserved, since any splintering might be a precedent for India herself.

4. Mr Moberly commented that such assurances were to be welcomed even if they had not been effective in persuading the Pakistanis. In arms control matters, where the security interests of states were closely involved, no progress was possible without mutual confidence. The history of SALT demonstrated this. The need for confidence led one back to international inspection as a way of giving bona fides to words. He knew this approach had not been found acceptable by the Indians in the past, but he thought it offered the only way to induce Pakistan to change its present course. Mr Singh agreed it was a question of confidence.

cc Mr Moberly

✓ SAD

JNU

Chanceries: Delhi  
Islamabad  
UKDIS GENEVA in New York