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SUBJ: South Asian Situation

1. Under Secretary called in British Charge Millard August 6 to review South Asia situation. Millard accompanied by First Secretary Boyd. Van Hollen, NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary, Quainton (NEA/INC), and Veliotes (U) also present.

2. Under Secretary began by reviewing three major areas of USG concern at this time: humanitarian relief, refugees, and avoidance of conflict both within East Pakistan and between India and Pakistan. Most immediate problem from our point of view is real danger of famine

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NEA/INC:ACEQuainton/emg	8/6/71	21289	The Under Secretary

CLEARANCES:

NEA - Mr. Van Hollen
EUR/BMI - Mr. George
S/S - Mr. Miller

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in latter part of this year. Danger seems not fully recognized or admitted by GOP. Basically USG would like to see more UN action. We are prepared to support it, and on Pakistan side have or will have made available 360,000 tons of grain. We are willing to put in more. Since question is one of distribution rather than port capacity, we have provided $3 million for coastal vessels and plan $1 million more. Another problem in connection with famine will be degree of harassment by liberation army. It is important that it not affect distribution of food. If world is not successful in averting famine, refugee flow will increase greatly and further strains placed on Indo-Pak relations. It is important to do whatever can be done to reduce refugee flow. We have been pressing GOP to stop military harrassment, to pull army back, get relief operations going, and offer full return of property to refugees. Our representations have been only partly successful.

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In addition, there is problem of increased cross-border activities which inhibit return of refugees and keep army in field. We are trying not to tie relief and ~~XXX~~ refugee questions with political accommodation, but as practical matter, we recognize that any move toward political settlement would also be helpful in humanitarian relief and refugee contexts.

3. Another problem which concerns us is how to get political accommodation, given emotions in area. It would be helpful if GOP would deal with elected representatives of East Pakistan either as individuals or preferably by lifting ban on Awami League. It might be difficult for elected representatives to act on individual basis if Awami League continued to be banned, since they could be treated as traitors by Bengalis in such circumstances. We hope Yahya could be encouraged to deal with Awami League as such, excluding only those against whom there

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is particular case. We also feel it important that he not try Mujib.

4. Under Secretary noted that when we talked with Indians they recognized need to lessen conflict, but they have said they are not in position to cut off cross-border operations or interfere with liberation forces. From their point of view if atmosphere is to be improved there must be move toward political accommodation. If that happens then the Bangla Desh government might take more moderate position and way might be opened to reduction of guerrilla operations. Under Secretary noted that even in absence of political accommodation, however, we intend to proceed full steam on humanitarian relief efforts. We hope to be able to work closely with HMG.

5. Millard replied that HMG entirely shared USG view of seriousness of situation and of connection

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between humanitarian problem and cross-border operations. Prime Minister had urged Yahya to create ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ conditions conducive to refugees' return, but had received no clear ~~XXXX~~ answer. On humanitarian side, HMG recognized importance of UN and has already given ~~$~~ 1 million for East Pakistan relief. On Indian side he felt there was very little HMG could do given Indian sensitivities and fact that UK relations with India not particularly good. He thought UK not likely to be effective in efforts to try to stop cross-border operations.

6. Under Secretary said there were various degrees of cross-border operations. It is very important from our point of view that GOI take no more positive actions and ~~XXX~~ itself not involve ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ directly. Even if HMG does not feel it can stop cross-border operations, we would hope it could urge restraint. Indians have told us they would

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not attack Pakistan, but would respond to an attack. We hope both USG and HMG could urge both sides to avoid being provoked.

7. Under Secretary also commented on Secretary's proposed August 9 visit to New York. He will not be talking about political accommodation but will be supporting the UNSYG s efforts on the humanitarian side. We wish to galvanize UN into more effective and quick actions and hope UK and other countries will support his efforts. We would like to see UN get more personnel into the field. We feel it can only be helpful to have the UN in East Pakistan. Problem is how to assure their safety, given some indications that Liberation Army might prefer not have UN there. Perhaps this is another area in which HMG might also be helpful. On Indian side we have seen reports that annual costs of refugee support will be between $300 and $600 million. We have offered $70.5 million with additional

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sums to come. Rest of world will also have to give a lot more.

8. Van Hollen noted that at UN events had entered new phase. Soviets were unwilling to support consensus being sought by UNSC president in support of UNSYG's memorandum and Indians continued to be reluctant to accept proposal for UNHCR presence as proposed by UNSYG aide memoire. In reponse to Millard's question about USG attitude to Security Council meeting, Van Hollen said that at the moment we were still not in favor, but were flexible particularly if there should be serious escalation of situation. What we wish to avoid is mere exchange of recriminations. In connection with possible escalation, Van Hollen commented on elements in situation which are of concern to us. He noted rising level of insurgency in East Pakistan over last three to four weeks, fact that there had been no

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real move toward political accommodation. Yahya speech of June 28 had not yet led anywhere and no list of proscribed offenders had been published. Third element of concern was continued, if diminished, refugee flow and Indian cross-border activities. Millard asked whether we had indications that Indians moving toward intervention. Under Secy said he thought that would be too strong an interpretation, but we were concerned at increasing insurgency, overflights by both sides and Indian efforts to get missionaries out of border areas.

9. Veliotes asked about status of Mrs. Bandaranaike's Commonwealth mediation effort. Millard said he thought a Commonwealth initiative not likely to succeed, considering current Pakistan attitude toward Commonwealth, [illegible] time. He understood Arnold Smith was interested in getting mediation going, but did not think it would get

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very far. Van Hollen said that looking to future there might be need for some third party effort by one country or group of countries. Timing would be important, as would question of whether such an effort was focussed on reconciliation within Pakistan or international effort between India and Pakistan. Shah of Iran had offered to mediate. Pakistan had accepted but India had not.

10. Conversation turned briefly to utility of discussion with Soviets on South Asia. Millard thought it might be difficult for HMG to discuss problems of two Commonwealth countries with Soviets. Under Secretary said he had impression that Sir Alec Douglas-Home thought it would be useful. Boyd said that it was HMG view that if we wanted to influence Indians, Soviets would of course be important. All agreed that we would want to see what comes from Gromyko visit to New Delhi.

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11. In conclusion Millard said he would report fully to his government and in particular would seek their views on what further might be done by way of encouraging restraint and providing additional resources for relief. It was agreed US and UK would keep in close touch in future.

END

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