

**November 17, 1978**

**'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in  
Pakistan,' US Embassy India Cable 17682**

**Citation:**

"'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in Pakistan,' US Embassy India Cable 17682", November 17, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Mandatory Declassification Review request. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #3. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112907>

**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.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

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TELEGRAM

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.D. 11652: GDS  
AGS: MNUC, TECH, PEPR, JN, PK, US  
SUBJECT: ACHIEVING USG NONPROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES IN PAKISTAN

EFS: A. ISLAMABAD 11119; B. STATE 290757

. THE GOI HAS KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT WE BELIEVE PAKISTAN  
D BE BENT ON ACHIEVING A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY. THAT WE  
AVE SUCH SUSPICIONS HAS CONFIRMED TO THEM DURING NYE'S RECENT  
VISIT HERE; HOWEVER, SO FAR AS I KNOW WE HAVE OFFERED THE INDIANS  
D 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  
CAPABILITIES IN NUCLEAR-WEAPONS AREA. LAST WEEK HOWEVER, V.  
SHANKAR VOLUNTEERED 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  
DIVULGE. WHEN I SAID THAT THIS TIMETABLE DID NOT SQUARE  
AT ALL WITH OUR CALCULATIONS, SHANKAR SAID HE HAD  
CONFIDENCE IN HIS INFORMATION.

MADE AT MY REQUEST, TO FIND OUT SOMETHING ABOUT WHERE  
SHANKAR GOT HIS INFORMATION HAS DRAWN A BLANK. MY  
PERSONAL HUNCH IS THAT SHANKAR IS ON LESS FIRM GROUND

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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.  
GOHEEN

EOT

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