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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: President Yahya and Communist China

I was visited at the end of the week by Ambassador Hillaly and by Sher Ali Khan, President Yahya's Minister of Information and National Affairs who was here at the head of Pakistan's UN delegation. Although Sher Ali may not quite be Yahya's number two as he claims, he is apparently close.

Sher Ali came to report follow-up on your suggestion that President Yahya tell Chou En-Lai that the US would welcome accommodation with Communist China. ]

Sher Ali reported that Pakistan's delegate to the Peking 20th Anniversary celebrations had been instructed to let the Chinese know that Yahya was prepared to discuss the subject of American intentions in Asia when Chou En-Lai visits Pakistan, presumably early next year. Now Sher Ali felt that it would help President Yahya to have something specific to say to the Chinese, perhaps on US intentions on Vietnam. They could make a general pitch for the improvement of relations but that would be unlikely to provoke a specific response. President Yahya hoped that we might give him something to say.

I told him that I would have to consult with you so that we could pass on a more precise formulation than I was prepared to do at that moment. I did tell him however that, if President Yahya were communicating with the Communist Chinese Ambassador, he might say confidentially that the United States is removing two of its destroyers from the Formosa Straits. I told him that he should not allow any misunderstanding of this move -- it did not affect our basic position on Taiwan but it was an effort to remove an irritant. I told Sher Ali that we would be in touch with Ambassador Hillaly when we had something more precise to say. ||

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Reading from various parts of this record, he reconstructed the conversation between the two Presidents along the following lines:

1. President Nixon said that he thoroughly understands Pakistan's points of view toward China.

2. President Yahya, discussing China's view of the world, said that China feels surrounded by hostile forces--India, Soviet Union and the United States in Southeast Asia. China seeks no territory or war but will fight with no holds barred if war is thrust upon it. President Yahya stated his view that there is a need for a dialogue with China to bring China into the community of nations.

3. President Nixon stated it as his personal view--not completely shared by the rest of his government or by many Americans--that Asia can not move forward if a nation as large as China remains isolated. He further said that the US should not be party to any arrangements designed to isolate China. He asked President Yahya to convey his feeling to the Chinese at the highest level. When President Yahya said it might take a little time to pass this message, President Nixon replied that President Yahya should take his own time and decide for himself the manner in which he would communicate with the Chinese.

In concluding the conversation, Ambassador Hilaly said that Chou En-Lai had been invited to Pakistan and had accepted but it was not clear when he would come. He said President Yahya might, in a conversation with the Chinese Ambassador, simply say that the US had no hostile intent toward Communist China but he would wait until he sees Chou En-Lai to convey President Nixon's specific views.

Harold H. Saunders