

S E C R E T

ISLAMABAD 012246

(3) ACTION: AMB-1 INFO DCM POL
CHRON (DUMMY)

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CHRG: AMB

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ADD:

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3873

INFO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3414

BT

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 12246

EXDIS DOS REVIEWED 19-Apr-2007: DECLASSIFIED IN FULL

FOR UNDER SECRETARY ARMACOST AND AMBASSADOR DEAN FROM
RAPHEL

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, IN, PK, AF, TPHY

SUBJECT: INDO-PAKISTANI RELATIONS

REF: DELHI 13912

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. I FULLY AGREE WITH JOHN'S INDIAN CONTACTS WHO SEE
THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN AS ONE OF
GREAT STRATEGIC IMPORT FOR BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN.
WE IN THE STATES TOO OFTEN TEND TO THINK OF
AFGHANISTAN MAINLY IN TERMS OF THE SOVIET
WITHDRAWAL. BOTH ISLAMABAD AND DELHI SEE THE
POSSIBILITY OF A MAJOR STRATEGIC RESHUFFLING WITH A
STRONG ISLAMIC BLOC STRETCHING FROM TURKEY TO
PAKISTAN, WITH AFGHANISTAN A FULL AND SUPPORTIVE
MEMBER, CONFRONTING A HINDU INDIA WITH A LARGE MUSLIM
MINORITY. THE PAKISTANIS ARE INTRIGUED, TITILLATED
AND PLEASED WITH THE PROSPECT; THE INDIANS ARE
NERVOUS, EDGY AND WORRIED. WITNESS THE FORMER'S TILT
TOWARD HEKMATYAR AND THE LATTER'S FLIRTATION WITH
NAJIB.

3. AS WE HAVE REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, ZIA AND OTHERS
SEE THE CHANCE FOR A FRIENDLY AFGHANISTAN FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN 40 YEARS. PAKISTAN CAN HAVE, AS ZIA
SAYS, "STRATEGIC DEPTH SO INDIA WILL KNOW IT CAN
NEVER THREATEN US AGAIN WHILE WE HAVE TO BE WORRIED
ABOUT OUR BACK". I THINK THE PAKISTANIS OVERESTIMATE
THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE ISLAMIC BLOC CONCEPT JUST AS
THE INDIANS ARE. PROBABLY UNDULY WORRIED.
NEVERTHELESS, BOTH TAKE IT VERY SERIOUSLY, IN
ISLAMABAD WITH GREAT HOPE AND DELHI WITH CONSIDERABLE
TREPIDATION. FOR MOST AMERICANS, THE SOVIET
WITHDRAWAL IS THE VICTORY. FOR OUR SOUTH ASIAN
FRIENDS, IT IS ONLY THE FIRST ACT IN A MUCH LARGER
DRAMA.

4. I THINK, HOWEVER, THAT THE INDIANS JOHN DESCRIBES

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HAVE OVERESTIMATED HOW THIS QUESTION AFFECTED ZIA'S DECISION TO DISSOLVE THE ASSEMBLY. THE IDEA OF A STRONGLY ISLAMIC, PRO-PAKISTANI AND ANTI-INDIAN AFGHANISTAN HAS ALMOST UNIVERSAL APPEAL AND SUPPORT IN PAKISTAN. ZIA DID NOT HAVE TO REMOVE JUNEJO TO GIVE HIMSELF A FREE HAND TO PURSUE SUCH A STRATEGY. NO PAKISTANI OF ANY SUBSTANCE DISAGREES WITH ZIA ON THIS ONE.

5. HOWEVER, BROAD POPULAR SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING ISLAM OUTSIDE PAKISTAN DOES NOT EXTEND TO FURTHER ISLAMIZATION INSIDE PAKISTAN. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION AND SKEPTICISM ABOUT ZIA'S AGGRESSIVE PROGRAM TO IMPLEMENT ISLAMIC LAW IN PAKISTAN. JUNEJO'S UNWILLINGNESS TO PUSH ZIA'S PROGRAM WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A REASON FOR HIS DISMISSAL.

6. JOHN ALSO NOTES THAT SOME INDIANS THINK ZIA BELIEVES THAT PAKISTAN'S FRIENDS IN THE U.S. CONGRESS AND ADMINISTRATION WILL PROTECT HIM FROM ANY ANTI-DEMOCRATIC ACTIONS HE TAKES. I AM CONVINCED THAT ZIA DOES NOT BELIEVE HE HAS SUCH A TEFLON COATING. CHARLIE WILSON AND I HAVE TOLD HIM THAT UNLESS HE TAKES PERSUASIVE AND CONCRETE STEPS WHICH PROMPTLY SETS PAKISTAN ON THE ROAD TO FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS, OUR RELATIONSHIP WILL FACE CONSIDERABLE HAZARDS. PAKISTANI POLITICIANS WHOM WE RESPECT VOLUNTEER THE SAME ANALYSIS. ZIA TELLS US HE UNDERSTANDS AND APPRECIATES THE FACT AND WILL MOVE DECISIVELY TOWARD ELECTIONS BECAUSE OF PAKISTANI DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS AS WELL.

7. SO, IN SUMMARY, YES - PAKISTAN AND INDIA ARE BOTH FOCUSED ON A NEW STRATEGIC SITUATION IN SOUTH ASIA AFTER SOVIET WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN. BUT NO - THAT WAS NOT ZIA'S REASON FOR DISSOLVING THE ASSEMBLY.
RAPHEL##

BT
#2246

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