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A/ISS/IPS, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
October 11, 2007

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Authority *VND 009 021*
By *MN* NARA Date *1/28/08*

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Reviewed by H. D. Brewster *HDB*

Date: 3-3 19 78

PARTICIPANTS:

Mohammed Naim, Foreign Policy Adviser to President Daoud, Deputy Director of the Legal and Treaties Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan
Waheed Abdullah, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Samad Ghaus, Director General of Department of Political Affairs, MFA

CLASSIFIED BY FRANK WISNER
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO-
YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON
DECEMBER 31, -----

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Theodore L. Eliot, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan
Alfred Atherton, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs
L. Bruce Laingen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff *PRZ*

DATE AND TIME:

Friday, November 1, 1974
10:10 - 11:30 a.m.

PLACE:

Foreign Ministry
Kabul, Afghanistan

[The meeting began with Deputy Minister Abdullah alone, in his office.]

Abdullah: Once again on behalf of the Afghani Government, I welcome you to Kabul.

Kissinger: Thank you.

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Abdullah: When Ted [Eliot] informed me -- or I informed Ted -- that you were coming [laughter], I was very happy.

Eliot [to Kissinger]: I think you informed their charge in New York.

Abdullah: I think your talks will be fruitful and positive for the future of Afghani-US relations. When I was in Washington and had talks with Mr. Ingersoll and other colleagues in the State Department, I was very pleased. I think now the US understands our views on international affairs better. Really, the only problem we have is Pakistan.

I'm sure your visit will further strengthen our relations and will give you better ideas of our views.

Kissinger: I'm sure it will further strengthen a good relationship. And also I'm here to meet the leaders personally, which is better than through cables. We know your views and we respect your nonalignment.

We are always told you are worried about your other neighbors.

Abdullah: We want only peace and tranquility in the region and to use our resources for development, economic and social. War is no good for us.

Kissinger: This is clearly true.

Abdullah: One of our neighbors doesn't want to settle the problem.

Kissinger: You have to explain what you want. Because the Pakistanis won't give up any territory.

Abdullah: We don't want any territory. That is a misconception of the Pakistanis.

[At 10:15, the group moved to Mr. Naim's office where they were greeted by Mr. Naim and Mr. Ghaus. The press was admitted briefly for photos.]

Kissinger: I already met an Afghan student of mine at the airport. He was at Harvard.

Naim: We welcome you here. Our only regret is you can't stay longer. You are a very busy man and it is perfectly understandable. But we are happy to have you here.

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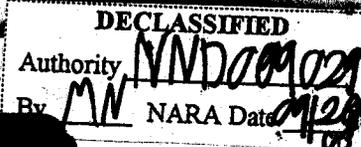
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Kissinger: I'm very grateful for the warmth of the reception.

Naim: Because you are going to stay only for a short period of time, I'm going to only mention briefly the items of interest to us.

The first item is relations between Afghanistan and the United States. From the very beginning of our relations, it was the wish of the Afghani people always to have cordial relations with the American people and understanding and goodwill. This was not only a wish, but the geopolitical situation of Afghanistan always required that we have good and close understanding with the United States. Because of the politics prevailing in the region, sometimes a misunderstanding might have occurred in our relations, but it is always our wish to remove the misunderstandings and have really close and friendly relations with you. The remoteness of our country -- we are not big and we are far away -- may make it that Afghanistan falls outside the interest of the United States. But because of the geographic situation of Afghanistan, we always have been of the opinion that the presence of the United States was needed. So we hope the visit of the Secretary of State will promote this understanding, in accordance with both our wishes.

Afghanistan is a small developing country and it is quite natural for it to attract the assistance of the developed countries, and we always had the desire to attract the assistance of the United States, which is always welcomed and we value it very highly. As you know, sir, we have in Afghanistan with the assistance of the United States started a large project in the Hellmund. In spite of all assistance, it has not yet been brought to completion. We believe, without an enormous sum of money, it should be brought to fruition, and will not be a burden but a success. This project, related to the upper Hellmund Valley, should be a complex of electricity, irrigation and power. This project, at a time when the world faces an enormous food crisis, is for Afghanistan of fundamental importance. Because for Afghanistan every drop of water is life, and we need it for food. Essentially, we seek assistance for the development of this project. In spite of the fact that this is termed a long-term project, it was initiated 30 years ago; even as a long-term project, 30 years is a long time. It is our hope that for the completion of this within this coming ten years we will have the help of the United States.



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Naim (cont.): I wish now to inform the Secretary of Afghanistan's foreign policy and in the region.

First I want to state the bright side of it [Laughter] -- then I'll mention the difficulties.

Our relations in the region, with our western neighbor Iran, are extremely close and cordial. We've reached an understanding to cooperate very closely in various fields, and it is our hope and expectation that this friendship will be a factor for stability in this part of Asia.

Another country of great importance in the region is India. We have very close relations, and the closeness of views leads us to think we can expand this closeness and bring friendship closer.

With our northern neighbor, which is at the same time a great power, we have a very close relationship, and over the years we have built friendly relations, so that we can say from that side we feel quite secure. Cooperation between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union has been very close; they have assisted us on many projects in Afghanistan, and over the years they have learned and we have learned that our close cooperation does not mean any ideological interference in our country.

Our other neighbor is China. With China we can say our relations are correct. The People's Republic of China has invited me for an official visit, and I hope within a month my visit will lead to a greater understanding.

Kissinger: We may meet there [Laughter].

Naim: I'd be happy to meet you there.

Now, with your permission, I'll say a few words about the darker side.

Kissinger: He said relations were "good" about the Soviet Union and "correct" about China. Can he give one adjective about Pakistan? [Laughter].

Naim: Conforming to what you just said, as far as it depends on Afghanistan, our relations are correct. Owing to the fact that we don't have much time, I want to give you the details of the historical background. I'm sure it is all in the files of your Embassy.



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Kissinger: So many other things are found there, we can't sort it out. It will take the Ambassador six months to recover from this visit.
[Laughter]

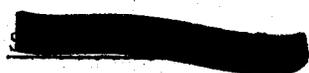
Naim: We don't speak of the past but of the future. In the last months, Pakistan brought accusations to Afghanistan which are absolutely false. One of the first accusations is they claim we are working for the disintegration and breakup of Pakistan. We are categorically rejecting this claim. We in no way expect or foresee or wish the disintegration of Pakistan, and we cannot do anything in this regard.

Because of the lack of time, I can't give the historical background, but one thing should be said plainly -- the pressure being brought there on Pushtunistan and Baluchistan cannot leave Afghanistan indifferent. The power used by Pakistan against these people every day deteriorates the situation further. Pakistan, instead of seeking ways to solve this peacefully within its own Constitution, is using force to solve the problem. The sentiments of the Afghani people, because of the historical background, cannot remain indifferent about the situation. We should not forget these two regions were part and parcel of Afghanistan and were severed by colonialism from their motherland. This notwithstanding, we don't have any territorial claims on Pakistan and we don't want the disintegration of that country. If on one hand the Government of Pakistan accords rights according to the Constitution to these people and with the other hand takes them away, we can't be indifferent.

Secretary Kissinger was being very active in his peacekeeping role lately throughout the world, and also achieved successes. We hope his trip here will also be successful to help find an understanding between Afghanistan and Pakistan to find a solution to this problem.

Kissinger: No one ever asks me to deal with problems that are less than a thousand years old. [Laughter]

Naim: From the results you have in the Middle East and your successful trips, we hope you can do something also for this thousand-year-old problem [Laughter].



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Naim (cont.): If Pakistan succeeds in bringing understanding between the various masses of people living in Pakistan, there is a greater scope of understanding and a greater scope of cooperation between our two countries. This was briefly the situation between us and Pakistan, and we hope Pakistan can find its own people a solution, which will lead to the satisfaction of the sentiments of our people.

This was the bad side of our story. [Laughter] And you can see, to the extent that it belongs to us, it's not really very bad.

Kissinger: An airline pilot once said: "The bad news is we're lost. The good news is, we're making very good time." [Laughter]

Abdullah: I think you've found the right direction in Afghanistan. [Laughter]

Naim: During all these years of this danger of war, your efforts really have been instrumental in bringing a better understanding among peoples and promoting detente. And we in Afghanistan praise your efforts. Small countries like us pray and hope your efforts in this will be crowned with success.

I am at your disposal if you want clarification of any point.

Kissinger: I appreciate your presentation very much, and it gives me a very rapid and a very good insight into the thinking of Afghanistan. Let me make a few observations about our views, and I may ask a few questions about your relations with Pakistan.

First of all, the United States interest in Afghanistan is its independence and sovereignty. We have no interest in any dominant or exclusive or unique position. I say this to indicate we consider it absolutely natural that you have good relations with your northern neighbor. For that matter, we have good relations with your northern neighbor. For the leaders of Afghanistan this is an unavoidable and necessary policy.

We also understand why you would want some American presence here, and we are willing to cooperate with this. And I also agree my visit here can perform a useful role in this respect.

So the basic orientation of the policy of Afghanistan we understand.

We know if Afghanistan is part of a nonaligned grouping, the only point I have to make about this is that soon the nonaligned will become

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the largest single bloc in the world. And those of us who are not part of it will soon begin agitating against the danger of bloc politics. [Laughter] And our only concern is it shouldn't be carried to the point where no matter what happens, bloc votes as a unit, because then it is almost impossible to conduct a constructive foreign policy.

But Afghanistan has not been particularly bothersome in this respect, and I say this to every nonaligned leader. So you can bear in mind that we don't welcome the nonaligned to vote against every American position. Although I say this isn't directed at Afghanistan.

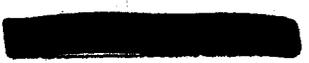
To return to the American presence: We are in principle prepared to maintain this.

On the particular project, let me say two things: I don't want to pretend I know about every project we have in Afghanistan or that has been put before us. I have some general knowledge about the Hellmund Valley project. I think the best way to deal with this is to send some senior official from our AID agency out here, to whom you can make specific requests. And our basic attitude is sympathetic. Within the next few weeks. And then you can develop together with our Ambassador and him some specific projects. We have some Congressional problems but our basic attitude is sympathetic. We will try to keep the bureaucracy to a minimum, but I can't promise anything, because we have many frustrated missionaries who can't resist reforming everyone. As far as we can do it from my office, we'll try to keep the paper work to a minimum. Ted, can you try?

Eliot: I will try.

Kissinger: I have to tell the former Executive Secretary of the Department that I'm in awe of the system I found there. [Laughter]. The other day, someone wanted me to make a phone call to a Senator and sent me a memo -- which had been endorsed by eight different bureaus in the Department of State. Since my colleagues thought my intelligence has its limits, they called the Senator beforehand and told him what I was going to say. [Laughter]. When I called attention to this, they removed the endorsements from the memo. But I'm sure they haven't changed the system. [Laughter]. You might learn something in bureaucracy from us.

The other day I met a Senator at a dinner party who was getting nervous. Four different offices at the State Department had told him I was going to



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call him, and I hadn't called him yet. So he wondered what he'd done wrong. [Laughter]. In fact I had no intention to call him.

The reason I tell you is, when the paperwork gets excessive remember what I have to suffer. It's not directed against Afghanistan. Seriously, we want to be helpful to you within our means and in as helpful a way as possible.

Naim: I'm very grateful for what you just said. If the bureaucracy is such a degree in advanced country, imagine it in a developing country.

Kissinger: You're hopeful; I imagine you do it on the basis of more personal decision.

I gave a lunch for the African Ambassadors at the UN, and they had a spokesman for the Organization of African Unity, a very attractive girl, who was not selected for her brains. [Laughter]. My colleagues had drafted a toast for me, despite the fact I have never in my year as Secretary of State given a toast that was drafted for me. They gave it to her before they gave it to me. So she prepared an eloquent reply. Of course in my toast I said nothing that had been prepared. And since she didn't have a very quick mind, she read her toast, which was written several days before, praising me for things I never said. [Laughter]

Now, with respect to foreign policy....

Naim: In connection with quicker decision, personal decision, I want to tell you that in a few short years we have embarked on planning for economic and social development, which we thought would lead in a few years to a democratic set-up. In spite of the fact that the Afghani way of life is a democratic way of life and our people are living their daily lives in a democratic set-up, our intelligentsia did not understand well -- our responsible people did not react responsibly.

Kissinger: Does Your Excellency speak English, so he gets a chance to think about his answer while it's being translated? [Laughter] It's an unfair advantage. [Laughter]

Naim: [In English] I have a hearing defect and I can't understand so well.

The aim of the present Afghanistan Government, and the wish, is to re-establish democracy in a way that is appropriate and suitable for the Afghani people. We don't see a national life for people except that they

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participate with the government and in the national life. Taking into consideration the knowledge and maturity of our people, we should be very careful in the future in drawing up our laws. For example, our friend Parkistan, which has established a so-called democratic constitution, saw fit to draw laws to curtail the right of the parties to function democratically. Because of that, Afghanistan has to be very careful. When a constitution is drawn up, it should be consistent with the understanding and maturity of the people. And this embryo would be expanded step by step in accordance with prevailing circumstances.

As you said, sir, present conditions may give the opportunity for people to take personal decisions, but we are not satisfied with the existence and prolongation of the present set-up.

Kissinger: That is very interesting, and we'll be watching with great interest.

On your foreign policy points, I have already commented on your relations with your northern neighbor. And we think that is appropriate, and we have no concern. After all, you have some record in maintaining your independence. I don't think from my reading of Afghanistan's history that you've specialized in submission. And therefore we consider it a natural policy.

With respect to the People's Republic of China, as you know, we have good relations with both China and the Soviet Union. Incidentally, when you visit China you'll find they don't speak of your northern neighbor in the same friendly terms as you do. [Laughter] But that is their problem, and we don't get involved in that dispute.

We welcome if you improve your relations with the People's Republic of China, but, again, it's your affair. They were very concerned when your Chief of State came into office, because they expressed this to us. They thought you would conduct an extension of Soviet policy. The fact that they invited you must indicate their minds are somewhat at ease on this.

Incidentally, that is true of Iran too. The Shah was in Washington when, or shortly after, it happened. There were questions on his mind.

With India, we really have no comment.

Now with respect to Pakistan. I'm not absolutely clear what you want from Pakistan. I think a territorial change is impossible, at least without war.



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In terms of negotiations, if the United States can do something to be of some assistance, we'll be glad to consider it. We strongly favor a peaceful solution of the dispute. But I frankly am not absolutely sure what it is you want them to do.

Naim: From what I just mentioned a few minutes ago, I think the situation is quite clear. There is no territorial claim whatsoever. Afghanistan could never be considered an aggressor on Pakistan. We just want Pakistan not to create hatred among its own various peoples, not to use force against its own various peoples constituting Pakistan, and to keep its own house peaceful.

Kissinger: Do you want to negotiate this with them, or should they just do it unilaterally?

Naim: We want the Pakistanis to not create hatred among its people, so not to see a repetition of 1971. If the process goes on, it is inevitable this would create the fact of adverse sentiments among the people.

It would create real emotion. Our people can't remain indifferent if force and pressure... If pressure and force are used by Pakistan against the people, it would create an emotional reaction among our people to which the Afghanistan Government couldn't remain indifferent. The Pakistanis always accuse us of interfering in their internal affairs. But I can tell you here, we have never done it and have no intention to. But we have documents, proof, that twice they interfered in our internal affairs. They are counterfeiting millions of Afghanis, our national currency, and distributing them here. This is immoral and inconsistent with international relations.

So I hope you will trust what we have said.

Kissinger: If you can ever think of any specific thing we can do to be helpful, we'll be glad to consider it. We told the Pakistanis yesterday to exercise restraint. And of course any military or paramilitary actions across the border would be an element of tension in the area. We have a long tradition of friendship with Pakistan and therefore we would like to see its integrity maintained. But as His Excellency said, this is not the problem. As far as humane treatment of the population is concerned, we generally favor that.

So I think the best way to leave it is, if the Afghanistan side ever has a suggestion or idea they'd like us to take up, we would be glad to explore it.

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Naim: We want Pakistan to provide equal opportunity for all its people and to secure equal rights in accordance with its own constitution. If they succeed in doing this, there will be no problem with us.

Kissinger: Unless you assume that the Pushtuns, given their normal rights, would be running Pakistan. [Laughter]

Naim: I didn't mean that. If Pakistan succeeds in solving this problem and secures the rights of Pushtunistan and Baluchistan within a reasonable and satisfactory manner, there will be no problems, and we can foresee good relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Kissinger: I agree, it is a very natural relationship. Could you give our Ambassador some suggestions about what you see as a normal relationship?

Eliot: Some specific ideas, and with respect to which Baluchis and which Pushtuns.

Naim: Whatever the present Constitution of Pakistan says, which is not being implemented. It's a matter of its own constitution. If they did it, we would have no quarrel.

Ghaus: Just the other day, all the other political parties were outlawed.

Kissinger: I'm very sympathetic to that. It's probably our only solution in America, to outlaw the Democratic Party. If we can't do that, we can start with the press. [Laughter]

Naim: We're running out of time, so once again I want to thank you and welcome you to Afghanistan, and thank you for what you have said.

Kissinger: Thank you again for the warm welcome. I am confident it will be the beginning of warm relations.

[Everyone gets up to leave. There is a delay while the security people make rapid arrangements for a brief sightseeing tour of the city, at the Secretary's request.]

Abdullah: I hope what we said is very well understood now.

Kissinger: In principle, yes, but in practice... [Laughter]

Abdullah: That's for you.

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Kissinger: I will talk to the Pakistanis.

Naim: We would in principle be willing to meet.

Kissinger: You would be prepared to do this? Where would you meet?

Abdullah: The Pakistani are very tricky people. And we would be prepared to meet, but without preconditions.

Kissinger: In the area?

Naim: Hank Byroade once said Bhutto wanted to meet me. We would be prepared.

Kissinger: Where?

Naim: Anywhere. Once through American good offices I met with Ayub. He said, "We can crush you." So I came back.

Kissinger: That is not helpful.

Abdullah: Mr. Bhutto should face realities.

Naim: They created the situation where they lost Bangladesh.

Kissinger: No question.

Naim: They're creating the same conditions now.

Kissinger: Really?

Abdullah: The key to solving the problem is not here but in Islamabad. The ball is theirs.

Kissinger: That's what they told me to tell you -- that it is in Kabul.
[Laughter]

Naim: It should be something real, not fake.

Kissinger: We'll look into it.

[The meeting ends, and the Secretary's party leaves on a brief drive around the city before the meeting with President Daoud.]