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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WBS
Date: OCT 06 2015

29 SEP 1980

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT
SUBJECT: Military Sales to Pakistan

Office of the Secretary of Defense 50 U.S.C. § 552
Chief, RDD, ESD, WBS
Date: 06 OCT 2015 Authority: EO 13526
Declassify: X Deny in Full: _____
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Reason: _____
MDR: 15 -M- 1689

As your meeting with President Zia-ul-Haq approaches, I believe it very important to our strategy interest in SW Asia that we keep open the door for renewal of close security ties with Pakistan. My concern is heightened by the Iraq/Iran conflict and the threats to stability which it poses.

We can and have indicated a willingness to sell to Pakistan certain military equipment for cash including M60 tanks. We have transferred two old destroyers, and have pursued the defense industrial cooperation program initiated last February. However, we cannot give them the security guarantees they desire and it is probably infeasible at this time to persuade Congress to remove the legislative barriers to grant aid and FMS credits, even if we renewed our earlier decision to turn a blind eye to their nuclear weapons program. In the absence of sales, we have had practically no strategic or military-to-military dialogue with them.

There is, nevertheless, one move we could make which would be taken by Pakistan as very positive evidence of our continued concern for Pak security and would thereby reinforce other cooperative programs. That move would be to agree to their long standing request that we sell advanced aircraft and, specifically, to offer to sell the F-16 for delivery in 1984 or 1985. Pakistan has also shown an interest in F-15.

In light of the threat to Pakistan, posed by the Soviets in Afghanistan, a good case can be made for Pakistan's acquisition of either the F-15 or F-16. Pakistan's air defense problem has been accentuated by the arrival of high performance Soviet Air Force aircraft in Afghanistan, as well as continued modernization of India's Air Force through recent receipt of Jaguars and reported plans to acquire the MIG-23 and MIG-25. With its strength comprised of obsolescent Chinese built F-6 (MIG-19) and a modest number of Mirage III and V aircraft, and with very limited surface-to-air missile capability, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) is no match for its neighbors, and is practically unable to maintain sovereignty over its own air space.

24 Sep 80

-82-0217, box 17, Pullsman (17 Apr - Dec) 1980
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Almost two years ago, we advised Pakistan that we were prepared to sell F-5E aircraft on a one-for-one basis to replace the PAF's Korean War-vintage F-86s. Subsequently, Pakistan has been cleared to receive presentations on the F-X but they have expressed no interest. Surplus F-4Es are unavailable and would be unsuitable against the threat. The F-16, which you considered but deferred last January, may be a practical option. Though the F-15 might be even more appropriate for the defense task Pakistan faces, it costs far more than the Arabs seem willing to furnish; I do not recommend it.

Expression of our willingness to sell advanced aircraft would have great symbolic value. It would help to dispel the Pakistani impression that we accord them second class status. Pakistan would still be required to come up with the cash for the transaction and the cost involved -- over \$1 billion for 40 F-16s. Normal production leadtime would preclude delivery of the F-16 or F-15 until mid-1984.

I recognize that India would react negatively to US agreement to sell Pakistan the F-16. However, we have also resumed selling arms to India and could demonstrate our South Asian evenhandedness by offering to release the F-16 to New Delhi as well, even though it is unlikely the Indians would be interested.

I urge you to consider offering to sell the F-16 to Pakistan.

Howard Bremer

cc: The Secretary of State

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