November 17, 1978
'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in Pakistan,'
US Embassy India Cable 17682

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"'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in Pakistan,' US Embassy India Cable 17682,"
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Summary:
U.S. Ambassador to India reports that the Indian government is aware that the U.S. believes Pakistan seeks nuclear weapons capability. An Indian diplomat informed him that Pakistan was two to three years away from nuclear capability.

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THE GOI HAS KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT WE BELIEVE PAKISTAN 0 BE RENT ON ACHIEVING A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY. THAT WE HAVE SUCH SUSPICIONS WAS CONFIRMED TO THEM DURING MYE'S RECENT VISIT HERE; HOWEVER, SO-FAR AS I KNOW WE HAVE OFFERED THE INDANS FACTUAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT OUR VIEW.

IN ANY CASE THE GOI HAS ITS OWN GROUNDS FOR THE SAME BELIEF, UNTIL RECENTLY IN TALKS WITH US GOI LEADERS HAD INDICATED LITTLE CONCERN OVER PAKISTAN'S INTENTIONS AND ABILITIES IN NUCLEAR-WEAPONS AREA. LAST WEEK HOWEVER, V. HANKAR VOLUNTED TO ME THAT GOI NOW BELIEVES THAT PAKISTAN IS WITHIN TWO OR THREE YEARS OF THE AFOREMENTIONED TARGET AND HAS HELP FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY WHOSE IDENTITY HE WOULD NOT AULGE. WHEN I SAID THIS TIMETABLE DID NOT SQUARE AT ALL WITH OUR CALCULATIONS, SHAKAR SAID HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN HIS INFORMATION.

MADE AT MY REQUEST, TO FIND OUT SOMETHING ABOUT WHERE HANKAR GOT HIS INFORMATION HAS DRAWN A BLANK. MY PERSONAL HUNCH IS THAT SHANKAR IS ON LESS FIRM GROUND SECRET
Here then he wanted me to believe. This is not to say that he was consciously dissembling, but that like other Indians he tends to accept uncritically the worst possibilities where Pakistan is concerned.

3. Department please repeat this to Islamabad and others as desired.

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