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OCI No. 2159/71

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
24 November 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

India-Pakistan Situation Report
(As of 1500 EST)

1. The Indian Government has confirmed that Indian troops and armor have taken part in military action in East Pakistan. Speaking to Parliament today, Prime Minister Gandhi told enthusiastic legislators that Indian troops had destroyed 13 Pakistani tanks during heavy fighting near the border town of Boyra on Sunday. Later government spokesmen announced that Indian tanks had crossed the border in that engagement--in "defensive" action--and that such an action may happen again.

2. The general tone of Mrs. Gandhi's statement was low key, but she left little doubt that India would continue to give support to the Mukti Bahini, whom she described as having "freed large parts of their homeland." She said that India would not declare a state of emergency, unless compelled to by further "aggressive" action by Pakistan.

3. Mrs. Gandhi's comments indicate that India is prepared to see the guerrillas through to victory. Her statements appear designed to force President Yahya Khan to decide whether to win a reprieve from military pressure by some persuasive move to meet rebel demands, or risk the strong probability of involving his country in full-scale war.

4. In the meantime, the Pakistanis continue to dramatize the seriousness of their position. Today a government spokesman stated that his country would welcome any big-power initiative to bring



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about a cessation of the "Indian aggression." The Pakistanis have announced a general mobilization

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6. The situation along the East Pakistani border remains murky but fighting is apparently continuing. The Indians have banned civil air flights within 10 miles of the border and at night the runway at the Calcutta airport is illuminated only when a plane is landing. Dependents of US residents are being advised to depart Dacca in East Pakistan as soon as commercial flights are available and US government dependents and other non-essential personnel are to be moved from Lahore in West Pakistan to the capital at Islamabad.

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7. In East Pakistan the UN is evacuating some of its personnel. Because of Mukti Bahini attacks on three UN-marked ships bringing food grains into East Bengal, the UN is asking other relief ships destined for East Pakistan to change course for Singapore.

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8. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] intermittent artillery and mortar fire and the shelling of the Jessore airport. An invading force, not further identified, with vehicles behind its front lines, has reportedly taken a nearby village and halted.

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9. President Yahya has been trying to work out the transfer of power to a civilian government, probably in early January, with Yahya probably retaining the presidency, Nurul Amin, leader of the United Coalition Party (UCP) becoming prime minister, and Z. A. Bhutto, head of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), serving as deputy prime minister. Amin has long been prominent in East Pakistani politics, and won his national assembly seat last year despite a landslide vote in East Pakistan for advocates of provincial autonomy. The UCP--a coalition of moderate and rightist parties--however, draws the bulk of its strength from men recently declared elected unopposed in army managed by-elections. Leftist ex-foreign minister Bhutto's somewhat smaller PPP has almost no support in East Pakistan, but won a majority of the West Pakistani seats a year ago.

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