

KISSINGER'S DIPLOMACY DURING THE 1971 INDO-PAK WAR

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DECLARATION


I declare that the dissertation entitled "**Kissinger's Diplomacy during the 1971 Indo-Pak War**" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.


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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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*To Harika and Deepthi,
for there is no better way to explain my prolonged disappearances*

PREFACE

Being a student of History and International Relations, I had always nurtured a curiosity and hunger to unearth the hidden. This research is a result of such determination to bring to limelight the contributions of the great minds and advisors that are buried under the glories of their patrons and leaders. The 1971 Indo-Pak War is one such case in contemporary history where US President Richard Nixon is credited and criticised at equal measures, while the role of Henry Kissinger in foreign policy formulation has become largely evident only after the declassification of American documents. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore the influence of secret elitism in American democratic policymaking process.

This research could not have been possible but for the resolute support and enthusiasm of my supervisor Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra. He has always been open to embrace my ideas and willing to add his professional and personal experiences to enrich them and protect me from committing errors. His classes on American national security and foreign policy were truly nourishing for a strategic and defence enthusiast like me. Beyond pure research abilities, my time under Mahapatra Sir's supervision was a practical learning experience in the lessons on time management, multi-tasking, work integrity and humility. With a mentor like him even a mountain trek can seem like a nice walk. I thank him for every lesson he has taught me and wish to treasure them throughout my life.

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A popular saying is, “learn from the mistake of others. You can’t live long enough to make them all yourself.” I was fortunate to exploit the experiences of two friends, Nidhi and Pankaj, in resolving several issues I encountered during my research. I am extremely grateful for their patience in dealing with my constant needling with doubts and queries and also reading my work and providing valuable feedback. My discussions with Cleo Pascal were particularly central in building up of my ideas—special thanks to her. I thank Vignesh for gifting me the book *The Blood Telegram*, which was the basis for deciding the case study.

Research is a tedious job and can get monotonous and discouraging at times. I was saved from such terrors, thanks to the happy and wonderful times I spent with Mondip, Thadoi, Asha, Pawan, Shailesh and Navneet—I love you all. My stay on campus was made easy and work friendly due to the congeniality of my roommates Vijay and Wangam.

No amount of words can capture my gratitude towards my family and friends who have stood by me for years and supported my academic interests. My absence from home and failure to fulfil my filial duties must have caused trouble to my parents who have been kind enough to stomach all such discomforts and encouraged me to pursue my interests. I owe a great deal of apology and gratitude to them. I also thank Deepthi for taking up the domestic responsibilities that I had left unattended. I must acknowledge the hospitality and affection extended by my cousins Girish and Poonam; and my niblings Rishab and Harika. I thank them for hosting me in Delhi and coming to my rescue when I was longing for a good meal. My final words of gratitude include Prashanth, Suraj, Mohan and Kaushal, friends from Bengaluru, who missed a teammate but sustained an unflinching support of his interests.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Background

Tom Clancy, an American novelist, quoted that “the control of information is something the elite always does, particularly in a despotic form of government. Information, knowledge, is power. If you can control information, you can control people.” Information as a source of knowledge and power is fuelled by several other thinkers like Kofi Annan, Francis Bacon, Matt Bevin and Tavis Smiley, at various times in history. It is, therefore, a powerful assumption and fundamental criteria that possession of information grants one an elite position. In the modern times information has a greater role to play in obtaining public legitimacy for the actions of the political leadership, especially in democratic nations. Although speculative, Henry Alfred Kissinger’s, former National Security Advisor and Secretary of State, act of conditioning declassification his telephone conversations (telcons) subject to his permission be recognised as an attempt at acquiring of legitimacy through information control. Kissinger has laid a condition that his telcons be declassified only four years after his death. It is, therefore, no surprise that Noam Chomsky asserts that “propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state.”

One of the ways information gets transferred to future generations is through documentations and writings by historians and scholars. A common antecedent to arguments related to political and military history is that history is written by the victors. When historians take to analyse historical events even their judgements are dependent on the analyses of personalities from the luxury of time and ideological biases. It is for this reason that Nazi military leader Herman Goring had stated that, “...we will go down in history as the world’s greatest statesmen or its worst villains” (Simpson, 2013). As historians and researchers have begun to get exposed to a wealth of information and analytical tools, individuals and their actions have been subject of criticisms at various levels. Hence, dignity, glory and eminence of individuals have, by and large, become the gift of the writer. It is true of ambitious conquerors of the world like Alexander, Napoleon and Hitler, as well as revolutionary ideals like Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Friedrich Hayek and Milton Freedman. Whatever be the

judgment of history, or its actors, there is no gainsaying that their clout in creating, controlling and managing events, national and international, are indeed exemplary.

In the contemporary world history, the bipolar world gave birth to several great leaders on both the sides of the iron curtain, who sought to control the world and international events that would shape their reputation. Drawing parallels to sociology and societal structures, these personalities in international relations can be termed as 'elites'. Elites are a set of individuals who wield significant influence on decision making in any organisation, system or society. They could take the form of business elite, tribal elite or political elite and their numbers can vary from one individual wielding enormous power and influence to a small group. The main features of the elite theory remain that they are 'powerful' and constitute a 'minority'.

Democratic societies, by virtue of their power "of the people, by the people and for the people", objectively tend to have a disinclination towards elite politics. The First World War that brought great pain and destruction to the world was conceived as a result of elite control of decision making—a concept that President Woodrow Wilson sought to undo by making international diplomacy a public affair. President Wilson's idea of democratic oversight and introduction of control mechanisms against select-elite control of decision making is a resonance of the American way of political thought.

One of the admirations of the United States (US) constitution is the principle of checks and balances to ensure distribution of power among the legislative, executive and the judiciary branches of government. The respective elites in the legislative, executive and the judiciary work independent of each other to ensure that power is not abused disproportionately by any one of them. However, in practice the President of the United States appears capable of manoeuvring through the obstacles presented by the constitution and emerge as the most powerful decision maker. This factor was first observed by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. (1973) and came to be known as "imperial presidency". Examples of imperial presidency are plenty. As the supreme commander-in-chief President Truman declared intervention in Korea, and future presidents followed suit with invasion of Vietnam, Grenada, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. A cursory examination of these incidents support the assumption that within the American political elite-- inclusive of the executive, judiciary and the

legislative—the executive manages to grab a disproportionate share of power, in the form of imperial presidency. This smaller section of the political elite can be, therefore, viewed as “elite within the elite” that wields greater power and influence. In democracies, constant efforts are, however, made to check such actions. But, as history reveals circumstances make way for unilateral and exclusive action.

Beyond imperial presidency, there lies another proposition for elite control of decision making. In some cases the president or the supreme leader is merely the accredited due to his/her hierarchical position, while the actual force acting behind the supremo may be an advisor, prime minister or even an associate. Consider the historical case of Kautilya/Chanakya, the ancient Indian strategic thinker and Prime Minister in the court of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Association with Kautilya, as argued by historians, was responsible for Chandragupta’s ascendance to the throne and also, subsequent administrative decisions (Goswami, 2013). Scholarship refers to Kautilya as the “king maker” (Sharma and Sharma, 2001: 52). The hierarchical positioning of the ruler and the dearth of source material on the intricacies of decision making have forced historians to focus their studies on the rulers; thereby leaving such hidden characters in the dark. For the benefit of objectivity in comprehension of the decision making processes and procedures, it is paramount that studies on decision making diversify to include the ruler’s coterie. In the era of liberal democracies, the existence of such obscure characters has further complicated the analysis of decision making. These individuals, who play an advisory role in the administration, have actionable implications on the leadership. A combination of virtues such as domain knowledge, professional skills, and persuasive tactics, among many, provide these individuals a significant impact ratio on domestic and foreign policy making.

In this research, the focus is on Henry Kissinger, the National Security Advisor (NSA) under President Richard Nixon, during the year 1971-- is a landmark year in the contemporary history of South Asia as well as the Cold War history. The year witnessed the birth of a new nation in South Asia, called Bangladesh, and the year earmarked the rapprochement of Sino-US relations at the height of the Cold War. For decades after the Indo-Pak War that created Bangladesh, not much was known about the American role in it, barring a few notable media leaks and reports. However, the declassification of American documents opened avenues to explore the stellar role US played in this landmark episode. The documents are not only a treasure trove on

American complicity in the events, but also a reflector of the dominant role Kissinger played in controlling decision making. This is a sterling case that raises suspicions about the existence of the hidden elite. Historians have recognised Kissinger's genius as a diplomat and his role in cases like the Paris Peace Accords, Shuttle Diplomacy in the Middle-East and US-China rapprochement. But, an examination of Kissinger's role in the 1971 Indo-Pak war provides a case to test operational facilitators that allow the hidden elite to function in a liberal democracy.

Crisis in East Pakistan and the 1971 Indo-Pak War

The month of August in 1947, marked the end of colonial British rule over the Indian subcontinent. Along with the hard fought freedom, came the fragmentation of the landmass into two independent countries—India and Pakistan. The two nation theory borne out of demands for a separate homeland for Indian Muslims resulted in the creation of Pakistan. Pakistan of 1947 comprised of two parts, East and West Pakistan, divided by the Indian landmass. In the years that followed, West Pakistan grew increasingly dominant in politics, more evidently as the military came to power. A major attempt at transitioning to a democracy in 1970 by General Agha Mohammed Yahya Khan led to general elections across the country.

In the words of Bose (2012), “a little more than two decades after the departure of the British, our Bengali brethren across the border were once again fighting for freedom. This time their fellow countrymen from the other side of India—West Pakistanis—seemed for some inexplicable reason intent on killing them all.” After Gen Yahya Khan had announced the elections, at the provincial and national levels, in October 1970, he had declared that the newly elected National Assembly would convene to draft a constitution in 120 days. Notwithstanding this agreement, the results of the general elections seemed unacceptable to Yahya that eventually led to the bloodbath of the Bengalis.

Awami League led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman contesting in the Bengali dominated East Pakistan won with an absolute majority, while the runner-up Pakistan People's Party led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto won majority of the seats in West Pakistan, but none in the East. The outcome was the Awami League demanding power on the principle of majoritarian rule, and Bhutto basing his claims to authority on regional

representation (Sisson and Rose, 1991: 3). In the days leading to the civil war in East Pakistan on 25 March 1971, both parties battled hard to consolidate power and authority. Yahya, beginning to sense a growing sense of infidelity and revolutionary motives among both parties began to consider military solution to the problem. Such transformations in East Pakistan were logical given the growing connivance between Yahya and Bhutto against Mujibur Rahman. The Awami League was also criticised for being pro-Hindu-- a detrimental implication on the Islamic identity of Pakistan (Dixit, 2003:163). Such anxieties among the West Pakistanis and the continuous postponement of the National Assembly led to massive protests across East Pakistan in the beginning of March 1971. Yahya responded to these protests by deploying the military and police forces, and the stage was set for the civil war of 25 March.

By noon, General Tikka Khan, officer in charge of suppressing the Awami League and the people of East Pakistan, had charted out his plan of action. With targets briefed to his troopers, Gen Tikka launched a deadly genocidal campaign. The bloody campaign resulted in one of the world's gravest refugee crises and India had to bear the brunt. The neighbouring Indian states had to withstand the influx of 10 million refugees and the socio-economic problems they brought along. India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, cabinet ministers, secretaries and ambassadors across the world carried out series of diplomatic engagements to garner global attention to the ongoing crisis and the threat it posed to India's national security. Nevertheless, such initiatives were far from fruition. One of the main reasons for this diplomatic effort was the US taking Pakistan's side. US complicity in the killings in East Pakistan are discussed at length in the subsequent chapters, but suffice to note here that it threatened the resistance movement of the Bengalis, forced India to intervene militarily, and led to the total transformation in the South Asian balance of power equation.

The US, under President Nixon and NSA Kissinger, was planning a grand strategy for a peaceful global order that centred on detente with China. Yahya's friendship with Nixon, Pakistan's China connection and membership with the Baghdad Pact, gave her a critical position in US' grand strategy. This new found role could, however, be sustained largely based on US' position and action, vis-à-vis the humanitarian crisis in Pakistan's eastern wing. American wavering opinion beginning from a calculated silence to an overt tilt towards Pakistan pushed India and Pakistan into war during late 1971. A combination of international and domestic factors contributed to India's

decision to adopt a military solution, but the role of American support to Pakistan and Sino-US rapprochement in facilitating this decision cannot be discounted. Declassified documents in the US highlight that the decision to tilt towards Pakistan was not consensual in the US, but limited to the wisdom of Nixon and Kissinger. In particular, the documents help decode the role that Kissinger played in driving these decisions.

With the Awami government in exile in Calcutta, the third war between India and Pakistan was fought from 3 December to 16 December 1971. A comprehensive war plan adopted by New Delhi, under the political leadership of Indira Gandhi and military leadership of Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw, using all elements of state power, gave India a decisive victory that ended the war with a ceasefire agreement on 16 December. Independent East Pakistan was named Bangladesh and India's role in its creation was critical. The works of several scholars, soldiers, intelligence personnel and historians have chronicled the story of India's covert and overt affairs in the creation of Bangladesh from various viewpoints offering diverse perspectives to the monumental period in South Asian history. Indian leaders operating at different areas diplomatically, militarily and politically share the memories of the time as a watershed and proud moment in their careers. India's unilateral ceasefire was accepted and the worn-out Pakistani Army led by General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi surrendered to Indian General Jagjit Singh Aurora at the Dacca racecourse. The jubilant and ecstatic Dacca streets were filled with cries of "*Joi Bangla*" (Bass, 2013:320).

Until the day of the ceasefire, however, the bonhomie between US and Pakistan did not recede. Nixon and Kissinger had made drastic moves desperately to save Pakistan as they bought suspicions of Indian territorial ambitions in West Pakistan based on faulty intelligence analysis. Kissinger's recommendations and the subsequent actions taken by Nixon had a strong impact on global security as the two superpowers were closing in towards a confrontation. It also changed the face of Cold War politics in South Asia that was to remain firmly until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Review of Literature

A serious question haunting scholarly minds in international relations is who controls the international system? Is it the state or the individual? There are studies to show

that a state with all its resources exerts a level of influence over the international system. As seen during the cold war, the US and the erstwhile Soviet Union sought to shape the international system adhering to their ideological leanings by using the resources at their disposal. However, these nations have behaved differently, at different times, and in different circumstances. Although the behaviour of nation states stem from a strict adherence to national interests the means to apply the principles of national interests lie at the liberty of the individual running the state.

W.W. Norton, publisher of the series on 'Essentials of International Relations' provides a theoretical understanding of the role of an individual in international relations. Accordingly, realists appear to hold the individual with little importance since states are not differentiated by the individual or the government but the relative power of the state in the international system. However, liberals and constructivists offer credit to individual influence on foreign policy making. The argument, here, is that personal character of individuals affects foreign policies, although the position of the individual may be either political or private. This individual or a small set of individuals, who seek to control the international system, are termed elites, i.e. political elites, business elites and so on.

Elitism as a theory emerged in sociology which sought to understand societal structures and decision making in the society. Some of the earliest works in this area are that of Pareto (1935), Mosca (1939) and Michels (1915) who collectively are known as classical elite theorists. Classical elitism relied on the inevitability of elite rule as an argument against political liberalism and Marxism. According to them, elites can only be substituted by elites, meaning that a minority will always control the majority (Lopez, 2013). However, counterarguments were that such sort of elite control, although a reality, would be confined only to authoritative governments and not democracies due to the institutional checks in democracies. Coming in the early twentieth century, these classical elite theorists felt no compulsion to test the elite control in democratic structures. As a rebuttal to the argument, later elite theorists, however, argued that democracies are also compatible with elite control of administration. In that democracies can also be rule of a few (Sartori, 1987), but the key point is 'power' is crucial to the elites (Lopez, 2103).

Despite failing to directly address the concept of elite control in democracies, classical elite theorists offer principles to elite theory that can be applied to democracies. Pareto (1935) in his work 'Law of Elite Circulation' characterises the elites into two segments based on the characters attributable to that of a lion and a fox. While the character of the lion is that of force, fox is more of cunningness, skill and persuasion. This is true of elites performing their policy functions. While President Dwight Eisenhower was more willing to use force as an instrument of foreign policy, President Jimmy Carter characterises the fox, in which he relies more on negotiations and skill of persuasion to advance foreign policies. According to Pareto, lions and foxes survive under any type of political structures and their attitudes aren't affected by the form of government. All men wielding power invariably abuse the power to secure personal gains and advantages.

Mosca (1939), in his book 'The Ruling Class', expands on Pareto's characterisation of elites in a society. In analysing the relationship between the ruling class and the subjects of rule, Mosca offers two distinct features that are of particular relevance to this research. Firstly, Mosca rightly argues that the political elite need not necessarily be the highest political authority. It could be someone less known to the public but with access to the highest authority, like the prime minister of a king. In such conditions, decision making can be diffused in the hands of a few not one. The second factor that Mosca points out is, in modern terms can be called, public opinion. Without the support of the masses it would be difficult for the king to rule. This rationalises the existence of a coterie of knowledgeable men to support the king in decision making.

A later scholar on elite theory in politics, Michels (1966) in his book 'Political Parties', propagates the law of oligarchy. His work critiques Pareto on the concept of elite circulation and Mosca's emphasis on mass opinion. According to Michels, elites are not replaced by elites but, in fact, old elites try and accommodate the new elites. What is of greater relevance to the research in hand is that the masses always look for guidance while the leaders are power hungry. Therefore, once in power, leaders abuse power and position to make personal gains and this is what he terms as the 'second stage' where the leader becomes stable and irremovable. Michels credits these actions to the personal ideas and qualities of the leaders and the psychology of the organisation they serve.

In line with arguments placed by the elite theorists, the stage seems set to evaluate the power and influence wielded by a personality like Henry Kissinger on American foreign policy and the larger international politics. Several authors across the world have written passionately on the personality and achievements of Henry Kissinger. He has been a subject of admiration as well as criticism to scholars of history and politics. In doing so, there have been certain unique features that define a moment of transition in American foreign policy during the Nixon and Ford years. These transitions, although were a result of the President's decision making, have been, by and large, attributed to the ideas and principles of one man, Henry Kissinger. He is known to have been the driver of American foreign policy during the years of Nixon and Ford with his ideas of *realpolitik*. The first important question to answer is: What was Kissinger's style of diplomacy?

The conventional answer equates Kissinger with realism, a philosophy characterized by the cool assessment of foreign policy in the stark light of national self interest, or, in journalist Anthony Lewis' phrase, "an obsession with order and power at the expense of humanity." Writing in 1983, Kissinger's former Harvard colleague Stanley Hoffmann depicted Kissinger as a Machiavellian "who believe[s] that the preservation of the state . . . requires both ruthlessness and deceit at the expense of foreign and internal adversaries." Many writers have simply assumed that Kissinger modelled himself on his supposed heroes, the Austrian statesman Klemens von Metternich and the Prussian leader Otto von Bismarck, the classical European *realpolitik*.

Scholars have made an attempt to dwell into Kissinger's early history to determine impact on decision making (Kamath, 1974) (Gill, 1974) (Kalb, 1974). His early childhood in war torn Germany was a point of focus for studies to determine his behaviour. However, one could draw no parallels between his childhood and years in the white house. His diplomatic interactions with Germany, Middle-East, Israel especially, showed that he was a man of professional ethics and did not allow personal experiences affect professional life. The true answer actually lay in his days as a student of History in Harvard. His Doctoral Thesis examined the personalities of Metternich, Castlereagh and Bismarck. These legends would have an impact so strong that Kissinger's *realpolitik* was based primarily on their realist principles.

Robert D. Schulzinger (1989) in his book 'Henry Kissinger: Doctor of Diplomacy' asserts that Kissinger was a Kantian, not a Wilsonian, who believed that the duty of the statesman is to choose between the evils. Kissinger's great gift as a statesman, had a great talent for cutting through reams of information to find the operational essence within. He could see the real issues in time, moving backward or forward, and envision the next sequence of bureaucratic and diplomatic moves. It was by harnessing this ability that Kissinger was able to turn abstract wishes into concrete policies. This was, for example, his singular achievement in the opening to China. He found a halting and ineffectual American policy driven mainly by shifts in Chinese politics. Urged on by Nixon's geopolitical musings, Kissinger crafted channels and opportunities for movement. This is in line with the arguments of elite theorists as elucidated earlier.

According to Philip Zelikow (1999), in his work 'The Statesman in Winter: Kissinger on the Ford Years', Nixon had great strategic insight but given to constant musing, throws off sparks of brilliance and foolishness in almost equal measure. It was thus left to Kissinger and H. R. Haldeman, the priests at the oracle, to interpret the rumblings and judge what should actually be done. Kissinger and Nixon knew instead that ideals were worthy but impractical and "foreign policy was a continuing process with no terminal point" in which they would be guided by "a concept of the national interest," and a "realistic assessment of their own and others' interests."

From this vantage point, Kissinger developed certain qualities that the leader had to possess to achieve statesmanship. According to Kissinger (1979) himself, as illustrated in his book 'White House Years' the statesman must be cunning and patient. The statesman must be manipulative and be able to play the game in utmost secrecy and not be afraid to use force if need be. Eventually, when Kissinger became presidential adviser, he acquired a reputation of being a master in secrecy and surprise in diplomacy. Not surprisingly, he is compared to Metternich by many writers around the world.

It is fathomable by the works of Smith (1986) 'Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger', Kamath(1974) 'The Incomplete Diplomat', and Gill (1974) 'Kissinger: The Miracle Man' that Kissinger's PhD and time at Harvard also taught him other lessons that would become integral to his work behaviour. His mistrust of colleagues

at Harvard, would enable him to develop the same in the White House. And, his work on Metternich added to this belief. So, Kissinger gave importance to secrecy and elitist approach to diplomacy while loathing bureaucracy. Coincidentally, this was also shared by Nixon. Hence, Kissinger went on to be the driver of American Foreign Policy and the face of several diplomatic overtures like the Shuttle Diplomacy, China Policy, SALT I and II and the Paris Peace Talks.

Kissinger's realism is what led him to a statesman's status. He did not allow the past to impact the future. He dealt with the Soviet diplomat just like he did with his Israeli counterpart. He was a man of mystery and irritation to many in the administration. Nevertheless, he was the President's go to man! His primary focus was on final results and therefore, morals had little place in foreign policy. If his efforts to conclude the Vietnam War are seen as a humanitarian effort, his actions in East-Pakistan speak otherwise. In a democratic society like the United States, he managed to maintain utmost secrecy from the press, bureaucracy and the public, all in the name of national interest.

After several decades, Kissinger still remains a focus of historians and policy makers. With respect to this research, the 1971 Indo-Pak War, a precursor to the historic opening of Sino-US relationship, newly declassified documents provide room for further probing into Kissinger's authority and command on American foreign policy. The levels of secrecy and persuasion around the event show the importance of the role of the individual in determining the outcomes of international politics. Henry Kissinger, in this regard, stands out as an important "individual" who wielded power and influence in international politics to get what was envisaged as crucial in terms of national interest.

Given the embryonic nature of the declassified information, there is a dearth of literature on the Bangladesh crisis inclusive of the new information. Much of the available literatures on the crisis are memoirs and accounts of military personnel, bureaucratic officials and politicians of the era. While these literatures can certainly provide insightful details, two books published in the recent years encompass much of the new information and provide fresh perspectives to the events of the day. One of them is Bass (2013) 'The Blood Telegram: 1971 War'. The book is a rich historiography of all events transpiring in the US, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and

across other influential countries in the world. With regard to Kissinger's participation in the liberation of Bangladesh, the book reveals certain shocking as well as disturbing details on individual political ambitions as well as the spooky nature of secret diplomacy. To cite one such example here: Kissinger advised President Nixon to persuade Jordan and Iran to illegally supply arms and aircrafts to Pakistan while rest of the US administration and bureaucracy, including US diplomats posted in those countries wouldn't be privy to the information.

Another book of the recent times is Raghavan (2013) '1971: A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh'. Visiting the national archives of several countries across the world, Raghavan not only provides a wealth of information but also analyses as a security expert. With relevance to American decision making, he portrays a distinction in opinions in the American bureaucracy and the White House. While speeches and letters by ambassadors and secretaries were reflections of the happenings in Pakistan, the interpretation of the events were largely left to Henry Kissinger.

Kissinger capitalised primarily on the instrument of 'secrecy' in his diplomatic overtures both within the white house, US administration and with international leaders. Gibbs (1995) in his work 'Secrecy and International Relations', deduces three reasons for secrecy: internal threat, external threat and bureaucratic politics. These titles, although, are self explanatory need to be tested on case studies to further understand its impact on decision making. Kissinger's secret diplomacy during the 1971 Indo-Pak War leading to the landmark China policy is a case in point.

Rationale and Scope of the Study

Based on the above survey of literature some of the inferences are that a small group of elite are capable of controlling political decision making owing to their beliefs and ideas. Kissinger was no exception to this rule. Much of the foreign policy making under President Nixon ensued under the auspices of Kissinger's persuasion and approval. Then the question that arises is what is new in this particular case study? The answer to this question does not lie in just addressing the newly declassified documents of the United States, but to see what the new information has to offer for a research on decision making and international relations.

States and elites have been topics of study previously. However most of the studies have concentrated on the king or the president. Not all cases are exemplars of the king's decision making. Particularly, Kissinger's case is unique, in which many of the foreign policies of the time was his brainchild, though the consent of the president was central to execution of those policies. In this regard, the case study has worked to assess the individual control over international events as well as domestic politics. Kissinger's control over decision making was so in-depth that it clearly qualifies the proposition 'elite within elite', a concept that is yet to be underscored in academia. In doing so, the research has investigated the role of an individual in control of international politics as opposed to the state and the international system.

The extended contribution that this research has made to the studies in elite theory is the concept of 'secrecy'. Adhering to strict levels of secrecy Kissinger managed to make negotiations with the president, global leaders and key individuals within the administration to establish a worldview that he possessed. This way Kissinger could manoeuvre through the levels of decision making in the US and place primacy to his ideas and policies. The study of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, offers a wealth of instances where decision making was compartmentalised, and only Kissinger and Nixon had disproportionate access and control over information and decision making.

Lastly, in addition to contributions to the two concepts in decision making international relations, the research also seeks to make a minor contribution to intelligence studies, a subset of politics and international relations. The case study offers a perfect example of politicisation of intelligence, in which every piece of intelligence gathered by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other intelligence services were subject to analysis and interpretations by Kissinger. The president was receptive of intelligence analysis vetted by Kissinger, thereby, providing further room for Kissinger's ideas to prevail. In this period of American history, strategic intelligence in the US underwent a revolutionary change and much of it to the credit of one man, Henry Kissinger. This stands as an exemplary case for, in the intelligence parlance, 'politicisation of intelligence'.

Research Question and Hypothesis

The focus of this research was to examine if a liberal democracy, with all systems in place to ensure decentralisation of power, can still allow the emergence and

functioning of an individual—other than the political leadership—with disproportionate ratio of authority. In so doing, the central research question was—can secret elite exist within a system of checks and balances in liberal democracies? In order to address this question the research undertook the case study of the US, a liberal democracy with varied levels of checks and balances to safeguard against unequal concentration of power in decision making; Henry Kissinger, an individual who seemed qualified to represent the secret elite as defined in the next chapter; and, the 1971 Indo-Pak War, which is a ready case with a wealth of information on Kissinger’s activities that arose a plausible suspicion on the existence of a secret elite.

In addition to exploring the question of the existence of a secret elite, or not, in liberal democracies, the research had a protracted aim of deducing the operational details that allow their sustenance. Consequentially, the theory chapter establishes three factors—ideas, position and secrecy—as inevitable ingredients for survival. This research not just offers an understanding of secret elitism through the study of Kissinger’s interactions with the sub-continental crisis of 1971, but also explores the operational facilities that allowed his emergence as a secret elite. Therefore, in extension to the central research question the peripheral question that the research seeks to answer is—why is it difficult to detect and eliminate secret elitism from liberal democracies while their foundational principles are transparency and openness?

The third research question is case specific and seeks to examine the role Kissinger played in the creation of Bangladesh. An examination of Kissinger’s work during the year 1971, both internationally and at Washington, provides an idea that although the developments in East Pakistan were happening thousands of kilometres away from the US, the occupants of the White House had an influential role to play. As the subsequent chapters reveal, there were multiple occasions and issues when Kissinger responded to the crisis in East Pakistan that proved counterproductive for the Bengali cause. On the basis of the dominance of Kissinger’s role in US foreign policy making of the era, the third research question addressed in this research is—did Kissinger have a role in the creation of Bangladesh?

The study was conducted to verify three hypotheses based on theoretical as well as case specific considerations, as listed below:

- An individual is indomitably capable of controlling decision making and international relations by effectively manoeuvring through a system of checks and balances;
- Secrecy is a critical determinant in individual control of information, diplomacy and decision making;
- The birth of Bangladesh was a result of Kissinger's perseverance to establish a world order favourable to the US.

Research Methods

As evident from the above section, this research has two broad categories of examination. The first category is the conceptual analysis of secret elitism and the second section deals with the case study of Kissinger's diplomacy and decision making during the 1971 crisis and war.

In addressing the conceptual issues, the research has adopted a mixed approach of inductive and deductive reasoning to produce a theoretical understanding of secret elitism. A thorough examination of elite theory, political elite in particular, was conducted through an extant survey of literature on the theme. The works of Mosca (1939), Michels (1966), Michels (1915), Sartori (1987), Lopez (2013), and several others mentioned in chapter 2 helped enlist certain foundational principles on the functioning of political elites. Based on these principles of political elitism a set of independent variables, such as ideas, position and secrecy were inferred and induced to test the theory of secret elitism in liberal democracies.

The case study on Kissinger, the crisis in the subcontinent, the war, and American politics of the day included a combination of primary and secondary source research. Declassified documents by the State Department and the National Security Council provided details into the discussions and deliberations held as part of foreign policy formulation in the US. These documents offered a view of the varying opinions of each department in the US as the crisis began to unfold in East Pakistan. In contrast to the content of these documents were the Nixon Tapes. The secret tape recordings presented an entirely different picture of Washington's approach to the crisis. A comparative examination of the two sources assisted in drawing analysis and testing the theoretical principles of secret elitism on Kissinger. In addition to the primary

sources, the study also consulted books, journal articles and newspapers to acquire information on the sub-continental politics and personal commentary on Kissinger.

Finally, the analytical section of this study seeks to address the central aim of the research, i.e. to investigate the existence of secret elitism in liberal democracies. To do so, the research selects the doctrinal features as enunciated in the theoretical discourse and tries to subject the personality and work of Kissinger during the crisis period to scrutiny. This exercise, being the pivotal part of the study, has assisted in exploring the possibility of secret elitism in liberal democracies in general, and review the case of Kissinger as secret elite in particular.

Organisation of the Dissertation

The chapters in the book are organised systematically to denote the step-by-step research stages. The first chapter has introduced the readers to the ideas and questions guiding the research and the methods adopted in the inquiry. The second chapter is a conceptual attempt at providing a theoretical appreciation of the principles of secret elitism and some of the understudied concepts of international relations such as secrecy and secret diplomacy. The third and fourth chapters are a narrative of Kissinger's handling of the 1971 crisis in South Asia and the Indo-Pak War. The third chapter particularly deals with Kissinger's decision making efforts at Washington amidst the contradictions and discrepancies with various other departments involved in foreign policy formulation. The fourth chapter is a narrative on Kissinger's diplomatic efforts in managing the crisis through meticulous planning and cooperation from several international actors and institutions. The fifth chapter is the highlight of this research as it subjects the findings of the preceding chapters to an analysis based on the theoretical framework adopted in chapter 2. In the final concluding chapter, closing remarks are made about the success or failure in testing the hypothesis and the definitive outcome of the research.

CHAPTER 2

**THEORETICAL DISCOURSE ON
POLITICAL ELITE AND SECRET
DIPLOMACY**

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL DISCOURSE ON POLITICAL ELITE AND SECRET DIPLOMACY

For the champions of global peace, the World War II undoubtedly stands as a point of departure to highlight the devastation and pain wars bring to mankind. The war was fought fundamentally to achieve global primacy through the use of force. And in addition to force posturing, the war also brought to limelight certain individuals, on both the side of the battlefield, whose ideas and decision drove the countries into the wars or sustained it. Some of the names that have made history are Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Ever since, individuals and ideas have had a remarkable impact on the ongoing events in the world, even as recent as the Arab Spring and the rise of the Islamic State.

In the aftermath of the war, one of the key rebuilding and reconstruction efforts initiated by the United States (US) was ‘democratisation’. The belief was that with democracy, the world would avoid succumbing to adventurism and foolhardiness of power seeking individuals (elites). However, more than half a decade since the end of WWII, wars continued to be fought despite memories of devastation as well as the advent of the nuclear deterrent factorisation in national security decision making. So, what has hindered uninterrupted global peace? What explains conflict making and resolution? What rationalises military intervention? One of the explanations to these questions lies in the elite control of foreign policy decision making, even in liberal democracies (Higley and Burton, 2006) (Tardelli, 2013).

This chapter would attempt to enunciate the intricacies of elite control of policy making, especially in the US. Further, the focus of the research being Henry Kissinger and his diplomatic overtures to influence national decision making and international relations, this chapter would make an effort to contextualise the individual, ideas and secrecy within the larger framework of elite theory. And lastly, the chapter would study the concept of secret diplomacy and its linkages with elite theory.

Elite Theory

Historically, analysing the evolution of societies across the world, it is fathomable that a division on the lines of majority and minority is inevitable. In this context, the division is not on economic, social, professional lines but a combination of these factors emerging as a ruling minority and a subordinate majority (Mosca, 1939). Mosca's illustration of the ruling minority beholds certain key characteristics like smaller numbers, political functionalities, monopoly over power and subsequent privileges, while the subordinate majority is merely directed and controlled by the ruling minority. Mosca's contribution to the study of elites begins from the earliest of times, i.e. primitive societies, in which racial supremacy or warrior class formed the ruling elite. As societies progressed towards agricultural economies, racial superiority still held centre stage while land owning became another benchmark for rising influence in the societies. Eventually, ruling over the masses, politics, paved way for gathering more wealth and land. The hypothesis was that wealth and power were mutually productive.

Along with Mosca, Pareto is another social scientist belonging to the earliest group of classical elitist theorists. Their analyses of the relationship between the majority and minority are worth inquiry. In kingdoms and monarchies, the ruler and the ruling class are hereditary by nature. The offspring logic, although may not be a certain disposition, holds well in democracies too since the ruling class inherits the resources and knowledge from its ancestors enabling them to win elections and govern effectively (Higley and Burton, 2006). However, the difference between the elites in monarchies and democracies is the interplay between the elite and non-elite. Elites and non-elites are interdependent and the minority elite have to obtain the support and approval of the majority non-elites. To ensure this, the elite form what is known as a "political formula" tailored to include "non-elite interests and sentiments"¹ (Higley and Burton, 2006).

The conception of democracies being anathema to elite formation was debunked at the earliest by examining large organisations where oligarchic tendencies seemed inevitable. The struggle in politics may not necessarily be limited to struggle between the leader and the masses. On the contrary, political infighting becomes an important

¹ For more on political formula refer the section "Political Elite"

issue to contend with, if the leader wishes to sustain power. Therefore, a small number of individuals will emerge with greater access to funds, information flow and other forms of institutional functioning (Michels, 1911). Therefore, in successful democracies the ‘political elite’, in tandem with national interests and ambitions, work to build a consensus by merging individuals from “counter-elite”, i.e. opposition parties, and absorbing meritorious and talented individuals to form an equilibrium (Higley and Burton, 2006).

Abraham Lincoln’s aphorism for liberal, representative democracy was “government of the people, by the people and for the people”. However, classical elite theorists like Aron (1950) and Weber (1918) have vociferously argued that inequality in political power cannot be eliminated and thence, a government ‘for’ and ‘of’ the people is possible, but ‘by’ the people is near impossible as power is vested in the hands of a few (Outhwaite: 2003, 195).

Political Elite²

Political Elite are individuals capable of affecting political decisions by virtue of their strategic positioning in powerful organisations and movements (Higley and Burton, 2006). This group includes individuals of top political parties, cabinet members of the government, and the executive. According to Mosca (1939), the political elite’s actions are intent on preservation of their positions within societies. Tardelli (2013, 85) elucidates political elite as a “subset of ruling elite” and dissects certain key characteristics that constitute political elite:

- Autonomy of political power as result of control of state institutions and the legitimacy derived from non-elites;
- Authority to formulate state objectives, policies and decision to use force (or not);
- Form part of unique social strata that comprises of professional politicians.

Retention and augmentation of power are the primary motives of the members of the political elite. Most actions undertaken by the members are in congruence with this

² The scope of this thesis being limited to formulation and practice of foreign policy does not intricately delve into the definitions forwarded by sociologists and political scientists on political elite. The key characteristics of the political elite offered by these theorists are extracted and made use of notwithstanding. A critique on the definition of the term and the difficulties and complexities in encapsulating all aspects of it can be found in Zuckerman’s (1977) work.

principle. Mintz (2004) in his *polyheuristic* analysis of foreign policy making argues that political elites make a cost benefit analysis, in the political sense, before adopting any course of action. The two stages that emanate in analysis of foreign policy decision making are, firstly, to fine-tune policies in accordance with national interests; and finally, cherry pick those options that would seem politically profitable at the domestic front. Therefore, the political elites' power is assessed in terms of their "ability to control both its domestic and international environments and the actors that populate them" (Tardelli: 2013, 91).

The question, then, that remains to be answered is, how do the political elites operate? What guides their behaviour? The clarification to these operational queries lies in ideas, individual and secrecy.

Ideas

Ideas and ideologies form an integral part of political elite behaviour. For the political elite, ideas are important to mobilise masses, acquire political support and legitimacy for actions. The complexion of ideas and ideologies is what matters when shaping the position of the political elite. Non-elite approval or disapproval of an elite's course of political action is directly commensurate with ideas of him/herself and/or the party ideologies. In most democracies, policies are formulated on the basis of ideas and ideologies with an aim of strengthening the position of the political elite. Thus, ideas and ideologies, structurally, form the basis for a "political formula", a term coined by Mosca (Tardelli, 2013).

Ideas are formed over years of experience, learning and education, and transform into a political formula when rationally applied to the present political conditions. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet demise, the post communist states were left to devise political formulas on the basis of "intellectualism and materialism" or "commitments to norms and morals" (Kolankiewicz, 1994). Elites with varied backgrounds are inclined to behave differently. For instance, military elite are inclined to exhibit hawkish tendencies whereas business elite favour dovish ideas like negotiation and settlements (Martini, 2012). Preparation of a political formula in democracies is an easier task said, than done. Consensus and disagreements are often visible during the preparation of political formulas. Political elite, here, depend on the principle idea of "bargaining" to make ends meet.

In liberal democracies, the bottom line to sustain power in the hands of the political elite is evident. Elites commit themselves to the system and national interests but operationally they depend on bargaining, i.e. give to get. Bargaining of this kind also gives birth to homogeneity in decision making by providing greater inclusivity to the counter-elites. Bipartisan consensus on certain course of actions critical to national security and interests are derived as a result of co-opting and bargaining. Political elites can, therefore, based on their operational character, be divided into three groups: Disunited, consensually united and ideologically united elites (Higley and Burton, 2006).

To the “disunited elites” politics is war and therefore, political operations have a zero-sum character. One political faction disbelieves the other and all political actions are primarily meant to preserve power and keep competing parties at bay. “Consensually united elites” compete for power with a positive character. With modes of communications existing between political elites and counter-elites, convergences are found in areas like values and national goals while divergences arise only ideological and policy matters. In such systems, a level of mutual trust exists for the collective good and politics is perceived as a matter of bargaining. The last group, “ideologically united elites” are a result of a common ideological faith that binds the members together. A strict code of conduct exists and actions must adhere to established doctrinal principles. In such an arrangement, there is no room to perceive politics as war or bargain as the ideology guides formulation of policies.

Individual/Position

At this juncture, it is essential to acknowledge the role of the individual in foreign policy decision making. Individual is both the conduit for ideas to translate into policies and a source for historians to gauge the relevance of ideas in foreign policy. Weber, thereby, rightly credits charismatic leaders as central to the study of political elite as they act as “political integrators, strategic goal-setters and cultivators of mass confidence and trust” (Pakulski, 2012). International relations theories place a high premium on the role of individuals, albeit in different ways. Realists like Hans Morgenthau regard the abilities of statesmen to formulate and implement successful policies, while liberals and constructivists focus on the motives and thoughts of the individuals like Kant and Marx that have an impact on international relations (Togo,

2011: 64). Notwithstanding the polarity of these arguments, political psychologists have justified the relevance of the individual or leader in foreign policy making.

According to political psychologists like Hermann and Glad, foreign policies are shaped based on the personality factor of the leader. With higher levels of narcissism and nationalism foreign policy making tends to be independent, like the case of Hitler and Mussolini. Participatory and greater inclusivity of other individuals and institutions arises during the contrary. Renshon and Lerner (2012) suggest that emotions are central to an individual's decisions and this proposition is true in foreign policy making. Such emotions can be fathomed in two important factors that contribute to individual role in foreign policy making, i.e. "belief system" and "information processing mechanisms".

As described in the previous section, ideas and ideologies are critical in elite control of foreign policy making. Ideas emerge from one's experiences and lessons, and this collectively forms a person's "belief system". Information input on any given situation is subject to the leader's belief system- preconceived perceptions- that advice a particular line of action. The individual either processes the information in conformity to his/her belief system and probes into past events to draw similarities while ignoring certain vital differences, or falls victim to "mirror imaging"- a belief that the target individual would behave as anticipated. The former is also known as analogising and the leader is likely to draw analogies from past experiences, both self and elsewhere, before drafting policies (Dyson and Preston, 2006).

In the US, when foreign policies are formulated by the president independently the phenomenon has been termed as "imperial presidency". A phenomenon observed since the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt presents a picture of the democratically elected leader portraying a finery of kingship except a costume different from the monarch (Schlesinger: 2004, 492). Recently, under President Obama's administration, imperial presidency was evident despite taking office after downplaying the excessive executive control of foreign policy under President George W. Bush. Douthat (2014) writes that the reasons for the rise and sustenance of such imperial presidency, despite criticisms, are "increasing public expectations, congressional abdication and self image".

So far the explanation offered gives an impression that the elite may not be a minority group but an individual in the form of the supreme leaders of the nations in control of making foreign policy decisions. However, the individual in control of decision making can be a person lower than the supreme leader in the hierarchy, but exerts significant influence. As Mosca (1939) illustrates, the individual is not always the person with the supreme power according to law, sometimes alongside the king, a prime minister wields a power greater than the king. Certain individuals, by virtue of their position in the organisation, are capable of influencing political decisions (Higley and Burton, 2006). The strategic positioning of the individual may arise from his/her intellectual merit, financial resources that provide a significant clout in influencing foreign policies. Henceforth, the belief is that with the right resources *anyone* not *everyone* can evolve as an elite (Lopez, 2013).

Secrecy

The American political system is explained in polarised ways by pluralists and elitists. Pluralists argue that power, in the US, is not concentrated in the hands of a few elite but is diffused substantially. Diffusion of power among several institutions, predominantly known as a system of checks and balances, was envisaged to thwart the rise of a monarchical power structure. However, as seen in the previous section, this myth has been debunked considerably with the rise of imperial presidency. One of the most important tools that enable imperial presidency or the emergence of (executive) elite overshadowing the system of checks and balances is secrecy.

In following standard operation procedures of planning and negotiating a political outcome in liberal democracies, Giuseppe Di Palma argues that elites practice secrecy to ensure flexibility in bargaining and seeking innovative solutions to problems (Higley and Burton, 2006). The domain of foreign policy, in the current times, has been increasingly riding on the rule of secrecy that has provided the executive an edge over the congress and judiciary. Recent examples of elite mechanism adhering to the principle of secrecy are the PATRIOT Act, Homeland Security Act and the extraordinary rendition programme. Interjecting these executive actions to Palma's explanation deduces that secrecy surrounding the actions was perceived as an innovative solution to the problem of terrorism.

Gibbs (1995) offers three explanations for the persistence of secrecy despite resistance from several sections to do away with it. The first facet is the external threat explanation, according to which the elite subscribe to secrecy and employ deceptive tactics with concerns over national interest and national security. However, this form of secret information cannot be withheld for long in order to save the embarrassment following public revelation. The second explanation is the bureaucratic politics that attests that narrow, parochial interests of bureaucracies and inter-bureaucratic competition facilitate classification of information.

The third explanation Gibbs offers is more relevant for the purpose of this thesis. Termed as the internal threat explanation, the rationale has two variants: realist and rational action perspective. While in the realist explanation secrecy is a desirable engine to secure national interests, rational action advocates secrecy as a mode to further political interests. Whatever be the reason, the target audience in the internal threat explanation of secrecy are the non-elites. Classification of information or public deception by the political elite challenges the convention of democratic theory that alludes public control over the government. The political elite, nevertheless, justify secrecy for reasons of national security or political interests.

Historically, secrecy in international relations has been systematically practiced in the realm of diplomacy, one of the most powerful tools of foreign policy. The next section is a dissection of the theories and principles of secret diplomacy that simplify the understanding of elite control of international politics.

Secret Diplomacy

Low (1918) proclaims, after a meticulous examination of old European diplomacy that secret diplomacy is an evil that puts nations on the path to conflict. By definition, secret diplomacy is an activity by the government, keeping the public and media in isolation, involving negotiations and related policy making (Gilbao, 2000).³ In these sorts of diplomatic overtures even most politicians and officials are oblivious to the exchange of proposals and negotiations and also the agreements concluded. The quintessential diplomat of the old European school of diplomacy meant an honest man

³ One must not mistake secret diplomacy for closed door diplomacy. In the latter, the public and media have partial knowledge of the proceedings like the venue, schedule and participants in the negotiations where as content the negotiations are unknown. Secret diplomacy, on the other hand, leaves the press and people virtually ignorant.

tasked to lie on behalf of the king. Given the slow pace of communication, the diplomat was in absolute authority to tailor stories to convince the hosts to believe him, without the king having much operational control (Low, 1918). Therefore, there is a strong assertion that secret diplomacy was the cause for the great wars.

Post World War I, President Woodrow Wilson professed open covenants of peace and that all diplomacy should proceed in public view, denouncing private international understandings. Under the directions of the 14 points laid down by President Wilson diplomacy was institutionalised, rules and regulations laid down for membership, enhanced inclusivity to provide greater representation to smaller states, and democratised voting system was developed (Jung, 2016). The underlying goal was to eliminate elite control of diplomacy and make the business more accountable to the public: a concept known as “new diplomacy” (Sharp, 2016).

That said, secret diplomacy did not vanish from the face of international relations. Through the course of the Cold War, and in the post-Cold War era, secret diplomacy has been practiced and the US has been an active practitioner of secrecy. Secret diplomacy played an intrinsic role in negotiating between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the British government, George H. Bush and Ariel Sharon, and the US and the Taliban. The fundamental transformation in the perspectives of secret diplomacy is that, unlike the old European world in which secret negotiations created wars, secret diplomacy in the new world is criterion for conflict resolution. The argument, therefore, is that as long as the ends justify the means, secrecy is permissible.

Henceforth, a few underlying assumptions that justify the use of secret diplomacy need to be examined. First, as argued by Nicolson, uninformed public opinion is oscillating constantly and so, inclusion in the conduct of foreign relations can induce lethargy in execution (Sharp, 2016). Trivialising the role of public opinion, Nicolson insinuated that the elite control of diplomacy and its secretive character was indispensable for the efficient conduct of diplomacy. Second, secret diplomacy can be standardised only in exceptional circumstances when open forms are deemed unproductive. In such instances, secret diplomacy is critical in the instance of facilitating a dialogue between the warring or conflicting parties. The secret negotiations are essentially a forum to establish trust and reach certain agreements prior to the conduct of open diplomacy (Bjola, 2014). Lastly, the operation of secret

diplomacy has two distinct components: who and why? Secret Diplomacy is handled by able individuals, usually in confidence of the head of the state, and under the aegis of a third party. Examples for this assumption are Norway facilitating negotiations between Israel and Palestine, and Pakistan playing the mediator in Sino-US rapprochement. The purpose of secret diplomacy is clearly to sell a good story to the public. All these tenets of secret diplomacy suffice the premise that international negotiations are not devoid of elite control.

Secret Elite in International Politics

Based on the above breakdown of elite theory and secret diplomacy, this chapter has inferred certain facets and characteristics of the legislation and execution of foreign policies in liberal democracies. Even in a political system of checks and balances, elite control of foreign policy making is evident, and with instances of practice of secret diplomacy by the US, presence of an elite control in diplomacy is also fathomable. However, the purpose of this research is beyond the examination of well studied topics like imperial presidency and/or secret diplomacy. The focus is to identify the existence, or not, of a hidden individual, who is capable of influencing the process of foreign policy formulation and execution in accordance with his/her ideas.

As the section on political elite notes, ideas are integral to one's rise to higher positions in the political hierarchy. But, the question is how does one ensure that his/her ideas prevail over the suprema's or established national norms? What provides manoeuvrability in a system of checks and balances? In this respect, the thesis offers to highlight "secrecy", one of the most understudied concepts in international relations, as a plausible rationale.

Before attempting to construct a definition of the term "secret elite" it is logical to first discuss the key fundamentals that are necessary to qualify. First and foremost, secrecy centrally revolves around the possession and control of information. The individual in an ideal position to gather information and knowledgeable to provide personal interpretation of the acquired information gains an advantage compared to peers and co-officials who are constrained by organisational limitations. For example, an official in the State Department is more likely to analyse information bearing in mind the organisational culture as opposed to personal beliefs. Ergo, information and

analysis are the primary determinants of secret elite. Second, the presence of a secret elite and the practice of secrecy itself rests on the fact that a radical change is desired.

As seen in the secret diplomacy section, historically, secret diplomacy was sought to alter the status quo. Hence, the next aspect to secret elite is the willingness to take risks and seek radical transformation through the employment of secrecy. Risk taking and seeking change points to another important factor known as “power”. In the Weberian conception of power, at the individual level of analysis, two sub factors are noticeable. The fundamental requirement stems from a passion for involvement, to bring about a change. The other crucial factor is the ability to draw upon own resources as well as others to exercise the power (Perrucci and Pilisuk, 1970).

Third, the secret elite is a result of both personal and professional experiences and also thrives for personal and/or professional glory. Here, it is necessary to understand that secrecy is not eternal and once secrecy expires, either through whistle blowing or on the conclusion of an agreement, the secret elite rises to fame. Operational details are thereafter a matter of both academic and journalistic curiosity. Thereupon, past experiences and learning are critical to the functioning of the secret elite and the experience-driven-knowledge is desired to produce or influence decisions for the sake of exaltation.

The fourth tenet of the secret elite is the ability to wield influence. Borrowing from the works of Machiavelli, the secret elite must essentially be the combination of a lion and a fox. The traits of a lion are necessary to keep the subordinates obeying orders to the fullest by exploiting power at one’s disposal. At the same time, the traits of a fox, practice of deceit and cunningness, are necessary to escape entrapment and manoeuvre through all obstacles and convince the supreme leader of the preferred course of action. Finally, the secret elite is the one who firmly believes that there needs little or no interference by the non-elite. Here, non-elite is not limited to the public and media but also several within the administration who may be considered an impediment. Consequently, this gives birth to an image of concentric circles in which there exists an elite within the elite. In such a structure, there can be hardly any room for morals, principles (as visible in subsequent chapters) and the end result justifies the methodology.

Integrating all these elements this thesis explains “secret elite” in liberal democracies as the individual, who wields significant influence among the political elite by virtue of position, power, deceit and intelligence, and attributes successful outcomes to the law of secrecy and information control. The significance of this definition and, by extension, the examination of the presence of secret elite, needs to be embraced by scholars of international relations to comprehensively enhance the understanding of foreign policy making. Elite working in international relations has been hitherto studied from a perspective of national interests, party politics, geopolitics and economics. Despite attention being given to the study of the leader and the executive powers enjoyed by the individual, the dearth in studies on influential personalities operating in hiding has constrained adequate analysis of foreign policy decisions. Accordingly, the study of secret elite seeks to open scholarly avenues to grasp the worth of secrecy as an operational tool in the elite control of international relations.⁴

Duly, the following chapters investigate the strategies and tactics adopted by Henry Kissinger, as secret elite, in formulating US foreign policy and conducting negotiations both at domestic and international theatres during the 1971 Indo-Pak War, which was essentially a harbinger to the famous detente with China.

⁴ It has to be mentioned here that the study of secret elite has been a challenging task for policy analysts for the obvious reasons of information classification by the government and the unavailability of sources to prove the existence of one. However, it is the author’s contention that historical studies can attempt to decipher the existence of such individuals.

CHAPTER 3

KISSINGER'S DOMESTIC BATTLEFRONT: FRIENDS AND FOES

CHAPTER 3

GISSINGER'S DOMESTIC BATTLEFRONT: FRIENDS AND FOES

The Indo-Pak war of 1971 is an interesting episode in the history of American foreign policy from the perspective of domestic imperatives on foreign policy decision making. Despite being one of the most densely populated regions of the world, the subcontinent did not rank high in the foreign policy priorities of President Nixon and the strategic calculations of his National Security Advisor (NSA), Dr. Henry Kissinger. With the policy of non-alignment determining India's international relations, the South Asian region was of limited significance for the Nixon administration. The only objective was to restrict any moves by the Soviet Union and the Communist China in expanding their influence in the region. However, the crisis in East Pakistan would turn to be a serious bone of contention in Kissinger's historic overtures to the People's Republic of China (PRC). While the battlefield was geographically situated thousands of miles away from mainland United States (US), the strategic calculations of Kissinger led to a domestic war between the White House, the State Department, and the Congress- also a hostile public opinion. The objective of this chapter is to narrate the events of the era that expose Kissinger's command over US foreign policies. It tries to bring out the various shades of the individual in trying to garner the President's as well as other's acquiescence to his strategic designs. The American political structure of checks and balances challenged the sole dominance of Kissinger, but could not completely thwart his operations.

Kissinger's trip to Peking was shrouded in secrecy and Pakistan's President Yahya Khan had played the role of the middleman in facilitating the meeting with Chou Enlai. Coinciding with the political crisis in East Pakistan, American approach towards the developments in East Pakistan transformed from a position of neutrality- arguing on the principle of non interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state- to an overt 'tilt' towards West Pakistan. Kissinger's *realpolitik* met with a strict opposition from the State Department and the Congress, who were principally driven by morality. As this chapter explores, the crisis in the subcontinent turned out to be a major obstacle in Kissinger's strategic plans, and throughout the period of the crisis he had to use a combination of authoritative and sly tactics to fight the odds presented by the State Department, the Congress, the press and the changing public opinion.

The Indo-centric State Department

Kissinger always held that the liberals, democrats and more so, the most loathed, State Department was always biased towards India. Kissinger's antipathy towards the Indo-centric State Department was shared by Nixon who, at one instance, bluntly stated that "every ambassador who goes to India falls in love with India". Far exceeding India's contempt was Nixon's love towards Pakistan and its leadership, which Kissinger only sought to exploit to realise his strategic visions. That said, the declassified official documents do not necessarily display a pro-India bias on the part of the State Department, but a strong affinity to morals and national interests that had convinced the officials of the ineffectiveness of tilting against a democratic nation of 600 million people.

Beginning with dissatisfaction over inaction against Pakistan's military action against Bengali dissenters in East Pakistan to disapproval of US economic and military aid to West Pakistan, the State Department stood in stark contrast to Kissinger's wishes.

Gruesome Reporting from the Dacca Consulate

By March 1971, Archer Kent Blood, the US Consul General to Dacca began to provide a graphic reporting of the Pakistan military crackdown on the Bengali populace. On assessing Blood's reports, the State Department not only conveyed to Kissinger the looming of a civil war but also convinced him of the inevitable split up of Pakistan. The popular feeling among the Bengalis was to gain independence and the West Pakistani military crackdown would not succeed in suppressing the demand. In spite of this assessment, Kissinger and Nixon would continue to maintain silence over the West Pakistani military action.

Pained by the losses of innocent lives and disgusted by the silent posture held by the US, Blood wrote on March 28, highlighting all aspects of the West Pakistani military atrocities- titled "Selective Genocide". Blood's description of the events in East Pakistan was indeed a testimony to the title of the cable. The cable brought to light the systematic killing of "the core of future resistance": Awami League sympathisers, Hindus, politicians, professors and students (since they led the larger political movement and were the supporters of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman). It also noted the fact that the Bengali populace were unarmed and put little resistance, if any, against the

military action, and that desperate attempt were made by people to flee from Dacca. This would be the earliest indications to the US government of the refugee exodus- a pretext that India would later use to justify military action against Pakistan.

In an effort to avoid appearing as an idealist acting at the cost of national interests, Blood followed up his reporting with a note that the horrors and atrocities would soon come to light and suggested that the US government should be expressing its surprise at least in private with the Government of Pakistan over the use of military action against its own people. The “selective genocide” cable was read carefully Kissinger and his aide, Samuel Hoskinson- who shared Blood’s opinion that the US government must reach out to the West Pakistanis privately- but no attempt was made to persuade Nixon to do so. Nixon adopted a neutral position saying, “I wouldn’t prais(e) it, but we’re not going to condemn it either.” Kissinger and Nixon accepted the cable with modest seriousness, until they met stronger resistance from Kenneth Keating, the US ambassador in India, who not just upheld Blood’s views on the regional developments but also shared his views with Sydney Schanberg of the *New York Times*. Keating’s intention was to have a positive effect culminating into US pressure on Yahya to abort military action. Terming the incidents “a reign of military terror”, Keating exposed through the press that the military action against innocent Bengalis used US weaponry.

The agonised words of Blood and Keating failed to generate any sympathies from Kissinger. The State Department particularly echoed its assessment that Yahya could not win by military action. However, Kissinger ignored these warnings by arguing that with Dacca and Chittagong being in control, the Bengali nationalism wouldn’t survive with rural masses alone. Kissinger made no attempt to reveal his anti-India leanings in his interactions with the State Department but reserved such expressions for private conversations with the president. As far as interdepartmental discussions were concerned Kissinger always played safe by conditioning the discussions against taking an anti-Yahya position owing to the president’s personal friendship with Yahya.⁵ The State Department was swayed by Kissinger into believing that the president did not “want to be in the position where he can be accused of having

⁵ During early March, Kissinger was warned in an NSC meeting by a State Department official that Yahya was prepared to use force. Kissinger, however, rebuffed the warnings and any ideas hinting at US pressure on Yahya as “self defeating” and that the president would be “reluctant” to do so.

encouraged the split up of Pakistan” and hence the “policy of non-involvement” must continue.

The Dissent Telegram

What was particularly enraging the consulate staffs in Dacca was the US government’s silence, not just on humanitarian grounds, but over the fact that US weaponry was being used by the Pakistani armed forces. The consulate was made aware, through multiple sources, that the Pakistani Air Force was using the US made F-86 Sabre fighter jets to bomb and fire at area that led to mass casualties while the US C-130s transported additional troops to Dacca. The Pakistani Army, for its part, used M-24 Chaffee tanks, .50 calibre machine guns, bazookas and jeeps, all of US origin. Several weeks of systematic slaughter of innocent Bengalis compelled the Americans to voice their dissent against US’ inaction. Drafted by Scott Butcher, a young staffer in the consulate, a strong dissent telegram reached Blood’s table. Blood, already fuming with revulsion over US’ course of silence over the genocide, gave the telegram the teeth it required. Signed by member of the Foreign Service, the Agency for International Development and the US Information Service pledging their support Blood transmitted in early April a confidential cable titled “Dissent from U.S. policy towards East Pakistan” and a follow up telegram titled “Specific areas of dissent with current U.S. policy towards East Pakistan”.

Reiterating their discomfort with American silence over the killings the cable the cable stated that the American “government has evidenced... a moral bankruptcy, ironically at a time when the USSR sent President Yahya a message demanding democracy... and calling for end to repressive measures and bloodshed.” The follow up cable also stated that “in a country wherein our primary interests [are] defined as humanitarian rather than strategic, moral principles are indeed relevant to the issue.... and [must accept] on grounds of national interest and morality [that] an independent “Bangla Desh” is now inevitable.” On reception of this cable, Kissinger was furious and expressed his disbelief over the alleged atrocities against the Bengalis. Charging the Bengalis of committing their own atrocities, Kissinger bluntly told the State Department that there would be no shift in policy and that their officials act accordingly. Also to be noted is that William Rogers, the Secretary of State, a contestant of Kissinger’s views sided with the NSA in chiding Blood and his

comrades. Exchanges between Rogers and the Dacca Consulate show a degree of indignation at Blood's acts of dissention. Rogers also wrote to the consulate, at this point, about the importance of US non-intervention in Pakistan's internal issue owing to their reliance on the Government of Pakistan to protect the Americans living in West and East Pakistan.

Horried Keating and Griffel meet a Sober NSA

In the month preceding the secret trip of 1971 to China, Kissinger would have to face two officials from the State Department: Ambassador Keating in Washington on June 3rd and Eric Griffel, a development officer posted in Dacca Consulate in prior to the departure to Peking. Amidst the two meetings, Kissinger was also appraised by the State Department that the speech made by Yahya on June 28th, which Kissinger and Nixon had received so dearly as an effort in mending the crisis, was perfunctory and would fail as a result of the continuing ban on the Awami League members.

Ambassador Keating's agony was conveyed to Kissinger when he systematically brought out the issues in the subcontinent that needed the US' attention. The ambassador's primary contention was that India wanted to establish a good relationship with the US but the US seemed hesitant to take the necessary steps towards it. Whilst quoting the Indian Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on the democratic commonalities between India and the US transcending fears of Indo-USSR relationship, Keating said: "we are on the threshold of better relations with the one stable democracy in that part of the world." Keating's assessment on India's desired rapport with the US grew out of his interactions with sections of the Indian cabinet who expressed their interests in inviting foreign investments. So, in order to rest his case, Keating brought up two issues before Kissinger: the selective genocide and the resultant refugee crisis, and the military and economic aid to Pakistan. Keating brought to Kissinger's notice that the refugees fleeing East Pakistan were no more a mixture of Hindus and Muslims but were 90% Hindus- credit to the army's selective targeting. Pleading Kissinger to tighten the noose on Yahya, Keating suggested subjecting the economic aid to Pakistan to three principal conditions:

- The killing should be stopped in East Pakistan;
- The refugee flow should be stopped and a process should be started which would permit the beginnings of a refugee return to East Pakistan;

- Steps should be taken to negotiate a political settlement.

However, much to the Ambassador's displeasure, Kissinger kept citing Nixon's "special feeling for Yahya" to explain their inaction towards pressurising Yahya. On a rebuttal from the ambassador that one cannot make policies based on personal friendship and a warning that it would bring "terrific criticism on the President's head", Kissinger terminated the discussion by assuring that he would forward the ambassador's views to Nixon.

The meeting with Eric Griffel, on the other hand, came just the day before Kissinger's trip to Peking and a day after he had got a firsthand impression of the Indian emotions on the ongoing crisis. Griffel, one of the signatories of the dissent telegram, was ruthlessly blunt in attacking Kissinger for their policies in the region. Although Kissinger paid little attention to Griffel, he spoke at one instance. When Griffel described the Bengali will to fight and the terror campaign unleashed by the Pakistan Army, Kissinger adroitly tried to tackle it by saying that the US wanted to stay out of a civil war in Asia. Griffel, nevertheless, countered Kissinger that, while in the eventuality of a war India's success was assured, the US would be complicit in not using its economic leverage over Pakistan to avoid the war. Years later Griffel would only speak of his courage in confronting Kissinger though he had no hopes whatsoever of influencing Kissinger's mind.

Military Supplies: The State Department Outwits Kissinger

In the aforementioned sections, a war of words and ideas ensued between the representatives of the State Department and Kissinger but the real trouble would come in a subtle move made by the State Department. Notwithstanding Kissinger's efforts to exploit Nixon's special relationship with Yahya and other manoeuvres to continue the flow of military supplies through the pipeline, the State Department had successfully implemented an administrative hold on the arms supply as early as April 4th. To Kissinger's dismay, this news would come as late as July 23rd amidst a battle with the Congress that was working hard to impose an arms embargo on Pakistan (detailed in the next section on Congress).

Kissinger told Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State: "In June the president specifically did not approve cutting off the supply of military equipment. Now you are getting it

by indirection”. Of the \$14 million that had to be shipped to Pakistan, a significant share still sat in the pipeline- \$10 million to be precise. Sisco had appraised Kissinger forthrightly that though the Pakistanis had been requesting to renew the licenses to continue arms shipment, the State Department had no intentions to renew the licences, due to expire in August, by when only \$4 million worth of arms would be shipped. In a desperate attempt to defend the pipeline supply Kissinger questioned if this move wasn’t stricter than the 1965 embargo. When Van Hollen, State Department official, rejected any avenues for the extension of the license validity, Kissinger fumed at him: “you can damn well extend them if you are told”. In a benign tone, compassionate for the Pakistanis, Kissinger pitiably argued that the Pakistanis did not know that the arms purchased under license need not necessarily be shipped after the license expires. Nevertheless, Hollen rebutted that “the Pakistani Military Supply Mission... knows the exact status of the shipments. They bug defense about it all the time.”

What the State Department was essentially trying to do was to thwart the military supplies to Pakistan that was indirectly responsible for Yahya’s intransigence and provide economic and relief aid so that the living conditions of the Bengalis could be addressed and in turn, the refugee crisis could be managed. In the preceding months of the war, US economic aid stood at \$80 million while the military supply pipeline had dropped to \$2.6 million. It was clear that the State Department had prioritised political and economic means over military efforts to resolve the sub-continental crisis. This route to peace was antithetical to Kissinger’s designs. In a WSAG meeting on September 8th, on being reiterated by a State Department official about the status of the arms pipeline, an angry Kissinger raved, “You are trying to dry up the pipeline. You are asking them to dry up the pipeline... The president has ruled on this 500 times.” Once again not hiding his sympathies to the Pakistanis, Kissinger stated, “I wonder what we would do if we were instructed to use a baseball bat—go to nuclear war?”

Nonetheless, the bureaucratic hurdles posed by the State Department would fail to impede the strategist from exploring other “secret means” to furnish the dwindling Pakistani arsenal during the wartime (dealt with in detail in the next chapter). Suffice to mention here that, based on the suspicions arising out of Kissinger tabling the idea of Jordan supplying arms to Pakistan during a WSAG meeting on December 6th, the State Department officials, along with Pentagon lawyers, presented to Kissinger the

illegalities involved in such overtures. Yet, it wasn't sufficient to dissuade Nixon and Kissinger from doing it.

What are India's Intentions on the Western Front?

Following up the meeting on December 6th Kissinger held another meeting two days later. The WSAG meetings are an amalgamation of members from the State Department, Defense, JCS, CIA and AID. In this meeting, an effort was made by Kissinger to try and rationalise the transfer of weapons to Pakistan through a third party. At first, Kissinger placed the hypothesis that India might attack West Pakistan and the JCS presented its views on India's capabilities in the west and the State Department spoke of the probable course of action (mostly economic embargoes) that could provide the US with some leverage over India. However, when Kissinger inserted the idea of arms transfer from Jordan to Pakistan in the face of an Indian aggression in West Pakistan, the State Department, despite not rejecting the idea, declined having any assessments on India's intentions to invade the west.

Kissinger's argument was that in the event of a "rape of an American ally", the US should be allowed to afford security arrangements through another ally. The State Department officials concurred that in the face of an Indian action against West Pakistan, King Hussein could be asked to act. However, they did not accept that attacking West Pakistan was on India's war objectives. Ambassador Keating was also assured by Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh that India had no territorial intentions in either fronts, let alone invading the West- this meant India's position in the west was largely defensive. Withal, this would ultimately be Kissinger's justification for military action against India and also, eventually, reason to congratulate Nixon on achieving an objective that clearly wasn't. The decision to send in the aircraft carrier to the Bay of Bengal also angered the State Department officials, especially Keating, who wrote back to the State Department that much of Kissinger's accusations against India were misleading and false. Kissinger simply called him a "bastard", while Nixon added a "soft, son of a bitch".

The Handpicked National Security Council (NSC) Staff⁶

The NSC under President Nixon is quintessentially a model for centralisation of power and decision making on key issues of foreign affairs and national security—more specifically in the hands of Kissinger. With regard to the East Pakistan crisis and the 1971 war, the discussions and deliberations were chaired by Kissinger in two important interdepartmental groups: Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) and the Senior Policy Review Group (SPRG). The former was meant to address crises and contingency planning while the latter was to direct and review policies. The composition of these groups was largely heterogeneous, in that it included personnel from the State Department, Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director of Intelligence and others concerned. The illustrations offered in the previous sections are largely a derivative from the minutes and reports of these group meetings. Transcending beyond these groupings, Kissinger's relationship with the NSC, in the face of the South Asian crisis, can be determined by his interactions with certain key individuals handpicked to act as his aides and advisors in the White House.

Two individuals were of particular importance in dealing with Kissinger in matters on South Asia. A former CIA analyst on the subcontinent, Samuel Hoskinson, rose up to be an expert on South Asia in the White House. Roped into the position by Alexander Haig Jr., Deputy NSA, Hoskinson was never to miss an opportunity to impress Kissinger. The other individual was Harold Saunders, who was senior to Hoskinson, and had the experience of working with the NSC in the previous administration. Like Hoskinson, Saunders shared an admiration of Kissinger and also became Kissinger's closest aide. Throughout the crisis, the duo would prove to be thorough professionals, not crossing paths with Kissinger, unlike the State Department. Years later, while speaking to scholars on about the events they would recollect having not acted beyond their pay scale and not done anything that would aggravate their boss.

Both Saunders and Hoskinson had in the early stages of the crisis, i.e. March- April, brought to Kissinger's notice the developments in East Pakistan and had also advised conferring the issue a higher priority. On reception of Blood's cables from Dacca,

⁶ This section deals with only the NSC Staff. The NSC, as an institution, comprises of the officials from the State and Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, Chiefs of Defense Staff and others, and their interaction with Kissinger has been detailed substantively under their respective sub-headings.

although scorned initially for the low classification levels attached to it, the duo did attach considerable importance to it. In the subsequent memorandums presented to Kissinger, Hoskinson and Saunders used Blood's flawless reporting to base their assessments on the future of the subcontinent. Their assessment in April was that the West Pakistani military capability to hold on to East Pakistan with force was limited, Bangla Desh would probably soon be a reality and it was in India's interest to ensure the creation of it, and most importantly, even if East secedes and Yahya was ousted West Pakistan's foreign policy would continue to be the same- an indication that the US had little to gain by protecting the territorial unity of Pakistan. The same document also provides evidence that the birth of the new nation at that juncture was beneficial to the US than at the end of a prolonged conflict- as the chances were that an extremist and radical leadership would assume power, and in turn complicate prospects of an amicable relationship with the US.

However, just as the State Department was, the NSC staffs were unaware of the China operation and hence could not understand Kissinger's reluctance to consider the Bengali plight with seriousness. When repeated calls requesting for a meeting to discuss the situation in East Pakistan was ignored by Kissinger, a frustrated Hoskinson approached Deputy NSA Haig, also an old friend. Haig had nothing to offer but a mere warning to "be careful" and not to "rile up" Kissinger. They advised Kissinger to consider using the US' economic and military leverage over Pakistan to stop the shooting, but did so using the State Department's vivid reporting and recommendations as a shield. Getting a sense of Kissinger's strategic plans, Saunders advised a "realpolitik pitch for India" arguing that it would be "logical for the US to align itself with the 600 million people of India and East Pakistan and leave the 60 million of West Pakistan in relative geographical isolation." Later he even tried to persuade Kissinger to rid the policy of non-involvement by writing that US intervention would be "an effort to help a friend (Yahya) find a practical and face-saving way out of a bind." Kissinger remained adamant.

The Nixon administration had a broader consensus built that a war between India and Pakistan was undesirable. The instructions, thereafter, to analysts in the intelligence community, the State Department, military analysts and the NSC staffs were to monitor and assess, primarily, the likelihood of a war and the options to prevent it, and second, to assess the military capabilities of both parties. The NSC staff had

identified that the impetus for a war would be the swelling refugee influx into India. The question of granting aid and assistance to India, Kissinger's preferred option, was studied with rigor, yet the NSC staff expressed that the release of Mujib and retrieval of refugee camps back to East Pakistan was mandatory- a point that would continue to be emphasised even before Kissinger's meeting with Yahya on July 11. In addition, Saunders, in his capacity as the senior expert on South Asia, alerted Kissinger that India's relationship with the Soviets would fuel India's appetite for a war.

The question of the Soviet-Chinese role in the event of an Indo-Pak war is a perfect testimony to the fact that the State Department and the NSC Staff were unaware of the happenings on the diplomatic front, which was veiled in secrecy. A couple of months before the outbreak of the war, a WSAG meeting was held to discuss the roles the Soviets and the Chinese would play and the options available to the US to influence their decisions. Despite holding an agreement that all efforts were to be made to dissuade the warring parties from fighting, the State and the NSC Staff had varying scenarios in mind that might lead to a conflict. Consider one of the NSC Staff's queries: "Can we and should we manoeuvre the Soviets into using their negative influence with the Chinese to keep them from getting directly involved on the side of Pakistan?" Ironically, Kissinger would, amidst the war, encourage the Chinese to act militarily on behalf of Pakistan.

On the question of military aid to Pakistan, the NSC staff kept their boss updated about the developments in US military supplies to Pakistan, the State Department's efforts in thwarting the military supplies, and also, about the pros and cons of resuming/restricting them. They first brought to Kissinger's notice that US arms supply to Pakistan was indeed a point of leverage to influence Yahya's decision towards a political settlement. The NSC Staff was more amicable, informing Kissinger of Sisco's and Roger's resolution to act against him. They informed him about the State Department's "free wheeling", i.e. meeting with Yahya and threatening him with an economic blockade on demands for increasing military supplies. In a paper drafted by Saunders and Hoskinson, they assessed that if Yahya picked up Sisco's bait and surrendered arms supply demands for economic assistance- which they considered an empty promise- it would do significant damage to US-Pak relationship. Kissinger was also cautioned that without the spare parts the Pakistani Air Force would be crippled. Later, during the war, when Kissinger and Nixon plotted

the transfer of arms from Iran and Jordan, Saunders reiterated to Kissinger that it would be a violation of US laws- other NSC staff deny having any knowledge of the conspiracy.

The Congress, Media and Public Opinion

Nixon's China opening, which began Kissinger's elaborate efforts to protect West Pakistani atrocities, was shrouded in secrecy because a minor hint would have sparked off a debate and potentially threatened a dream project at its inception. President Yahya's help in reaching out to Mao's China was, unfortunately, not a disposable channel for Kissinger. The Chinese leadership would gauge the American seriousness based on their efforts to protect an old ally. Kissinger was, thence, forced to make no moves that would let down Yahya. However, the press and the congress presented a challenge to Kissinger's policies, i.e. policy of inaction and supply of arms to Pakistan.

Kissinger's realpolitik had space for no morals, only strategic accommodations (more in chapter 5). In this regard, turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed by the Pakistan Army and keeping the arms supply flowing as a symbol of reassurance of American goodwill fit well within his geopolitical vision. The press and the congress, on the contrary, were workers of honesty and humanitarianism, and would shape public opinion accordingly. The press kept up a broadcasting campaign of the ground realities in East Pakistan- of the humanitarian conditions, Pak government actions and the US response and connivance; and members of the Congress battled hard to thwart the executive's resolve to defend the Pakistani government. An illustration of their efforts is offered in the following subsections.

The Leftist New York Times

The Nixon administration was particularly frustrated by the *New York Times* reporting on US-Pakistan relations as well as Pakistan Army's barbarity in the east- the news agency was loathed among security officials as a "leftist newspaper". Sydney Schanberg, the bureau chief in Delhi would rise up to be one of the renowned conflict zone reporters- for covering this event and later in Cambodia and Vietnam. His coverage of the developments in India and East Pakistan was extant. Beginning with

the cyclone that hit East Pakistan and the ineffective government response, to the subsequent developments kept the Congress and the American public fairly exposed to the realities in the subcontinent. Schanberg was perceived as anti-Pakistan and pro-Indian reporter-which to an extent he was, owing to his appreciation of India's efforts to sustain its democratic structure in the face of its numerous domestic problems. However, Schanberg's reporting was holistic, in the sense; it covered a wide spectrum of happenings, which included Pakistani Army's targeted killings, US weapons usage and also the Indian covert operations in training the Mukti Bahini guerrillas and Indian Army ventures into East Pakistan after the war began. The difference was that his vivid reporting got him expelled twice out of Pakistan. About the refugee crisis, Schanberg's reports were a source of public understanding of the Pakistani Army's "selective genocide" of Hindus and Bengalis, and Indian efforts in accommodating the refugees in the states of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. With regard to military aid to Pakistan, although the Congress and the State Department were responsible for FRUS, Volume XI, South Asia Crisis, 1971, ratifying Kissinger's plea to keep the arms pipeline functioning, a large portion of the damage can be owed to the New York Times reporting from the subcontinent as well as the US ports and harbours. June 22nd reporting of the Pakistani freighters set to sail to Karachi bearing military equipment exposed the severing relationship between the executive and the legislation. This is because the congress had, by then, begun to work towards cutting off military aid completely to Pakistan.

Morals Driven Congressmen Levy a Ban on Military Supplies

Edward Kennedy, Democratic Senator from Massachusetts, was staunchly against Nixon's foreign policies in China, Vietnam and elsewhere. The South Asian crisis, at this point, was a blessing in disguise for the senator for two reasons. One reason was simply the fact that the Nixon administration was turning a blind eye to one of the worst manmade crisis of the world and US weapons being responsible for them. Secondly, the other party concerned was India, where the Kennedys were always held in high regard. Edward Kennedy's visit to India was marked by a grandiose welcome extended at a time when the Indo-US relations were had reached a nadir. The personal visit to the refugee camps, added to the existing knowledge from press reports and

State Department leaks, Kennedy would go on to pose a serious challenge to the White House.

Kennedy being the Chairman of the Senate subcommittee on refugees was ideally suited to appraise the Congress the refugee crisis fuming in the subcontinent and also of the Pak Army excesses and US' active inaction towards it. Apart from describing the situation in East Pakistan and its adverse effects on India, Kennedy took a sympathetic view of Indian plight and accused the US government of not adequately supporting the Indian government in dealing with the humanitarian crisis. Kennedy attacked Kissinger and Nixon by saying. "In the name of neutrality, some in our government say we must not be involved in East Pakistan today. But we are involved. Our weapons have been involved in the violence; our aid has contributed to East Pakistan's development for more than a decade... [so] at this point it must be humanitarian aid that will heal and rehabilitate, not further divide and destroy."

Congressional obstacles to Kissinger's agenda did not end with Kennedy alone. The military aid to Pakistan and its impact on sustaining Yahya's despotic rule had shocked many more congressmen, from both parties, who worked tirelessly to impose a ban on weapons sale to Pakistan. On 6th April, Senator William Fulbright (D) summoned the State Department officials to get a clear picture of the happenings in East Pakistan and the extent of US' role in it. State Department officials validated claims that the Pakistan Army had used US supplied F-86 Sabre jet fighters and M-24 Chaffee tanks. On 10th April, Senators Edmund Muski and Walter Mondale from the opposition, and Senators Edward Brooke and Mark Hartfield from the ruling party, while demanding further revelations of US' arms sale to Pakistan, promoted a resolution to ban all military aid to Pakistan; co-sponsored by Senator Clifford Case (R).

Despite, all these initiatives taken at the Capitol Hill to curtail the White House's immoral activities, Kissinger and Nixon remained intransigent. Congress' efforts were given a life only when the State Department took executive steps to cut off military supplies to Pakistan (as observed in the earlier sections).

Gallagher Amendment and Restriction on Economic Aid

Yahya's Pakistan was a country with a tattering economy largely reliant on foreign aid. As the political crisis ensued Pakistan suffered from negative trade performance and plummeting foreign exchange reserves. On requests from the government to increase the flow of aid, the World Bank's Aid to Pakistan Consortium- presided by Peter Cargill, head of the bank's South Asia department- was sent to Islamabad to get a grasp of the situation. Cargill's report decried Pakistan's assurances of political normalcy and stated that the "situation is extremely serious". The consortium was an eleven nation team and ten of the eleven concurred with Cargill's assessment, but the US didn't.

At the Congress, Cornelius E. Gallagher (D) was pushing hard for the termination of all aid to Pakistan until the political situation became stable in East Pakistan and the refugees were granted a return to their homes and properties. Although Gallagher's proposal was based on press reporting of the Consortium's findings, his campaign gained pace when Senator Mondale (D) procured a copy of the report and circulated it among the fellow senators. On July 15th, the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted in favour of the Gallagher Amendment by seventeen votes to six.

The Media-Congress challenge to Kissinger-Nixon scheme to militarily strengthen Yahya was rather formidable. Kissinger understood the damage it was doing to his China project. He had lashed out, in private, at the whole liberal community, the press, the Democrats and the Congress for being against Yahya. Kissinger also had to strive hard to convince the stiff Chinese that "the New York Times and other publications did not represent the administration's policy on Pakistan." The Gallagher Amendment also was an impediment in Kissinger's work out to fix the Pakistani economic distress. However, on the economic aid question Kissinger found some support from the State Department officials who were willing to deal with the amendment, provided that the economic aid would be meant to support humanitarian programmes and not fuel government atrocities.

Humanitarian Public Opinion

The earliest of the American public opinion on the East Pakistan crisis came about by the views expressed by American citizens living in Dacca and had seen, firsthand, the

horrors of the genocide. They knew of the elections, Pak military actions to subdue democratic principles and had also seen their Bengali friends being executed. These Americans were the earliest witnesses of US weapons and aircrafts being used to support the Pak Army action. Nevertheless, the Americans were soon evacuated from Dacca and from then on, American public opinion began to be shaped by the reporting of events by newspapers like the *New York Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Newsweek* and others. There were reports of genocide, rape, deaths due to hunger, and also of the targeted killing of Bengali Hindus. The Indians, for their part, had mounted an effective propaganda campaign to build a favourable American public opinion. Kissinger realised this in his meetings with the Indian ambassador. As the Congress joined in shaping public opinion in favour of India Kissinger realised the difficulties he would have to face in realising his strategic goals in Asia.

Unexpectedly, much to Kissinger's consternation, American public sympathy with the Bengali cause- in turn to India's favour- was energised by a band of musicians. Famous musicians like Pandit Ravi Shankar, George Harrison, Joan Baez, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, and Bob Dylan began performing and singing songs in favour of "Bangla Desh". The proceeds from these performances were meant to help the refugees. These performances would send a jolt of shock to the White House as well as the Pakistani government. All these events combined with the White House's intransigence left the American public opinion in favour of the humanitarians, but the Vietnam debacle cautioned them from demanding an active American intervention on behalf of the Bengalis.

The Professional Pentagon

The Department of Defense were privy to the same details as the State Department and NSC Staff since the NSC meetings- WSAG and SRG meetings- included officials from the Pentagon. The Pentagon was clearly not as hostile as the State Department or the Congress was to Kissinger. It provided a blend of support and caution to Kissinger's policy prescriptions. As the violence began in East Pakistan, the Pentagon experts used their military acumen to ascertain other's judgement that the Pakistan military will not be in a position to succeed. But, Kissinger had faith in Yahya's disciplined military force over the helter-skelter Bengali fighters. All Kissinger wanted was the flow of arms and armaments to be unabated and the Pentagon was

found helpful in this. Initially, the Pentagon kept the weapons flowing through the pipeline until the Congress, the State Department and the NSC staffers could draw an estimate on the extent of the arms sale- a labyrinthine task. That the confusion in calculations would favour Pakistan was rightly recognised by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. David Packard: “Congress may holler and you can just blame it on the stupid Defense Department.”

Until July/August, the three services kept on dealing with the Paksitan military and continuing military supplies, both lethal and non-lethal. It was later that Congressional pressure forced the Pentagon to act and the services were directed to stop cutting any further deals with Pakistan. The next important interaction between the Pentagon and Kissinger occurred when Kissinger floated the idea of aircrafts transfer from Jordan to Pakistan. Pentagon lawyers vehemently argued that it would be a direct violation of US laws if the White House proceeded with the idea. However, there are no records of the Pentagon officials having protested against the idea of sailing the *USS Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal. On receiving orders from the supreme commander-in-chief, the Pentagon became part of Kissinger’s “gunboat diplomacy”.

A Few Good Friends

To this point, the chapter explored Kissinger’s interaction with various other institutions of American foreign policy making. It is evident that most officials in the State Department and the Congress were conscious stricken and tried their best to frustrate Kissinger’s strategic goals that were largely driven by perceived geopolitical needs and little consideration, if any, for morals and principles. That said, there were a few individuals who subscribed to Kissinger’s line of thought and offered him help whenever and wherever it was required.⁷ His deputy, Alexander Haig Jr. Was his wingman at all times. Haig dutifully obeyed Kissinger and subscribed to his world view. He was the vital link between Kissinger and the NSC. When the NSC staffers seemed worn out due to Kissinger’s dictates, Haig was central to keep their spirits up. The deputy’s loyalty to Kissinger is well-established when he collated evidence to

⁷ George H.W. Bush was a key individual in supporting Kissinger’s ventures at the UN. The scope of this chapter limited to the domestic front, Bush’s contributions will be detailed in chapter 4 on diplomacy.

help Kissinger fix the blame on Nixon over the illegal arms transfer. At the same time, Haig Jr. Was working tediously to impress Kissinger, four other men matched Kissinger's strategic vision. The proclivities of these men were helpful for Kissinger in balancing the domestic upheaval posed by the bureaucracies.

Nixon's Predilections- A Boon to Kissinger⁸

The most important among the individuals who fit well in Kissinger's pursuits was none other than President Nixon. On the one hand, Kissinger's writings years after holding office as the NSA, and later Secretary of State, shift the responsibility to Nixon for the unethical policy lines followed by the US. On the other, declassified documents as well as illustrations offered above highlight that Kissinger only exploited Nixon's friendship with Yahya to further his agendas in several NSC meetings. This section, relying primarily on private conversations between Kissinger and President Nixon, shows how Kissinger utilised Nixon's predisposition to the best of his advantage and at times, pressed Nixon to act on his terms.

Two important factors led Kissinger to procure a close access and leverage over Nixon. At the fundamental level, Nixon was averse to large population involved in decision making and preferred small groups. He believed that "the bureaucracy... are bastards who are here to screw with us." Such aversion to decentralisation of decision making paved way for Kissinger to be Nixon's proxy in most of the top level meetings and offered him a lot of private time with Nixon to influence his decisions. Second, Nixon's friendship with Yahya and animosity towards Indira played well for Kissinger to pursue his strategic goals. For Nixon, the war was merely a confrontation between a friend and a foe. But, for Kissinger, the war had a deep Cold War calculation. It was in this respect that Kissinger would persuade Nixon to act boldly enough to bring the world to the brink of a superpower confrontation- plausibly a third world war.

During the earliest stages of the crisis, Kissinger had assured Nixon that Yahya's military was gaining control over the Bengalis. This was in total contradiction to what was discussed and agreed upon in the NSC meetings. Although Kissinger had correctly recognised the fuming Bengali nationalism and the impending secession

⁸ A detailed analysis of Kissinger's relationship with Nixon will be provided in chapter 5. This section only narrates certain key interactions between the two during the crisis and war period.

during those meetings, in private he relieved the worried president by assuring that “the Bengalis aren’t very good fighters”. To ensure the State Department and others wouldn’t threaten his plans he even procured a hand written note stating: “To all hands. Don’t squeeze Yahya at this time.”

As the crisis progressed and war became inevitable, Nixon questioned the logic in fighting for Pakistan. He begged Kissinger to explain continuation of American resolve to help Yahya when the people of East Pakistan were welcoming the invading Indian troops. Kissinger shot back at Nixon that the “rape of an ally”- an expression used multiple times throughout the year to keep up Nixon’s fighting spirit- by a Soviet client would shake the whole balance of power equation. It would also destroy West Pakistan and the Chinese would lose faith in the Americans. Using this argumentation Kissinger convinced Nixon to break the law and seek assistance from Jordan and Iran to supply weapons to Pakistan, seek a Chinese intervention, and sail the *USS Enterprise* into Bay of Bengal. Knowing clearly that Nixon’s concern was only about not letting Indira Gandhi get an edge over, Kissinger used the same rationale to praise Nixon over a victory that clearly wasn’t: “Congratulations Mr. President. You have saved W. Pakistan.”

Joseph Farland- a Buddy in Islamabad

Farland, a West Virginian, was the US ambassador in Islamabad- superior to Archer Blood. Farland was aware of the atrocities committed by the Pak Army and also the futility of such endeavours in suppressing the Bengali nationalism. Yet, when Keating and Blood cabled Washington about their concerns and dissatisfaction with US’ inaction Farland bristled. Conjuring a sense of professionalism among the staffers in Islamabad, Karachi and Dacca, Farland ordered that no opinions or judgements would be passed on the army’s activities in East Pakistan. He upheld the government-Kissinger’s- position that the crisis was an internal affair of Pakistan and as government servants they were only to follow orders.

As Kissinger’s China venture grew stronger, Farland utility matured. He gained more access to the president and the NSA. Farland did not miss an opportunity to curse Blood and the damage his team had done by leaking information- though Blood always remained professional- and also stoke Nixon’s anger by reiterating the

Congressional challenge it had presented. Farland was Kissinger's errand boy carrying messages from the White House to personally delivering them to Yahya. Already hating the South Asian posting, Farland capitalised on his utility and requested a change in posting if the Chinese deal went through. Kissinger quite rightly called Farland "a man outside the regular Foreign Service Establishment". A special communication channel was established between Kissinger and Farland to avoid friction with the "pro-Indian" State Department. Kissinger told Farland, "Let me make a deal with you. If you get some instruction from the State Department that you consider absolutely crazy, you will use the special communication channel with us."

In the initial stages, Farland's policy prescription also matched that of Kissinger's. Both had argued for a position of neutrality and use backchannels to guide Yahya. Later, Farland would prove useful once again by persuading Yahya to instil a governor rule in Dacca prior to Nixon- Gandhi meet. This would provide a platform for Nixon to argue on behalf of Yahya's benevolence.

Winston Lord- the China Man

Kissinger's special assistant, Winston Lord, was a key player in this episode. Lord had access to Blood's reports, State Department documents and had a thorough knowledge of Yahya's carnage. Yet, Lord was loyal to Kissinger and above all he admired Kissinger for his intellect and diligence. His knowledge on China got him close to Kissinger and eventually, he would be one of the very few individuals to be aware of the China plan, Pakistani hand and would also accompany Kissinger to China and all other meetings with the Chinese. Lord, in fact, travels an extra mile to counterattack Kissinger's critics on human rights violation by claiming that the balancing strategy that Kissinger had adopted was itself an act of human rights since it kept the world from annihilation.

Lord, along with Alexander Haig, Deputy NSA, would be the only person accompanying Kissinger in his secret meetings with the Chinese. Lord was aware of the fact that Kissinger's request to the Chinese to move their troops to the Indian borders could spark a superpower confrontation but still he remained cautious not to raise concerns notwithstanding his faith in Kissinger's peace plans.

John Mitchell- the Chief “Law Enforcement” Officer of the United States

Attorney General John Mitchell would rise to fame following the Watergate Scandal, and then on, a series of revelations would regard him a crony to Nixon. In this case, the attorney general had a minor appearance but a bold and game-changing one. Mitchell was the only other person involved in the meetings that led to the transfer of arms from Iran and Jordan to Pakistan. The president appeaser maintaining a perennial silence as Kissinger and Nixon plotted the illegal transfer of weapons only interjected to curse the Indians and Ted Kennedy, and ponder over the Chinese incapability to intervene. He came to Kissinger’s rescue when the latter was worried about the State Department by suggesting that: “you’ve got to give them a party line on that or all a sudden the Secretary of State will say that’s illegal.” With the collective confidence of Kissinger and Mitchell, Nixon approved the plan, saying, “Hell, we’ve done worse.”

CHAPTER 4
WAR AND DIPLOMACY

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Kissinger, the strategist, derived his geostrategic acumen through a realist observation of international politics. The Sino-Soviet split, particularly, presented Kissinger with an opportunity to employ his much adored 'balance of power' tactics that culminated into the famous "triangular diplomacy". Seen through Kissinger's lens, the rift between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Soviet Union, and the border conflict in 1969 had thrust upon the Soviets a consideration of a dialogue with the United States to ensure stability in its western backyard, "so that they can focus more on China". In the event of such a Soviet quagmire, Kissinger deemed it ideal to side with the Chinese to "discipline the Russians". Kissinger's imagination held that the China policy would force the Soviets to consider peace with the U.S. -an expectation realised with the commencement of the U.S.-Soviet summit in Moscow in May 1972. Therefore, Kissinger's China initiative stands as a watershed moment in his career as a grand strategist and a colossal diplomat. However, peace with China had to be brokered by Pakistan and would appear amidst the 1971 East Pakistan crisis and the subsequent Indo-Pak war. The timing of the crisis convoluted Kissinger's China initiative-- one supposed to be a simplistic venture concealed in secrecy-- into a nightmare that almost resulted in a superpower confrontation.

This chapter is divided into two main sections- first, the crisis period and second, the war period. The crisis period involves mainly Kissinger's diplomatic overtures to China and its conclusive demeanour on India and Pakistan. The war period includes Kissinger's diplomacy primarily with India, Pakistan, China and the Soviet Union, in addition to numerous other participant nations from across the world.

Secret Trip to China-- the Stimulus for a Flawed South Asian Policy

A year before the outbreak of the crisis in the subcontinent, President Nixon and NSA Kissinger had been contemplating on several options for an opening to China. One of the earliest attempts was made through France. On 27 September 1970, conversing in his apartment in Paris, Jean Sainteny, a diplomat and a friend of Kissinger, was informed of Kissinger's hardship in reaching out to the Chinese.

Kissinger's request to Sainteny was to set up a meeting with Huang Chen, the Chinese ambassador. Sainteny agreed to help after conveying a little concern about his inability to speak Chinese language. The concern was that a clandestine message could not involve his interpreter- plausibly a secret service officer- knowing about it. Sainteny, however, offered to help using an associate with knowledge of the language and access to Chen. As late as 7 November, Sainteny still remained positive about his efforts but the results were far from realisation.

Exactly a month after meeting Sainteny, Kissinger held a meeting with Nicolae Ceausescu, President of the Council of the State of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to discuss the developments in Vietnam and the White House's renewed interest in reaching out to the Chinese. Kissinger reiterated to Ceausescu Nixon's "interest in establishing political and diplomatic communications" with the PRC. Kissinger assured the Romanian that the U.S. had no long-term animosity with the PRC and that any messages relayed between the U.S. and China through the Romanian channels would be "confined to the White House". Ceausescu promised to inform the Chinese leadership and also relay any message from China back to the U.S.

Two days prior to the meeting between Kissinger and Ceausescu, Nixon had met Pakistan President Yahya Khan when the latter visited the U.S. on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations. The tone of the meeting was set in perfect cordiality as Nixon explained to Yahya the accomplishments of the White House in keeping alive the military aid to Pakistan despite a stiff Congressional opposition. Yahya only picked up the tenor and thanked Nixon for being a wonderful friend of the Pakistanis and assured him that Pakistan would do nothing to embarrass the United States. In the conversation that followed Yahya bragged about his friendship with Zhou En-lai and Nixon supplemented that he too was interested in reaching out to the Chinese. Nixon firmly told Yahya that his intentions were not just to establish a hotline but to open diplomatic relations with China. Like Sainteny and Ceausescu, Yahya agreed to communicate with the Chinese.

The tripartite investments began to mature in January 1971. The White House began to receive responses from all three sources. Sainteny continued showing positive resolve in helping Kissinger. Ambassador Corneliu Bogdan of Romania also carried responses from Chou En-lai about the Chinese interest in opening a dialogue with the

Americans in a convenient location. Overwhelming these two channels, however, was the Pakistani channel. The Pakistani president personally carried a letter from Washington proposing a meeting with the PRC and read it out to Chou En-lai. While Chou gave the standard reply he had given to the former channels, he went a step ahead to accredit the Pakistani channel with a special status. The Chinese Premier said, “We have had messages from the United States from different sources... but this is the first time that the proposal has come from a Head, through a Head, to a Head. The United States knows that Pakistan is a great friend of China and therefore we attach great importance to the message.”

Whilst these developments were taking place the State Department, oblivious to the White House’s diplomatic activities, was left to make assessments based on open source information and some intelligence flowing in from its ambassadors abroad. Largely relying on the visit of the U.S. Table Tennis team to the PRC, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) prepared a report interpreting the incidents as a “new page” in Sino-American relations. During the 31st World Table Tennis Championship held in Nagoya, Japan between March and April 1971, the American ping pong delegation were contacted by the manager of the Chinese delegation and extended an invitation to visit China. After consultation with Nixon, the American ambassador in Japan directed the American delegation to accept the invitation. On 14 April, the delegation reached China and was welcomed by Premier Chou Enlai, culminating into a landmark event in the history of “sports diplomacy”. According to the INR report, Ottawa was predicted to be the epicentre of the metamorphosed Sino-American relations based on the appointment of Huang Hua as the ambassador to Canada. All in all, despite being a tenacious effort in intelligence analysis, the report highlighted the State Department’s oblivion to the Pakistan connection, or for that matter the Romanian and the French channel.

Chou’s message to Kissinger on 21 April 1971 confirmed the Chinese willingness to receive him, the Secretary of State or the President publicly in Peking, for which the “modalities, procedures and other details.... could be made through the good offices of President Yahya Khan.” In response to Chou’s letter, the U.S. Government responded with an affirmation of the need for high-level talks between the U.S. and the PRC. The response message informed Chou that Nixon proposes a preliminary meeting by Kissinger with Chou himself or any other high-level Chinese official to set the agenda

for the Presidential visit. It stressed on the need for the rendezvous point remain within flying distance from Pakistan and be shrouded in utmost secrecy. Pakistan would be the principal event manager. After many deliberations on the dates of Kissinger's secret visit it was decided that the visit would commence on 9 July and conclude on 11 July 1971. Pakistan was elated by the criticality of the role it was playing at this watershed moment in history. On 19 June, Pakistan Ambassador Agha Hilaly sent a handwritten note to Kissinger assuring him of "foolproof arrangements will be made... and he need have no anxiety on this count."

The foundational pillars were laid for the secret trip; the itinerary was drafted to include a visit to India, followed by a visit to Pakistan and then a flight to China and back to Pakistan. On 9 July, Kissinger would fake a stomach illness and retreat to Yahya's hill resort while Ambassador Joseph S. Farland would prevent the embassy doctor from reaching Kissinger. Kissinger accompanied by a few NSC staff would then fly to China. Thus, Kissinger's China venture was a success and laid the foundation for the presidential visit in 1972. However, apart from shifting the strategic priorities of the U.S., Kissinger's secret trip to China shook the geopolitical equation of South Asia, which can be better understood by examining critically Kissinger's diplomacy with India and Pakistan with respect to the East Pakistani crisis.

Kissinger's Diplomacy Begins at Home

The refugee crisis facing India had began to reach an intolerable level that forced Prime Minister India Gandhi to launch a global diplomatic mission to achieve international concern over her security plight. Through May and June 1971, selected diplomats and cabinet ministers toured the world conveying to the heads of various states the situation facing India. Nevertheless, the power politics of the day left India with few sympathisers, not significant enough to be impactful. To ensure that a war did not break out, some of the rich nations provided token aid to India- cumulatively forming less than 10 percent of the actual requirement to handle the refugee influx. Nixon indifferent to India's condition decided to provide nothing to the Indians- in order, not to rile his Pakistani friend. Kissinger persuaded Nixon to provide a small donation to diminish the press, Congressional and the State Departmental criticisms.

Ultimately, an aid of 17.5 million dollars was decided to act as an insurance against India making any war moves, at least until Kissinger completes his China trip.

Kissinger's main agenda was to avoid a war that could potentially derail his strategic plans and Nixon's main concern was to do nothing that could put Yahya in a fix. As the aid amount was being decided, private conversation between Kissinger and Nixon in the Oval Office show how the concerns of the two formed the basis for action. Kissinger told Nixon that the Indians were "the most aggressive goddamn people around there" and were "getting so devious" that a war was in the making (Bass, 2013: 143). Kissinger's appeal to the president was to use dialogue, sympathetic statements- on the refugee situation-- and aid as means to thwart the outbreak of a war. However, for Nixon, Yahya's friendship superseded Kissinger's strategic calculations. Verifying the ramifications on Pakistan, Nixon asked Kissinger if the statements on the refugee crisis involved "anything against Yahya". Knowing the president's propensity, Kissinger had done the groundwork by working with the Pakistani embassy. He assured Nixon that no statement would go against Yahya and, on the contrary, Yahya would echo Nixon's hope that the refugees could get back to East Pakistan- stealing away from India the strongest cause for a war.

Amidst these developments, Kissinger's diplomacy with Pakistan took a new face when he brought in Ambassador Farland on the China plan, thus, denying the State Department a key source of information from Pakistan. Following the president's orders, Farland covertly met Kissinger in Palm Springs, California, where he was informed about the China channel. Farland readily devoted himself to the mission and became the manager of all affairs with Yahya pertaining to Kissinger's visit. Farland further used the meeting to strengthen the U.S,' resolve to save Pakistan. Kissinger was alerted about Ambassador Kenneth Keating's press adventures (refer chapter 3), Pakistan's financial crisis and the need for international aid; and most importantly, Farland opined that Germany, Great Britain and Japan should be notified about the U.S. commitment to save Pakistan and instructed to adjust their policies in line with the U.S.

Swaran Singh, India's foreign minister, who was part of Indira Gandhi's diplomatic corps fighting to draw global attention towards the refugee crisis and resultantly condemn Pakistan, had reached Washington as his last stop. Kissinger conveyed to

Nixon that the main agenda was to keep the Indians “from attacking for the three months” and so the president had to deal well with the visiting foreign minister and instil a hope that the U.S. was with the Indians. Nixon played such a charming diplomat empathizing with India’s plight that Swaran Singh felt the president was more helpful than the State Department (Bass, 2103: 156). However, just a few days after Singh’s meeting at Washington, media reports about a Pakistani freighter filled with military spare parts was ready to sail from the New York harbour to Karachi surprised Singh. As Nixon and Kissinger dealt with the Indians during the month of May and June 1971, it was evident that they were ensuring no obstacles came from India while they set the preparatory grounds for Kissinger’s secret trip to Peking via New Delhi and Islamabad. In short, open diplomacy was to precede secret diplomacy, during which the only concern Kissinger and Nixon had was to avoid a conflict in the subcontinent.

Kissinger’s Visit to India

If Pakistan was the launch pad to reach China, India had to be the transit point to Pakistan because Kissinger still did not want to openly exhibit a leaning towards Pakistan. Kissinger landed in India on 6 July 1971 in New Delhi and was greeted by protesters from the Communist Party of India at the entrance road to the Palam Airport. *Chicago Tribune* reported the protesters carrying sign boards that read “Kissinger of death” and “Nixon arming Yahya’s military junta to kill Bangla Desh.”⁹ The communists made all efforts to attack Kissinger at the airport and later at the U.S. embassy they failed to tackle the formidable security arrangements made by the Indian police. The Indian government, for its part, felt that it would prick Kissinger’s conscience if he visited the refugee camps and witnessed the havoc. However, Kissinger had made it clear that he would not be able to visit any of the refugee camps as the purpose of his visit seemed to gain an overview of the Indian thinking rather than help resolve the refugee crisis.

Kissinger’s first meeting in India was with P.N. Haksar, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister in his South Block office. Haksar was Kissinger’s counterpart in India

⁹ Although the state of Bangladesh gained formal recognition on 16 December 1971, sympathisers of the East-Pakistani cause in the media and elsewhere had begun using the term “Bangla Desh” — meaning a “the nation of Bengal”.

and a renowned strategist in India. Haksar fumed at Kissinger over the issue of arms sale to Pakistan amidst India's ongoing refugee crisis. Explaining India's situation he told Kissinger that "[India] did not want to go to war but it did not know how not to go to war." Kissinger tried to pacify Haksar that the shipments comprised of non-lethal equipment to which the experienced secretary shot back that the non-lethal spare parts were meant to invigorate the lethal weapons (Bass, 2013:162). Kissinger without losing his nerve roared that the Indians were trying to use the shipment issue to prepare for a war. According to Kissinger, Haksar knew that the arms shipment was insignificant and added that, even on the remainder in the arms pipeline being shipped would not make any difference in the situation. To him, the weapons point was India's attempt in "playing power politics with cold calculations" whereas the State Department knew that the Indians had "a genuine feeling against [U.S.] arms aid to Pakistan."

In addition to this, there are two more important themes discussed by Kissinger and Haksar- both indicative of the complications and subtlety of statecraft. Haksar brought up the refugee crisis and its implications on India's national security. He emphasized that the majority of the refugees fleeing the country were Hindus fearing persecution and the Indian government found it difficult to revert them to East Pakistan until democracy was restored. For Haksar, this would have a negative impact on the secular fabric of India's democracy. Kissinger, trying to avoid Haksar's concern over communal backlash, inquired about India training the guerrillas. Haksar dodged India's covert operations by denying allegations of arming the guerrillas and mentioned that the frontier could not be sealed everywhere. By that time, however, the Indian Army, the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) were working in several secret camps training the Bengali rebels.

The question of the Chinese cropped up and Kissinger hinted to Haksar that the U.S. wanted improvement in its relations with China. However, Kissinger had to limit further details of the American plans as the China trip was meant to be wrapped in secrecy. When the Indian government had launched a diplomatic tour across the world in May-June, China was one of the countries to denounce India downright. China held that the crisis was Pakistan's internal issue and hence, could do anything to suppress the secessionists (Bass, 2013: 141). As Kissinger hinted the US efforts at developing friendly relations with China, Haksar naturally raised the Chinese as a

concern in India's national security. Kissinger assured that the U.S. would not allow China to dominate India, to which, Haksar seethed that the U.S. undoubtedly be sympathetic to India in the face of a Chinese aggression.

The Chinese question was brought up the next day again with Haksar, Swaran Singh, the Foreign Minister, Jagjivan Ram, the Defence Minister and Prime Minister India Gandhi. Kissinger, at different venues and different times, apprised these individuals of an upcoming change in international relations. He did not provide anyone with any details of his plans but only sugar-coated his statement with an assurance that it would be meant to promote international peace and tranquillity and not against India. Kissinger showed his canny side as a diplomat when he assured the Indians that the U.S would take a grave view of any unprovoked Chinese move against India, but did not make any promises of either a military intervention on India's behalf or pledge any military aid to India if the Chinese attacked. This talk of the U.S. condemnation of a Chinese aggression against India would begin to nullify on July 17 when Kissinger cautioned Ambassador L.K. Jha that if a war broke out between India and Pakistan and if China intervened on Pak's behalf "[the U.S.] would be unable to help [India] against China" (Hersh, 1983: 452). Nonetheless, in a span of five months, as the war broke out, Kissinger would be asking the Chinese to move in their troops.

The arms shipment to Pakistan had raised a hue and cry in the Indian parliament adding to the pressure on the prime minister to act. The issue invited attacks on Kissinger from all quarters on his visit to India. Except Vikram Sarabhi, Chairman, Indian Atomic Energy Commission, nobody agreed with Kissinger's insignificance logic of the arms supply to Pakistan. K. Subrahmanyam tried to evoke Kissinger's origins as a Hitler era refugee and asked him to empathise with India's refugee problems. Defence Minister Ram, aware of the border skirmishes between the Indian and Pakistan armies blamed the U.S. supply of arms to Pakistan as a cause for Pakistan's devilry. Above all, the foreign minister, who held a great feeling of betrayal after his meeting with Nixon bristled at Kissinger that he did not understand the U.S.' passion for friendship with Pakistan and, unlike the other Indian officials concerned much with the refugee question, said that the arms supply would be the impetus for a war (Bass, 2013: 164).

Kissinger was astute in realising earlier that the two days in India would be tiring with criticisms of the American foreign policy. But he was discerning as a diplomat that the meeting with the prime minister would be the crucial of all. The meeting began on the same lines covering the military aid, refugee situation, Pakistan's economic situation and the need for a political solution for the East Pakistan crisis, instead of a conflict in the region. Indira Gandhi's principal worry was the domestic implication of the crisis. She said that "hardly two people in the parliament approve[d] of [India's] policy". Also she provided Kissinger with India's analysis of Pakistan's strategic thought. She opined that it was inherent in the Pakistani mindset to view India through the prism of hostility, and hence, her adventurism against India would continue irrespective of the U.S. support. India's major concern with the refugee crisis was not just the impact on her economy but the fear of a communal backlash. A coy Kissinger asked how long India could sustain the refugees and Gandhi shot back that it was already unmanageable and she was "just holding it together by sheer willpower". Kissinger cooled the air by displaying his charisma as a wily diplomat.

Kissinger summarised the meeting by saying that there were two problems: at the immediate level was the refugee crisis facing India, and the long-term concern was the U.S.-India relationship. He quickly wrapped up the refugee question, by reassuring that the U.S. sympathises with India and President Nixon would use his influence over Yahya to handle the crisis. On the topic of bilateral relations, Kissinger noted that the relationship cannot be jeopardised based on a regional dispute. He delighted the Indian leadership by stating that the U.S. approach to India had changed from the 1950s and the U.S. no longer views India's policy of non-alignment as an opponent. He quoted that, "a strong India is in the interest of the United States... and will attempt to have as full a dialogue with India as India is willing to have", before extending an invitation to Indira Gandhi to visit the U.S. to take the relationship forward. By these words, Gandhi seemed to have relaxed and replied in positive but cautioned that not a word of it could get out.

Kissinger in Pakistan

On 8 July 1971, Kissinger began his first set of meetings in Rawalpindi with Sultan Khan, the Foreign Secretary, M.M. Ahmad, the economic advisor to the president of

Pakistan, and Agha Hilaly, Ambassador of Pakistan to the U.S. Kissinger well aware of the need to comfort the Pakistanis ahead of his China trip kept the tone of his meetings amicable to the hosts. He briefed the Pakistanis of his visit to India and described his experience as “shock[ing]” due to the “hostility, bitterness and hawkishness of the Indians.” He informed the Pakistani delegation that the refugee crisis was now top most on the U.S. agenda in the region because it had the potential to spark a war. Ahmad bristled at the Indians and told Kissinger that Pakistan was willing to welcome the refugees back but it was the Indian propaganda that had instilled fear among the refugees and prevented their return. The Pakistanis also took a grudging view of India’s linking the political situation in East Pakistan with the refugee crisis. The bottom-line of their argument was that India was unnecessarily preparing for a war. Kissinger couldn’t agree more with the Pakistani assessment. He accused Indira Gandhi of not trying to settle the refugee problem and comforted the Pakistanis by reiterating their viewpoint that the refugee crisis and the political settlement in East Pakistan must be looked upon in isolation with each other. Kissinger concluded the meeting with an assurance that the U.S. would do everything it could to help Pakistan alleviate the economic crisis that had intensified since the civil war had erupted, and further work towards a policy resolution.

Kissinger knew from the beginning that his stay in Pakistan was going to be much harmonious than his visit to India. His diplomacy that began in Washington had managed to keep the Pakistanis in good books- oscillating between exercising verbal restraint against condemning Yahya to continuation of the arms supply despite a ban. However, his stay in Pakistan was made slightly rough by American diplomats posted there. Eric Griffel, a signatory of the Blood Telegram, Dennis Kux, a political officer, and Chuck Yeager, U.S. defence representative gave Kissinger a hard look at the real picture that he deliberately wanted to avoid. Griffel continued updating the inattentive Kissinger on the developments in East Pakistan. Finally, what shook Kissinger was Griffel’s confidence that the insurgency could survive even without India’s help and if war broke out eventually, India would win. Kux highlighted the religious cleansing campaign mounted by the Pakistan Army and cited that it would lead to a war, chances at one in three. After feeling the heat in Delhi meetings, Kissinger understood that the chances of an armed conflict were higher. Despite favouring Pakistan, Yeager did not shy away from drawing Kissinger’s attention to an objective assessment of the

military situation in the subcontinent. As remarkable as his accuracy could get, he informed Kissinger that in the event of a war with India, Pakistan could last only about two weeks (Bass, 2013: 168-169).

Following these meetings, Kissinger's last stop before boarding the flight to Peking was a meeting with President Yahya Khan. The meeting was guarded in close secrecy. None other than the president and Kissinger were privy to the discussions and as a result, no official records of the conversations are available. All that is available is Kissinger's reporting to President Nixon about this meeting where he states having informed Yahya about India's concern. At the dinner table, Kissinger put on his act and complained of a stomach pain and was subsequently hurried to Yahya's hill resort and the trip to Peking was about to commence. Up to this point, the East Pakistan crisis was only a minor obstacle in Kissinger's strategic plans that had to be managed until the China opening went through. However, the discussions in China on 10 July indicated that the Pakistanis could not be ignored following the trip. On the contrary, the China trip would force Kissinger to get embroiled in the subcontinent for a long haul.

The China Trip and the Cold War Calculus

Kissinger was exhilarated about the meeting with Premier Chou Enlai. The half a daylong interaction covered several areas including Taiwan, Vietnam, Japan and also their mutual rancor of the bureaucracies. The first day's conversation did not emphasise the crisis in the subcontinent or anything substantial about India and Pakistan. But the meeting on 10 July, much to Kissinger's astonishment, was largely focused on the crisis in the subcontinent. Chou was forthright in his condemnation of the Indian interference in East Pakistan. "The so called Government of Bangla Desh set up its headquarters in India. Isn't that subversion of the Pakistani Government?" Chou assured Kissinger that if India attempted any military ventures against Pakistan, China would object it. Chou said, "We support the stand of Pakistan. If [the Indians] are bent on provoking such a situation then we cannot sit idly by." When Chou suggested his suspicions over Americans support of Indian subversion, Kissinger replied in negative. Kissinger told the premier that the American analysis was similar to the Chinese. He assured Chou that the U.S. had not given any military assistance to

India since 1965 and had ensured that the financial aid was not used to procure military equipment from elsewhere. Furthermore, he promised Chou that the U.S. would not “encourage Indian military adventures.”

The next day as the meeting concluded, Chou asked Kissinger to tell President Yahya that “if India commits aggression, PRC will support Pakistan.” He tried to probe if the U.S. would conform to the Chinese but got a half-hearted reply from Kissinger, who said that, “we will oppose that, but we cannot take military measures.” Chou replied that he understood distance was an issue but that shouldn’t stop the U.S. from persuading India to exercise restraint. Kissinger and Chou had realised that Yahya had outlived his utility, but unlike Kissinger, Chou had an urge to express gratitude. Quoting an old Chinese saying “that one shouldn’t break the bridge after crossing it”, Chou hoped to keep the Yahya channel alive. Kissinger, trying to play safe, agreed to exchange some communication through Yahya but not anything substantive- it required secrecy beyond friendship and trustworthiness. Although Kissinger managed to convince Chou not to communicate anything substantial through Pakistan, Chou’s affinity towards Yahya formed a strong basis for future policies in South Asia.

Chou’s deep resentment of India and inclination towards Pakistan gave Kissinger an impression that the Pakistan question would be a litmus test for the Americans to prove their loyalty. According to Kissinger, the Chinese would estimate the commitment levels of the U.S. in maintaining relationships based on their resolve to help Pakistan sustain its geographic unity. Ergo, what was supposed to be a short-term investment to establish a long-term business with the Chinese now turned into a condition for survival.

The foundation for the “tilt” was laid, and the U.S. resolve to protect Pakistan grew stronger. Notwithstanding the announcement of Kissinger’s visit to China, India recognised what was in store in the coming days and began to look elsewhere. From this point, began the change in the whole strategic and geopolitical calculus of the subcontinent. India grew increasingly paranoid of the U.S.-China-Pakistan concord and was, hence, forced to look towards the Soviet Union to develop a deterrent partnership. Scholarship is, however, divided on this argument. Historians Gary Bass and Ramachandra Guha argue that India had its own strategic designs based on cold calculations-- a catalyst in reaching out to the Soviets. Criticising this argument is

Srinath Raghavan, who surmises that it was the Sino-U.S. rapprochement that forced India to sign a peace and friendship treaty with the Soviets (Cordera, 2015: 46).

Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty: Myth or Reality

The Indo- Soviet friendship treaty is regarded as a watershed moment in India's history, but a lot more happened during that time that show the complexities of international relations of the day. A comprehensive understanding of this episode is important in further detailing Kissinger's diplomatic enterprise. Archival data available now provides a detailed picture of what actually transpired between India and the Soviet Union during that period. Also, what the treaty meant to the Indians, to the Soviets and to the Americans, in particular. It is true that the working on a treaty draft had begun prior to the Sino-American rapprochement. However, wary of probable domestic criticisms about moving away from established non-alignment principles, Indira Gandhi had paused working on the treaty, a decision the Soviets, despite being enthusiastic about accomplishing the treaty, had completely understood and accepted. But, as Kissinger's trip to Peking came to light, India was caught in a security dilemma and it was then that D.P. Dhar- the most prominent advocate of the treaty- began working meticulously on finalising the draft.

By this time, India's paranoia about domestic political repercussions had decreased and all reservations against signing the treaty had subsided. Instead, it was the Soviets who began to display hesitation at the moment of probable conclusion. Kremlin was not ready for the bifurcation of Pakistan or encouraging war between India and Pakistan. Contrary to Kissinger, who observed the crisis in South Asia through the lens of Cold War power calculations, the Soviets took a rather charitable view of the developments- a threat to regional balance of power. So, their only intention for the signing of the treaty would be to dissuade a Sino-America-Pakistan trio from making any military moves against India, which was India's biggest fear and impetus to sign adopt the treaty. Today, it is well-founded that until the escalation and war, the Soviet Union was the only country interested- or making efforts- in promoting peace and harmony between India and Pakistan. Premier Alexei Kosygin, in particular, wanted to promote trade and transit through Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. (Raghavan, 2013: 114). Even as the treaty was being signed he encouraged India to strengthen its

military without pledging active support in the event of a war. (Bass, 2013: 218) Therefore, on the fundamental question of why the treaty had to be signed, India and the Soviet Union had differing reasons.

History has to credit Dhar's genius for convincing the Soviets to allow the inclusion of a military angle in the treaty citing the Chinese threat. Dhar confided in the Soviets that the Chinese threat- one that the Soviets already believed- was indeed real and that, the Soviet troops concentration in China's northern borders would deter them from making any moves against India. Defence Minister Andrei Grechko, seemed not just convinced but strongly motivated to provide India with a deterrent effect against the Chinese. Nevertheless, the deterrent effect did not mean encouraging Indian military moves. It was only to deter Pakistan and China from making any offences.

India's intentions of signing the treaty were also defensive at best. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Foreign Minister Swaran Singh did not share the same anxiety as Dhar and Haksar and were careful about not insinuating any deviation from the policy of non-alignment. Foreign Secretary Kaul showed hesitation in accepting the military aspect of the draft as it could be viewed as a drift into the Soviet bloc. Instead he suggested inserting a clause that forbids having military relationship with a "third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party" (Raghavan, 2013: 125). In doing so, India was only ensuring that, in the event of a war with Pakistan, the Soviet Union would not be in any position to make military deals with Pakistan. It was no indication of a Soviet assistance to Indian military empowerment. To that end, even after the signing of the treaty on August 8, 1971, the Soviet's assumed role was still of a deterrent acting to stop one waging war against the other.

Now, the important question is- how did Americans perceive this treaty, especially Kissinger? Kissinger's assessment with respect to the Soviets was that the treaty offered "a way of solidifying their position in South Asia at the expense of the US and China." To Kissinger, this was Moscow's attempt at thwarting a Sino-Indian rapprochement in the future and distancing the US further from India. On the Indian side, Kissinger acknowledged that the treaty was a bold move for India for it denoted a shift from its non-aligned posture, which meant that "their vital interests are at stake". Kissinger also understood India's dilemma when he recognised that Indira Gandhi had accepted an invitation to Washington while the signing of the treaty was

underway. At that time, Kissinger had regarded the treaty as only a result of strategic calculations and in effect had a deterrent value. However, writing years later in his memoir, Kissinger held the treaty as the catalyst for the war. He wrote, “With the treaty, Moscow threw a lighted match into a powder keg” (Kissinger, 1979: 866-67).

Diplomatic Strategies to Contain the Outbreak of a War

In the interim between the signing of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty and outbreak of the war, Kissinger was embroiled in a domestic battle with the Congress, as elucidated in the previous chapter. But, while fighting the bureaucratic battle with the State Department and trying to checkmate the Congress, Kissinger held two meetings that could have saved Pakistan. The first was Kissinger’s meeting with some leaders of the Bengali exiles in Calcutta; and, second, the visit of PM Gandhi and Principal Secretary Haksar to Washington. However, in the end, both the attempts were futile and by the end of October and the beginning of November, the war was in its making

Kissinger’s meeting with the Bengali government in Exile in Calcutta was doomed to fail for the fundamental reason that the US failed to procure from Yahya the release of Mujibur Rahman. Mujib was the face of the revolution and the nationalistic fire spread across East Pakistan had taken a violent turn after his arrest. The US sought to soothe the Pakistanis by trying to extract a moderate faction among the exiles who were willing to compromise for autonomy, short of independence. The candidate chosen for negotiations was Mushtaq Ahmed, the Foreign Minister of Bangla Desh. However, the absence of Mujib played an important factor in negating any substantial developments. Also, Ahmed was seen as a conservative whose ideas could have fuelled communal tensions (Badhwar, 2014). Therefore, communication with the government in exile turned futile leaving Kissinger with only the prime ministerial visit as an opportunity to develop a solution.

Much to Kissinger’s disappointment, his warning to Nixon to be well behaved with Gandhi had no effect. The welcoming ceremony itself was disastrous with both the leaders quite explicitly showing a strong dislike towards each other. The two leaders kept exchanging their views on the refugee crisis, aid situation, and war mongering and arms sales. At every instance, one tried to overpower the other and there was nothing close to controlling the situation in East Pakistan that would deny India a

reason to fight. On the issue of Awami League and Mujib, the two leaders were at loggerheads. Finally, the meeting only served to strengthen India's conviction that the US was against them, further pushing India to adopt military means to settle the crisis. Not surprisingly, Kissinger declared that this meeting was the worst meeting Nixon held with any foreign leader (Kissinger, 1979; 878).

With the two ineffectual attempts, South Asia soon drifted into a war between India and Pakistan and Kissinger turned his charm to use every diplomatic tool at his disposal to punish the Indians. Secrecy was of the key to his business from this point till the end of the war.

The Final Play: United Nations to Gunboat Diplomacy

The failed diplomacy with Mrs. Gandhi not only strengthened India's reasons for military solution, it also strengthened Kissinger's anger against India and Nixon's commitment to save Pakistan. On November 21-22, the first evidence of an escalation appeared at a place called Boyra in East Pakistan, along the borders with India. After repeated cross border violations by Pakistan and provocation by Pakistan, the Indian Army entered East Pakistan. In retaliation, the next day Pakistan responded with land and air power, only to lose three Sabre fighter jets, around thirteen M-24 Chaffee light tanks and numerous soldiers to the Indians.

Although, there were speculations if this meant war, Kissinger was convinced that it was. Kissinger opened two battle fronts against India- one, at the UN; and second, in secret undertaking to support Pakistan militarily.

“Pakistan will get Raped”- Kissinger to the Chinese

The following day, Kissinger secretly met the Chinese diplomats at a CIA safe house in New York. The Chinese delegation led by Huang Hua, the Chinese Ambassador to the UN, met Kissinger, Haig and Lord and was told that the nature of the meeting was highly secret and no one other than the occupants of the room knew about it. Kissinger used the meeting to convey to the Chinese his strongest conviction to save Pakistan and also, to urge the Chinese to reciprocate the same. He began his presentation by briefing the Chinese a CIA assessment on Indian military- violating

US security rules of sharing intelligence- to show the Chinese that the Indians had stepped up their war efforts but left the northern frontiers with China unguarded. The principle objective of the meeting was to coordinate the Sino-US moves for the UNSC debates. He inquired Huang, what China would think if the US and China allowed a friend to get raped without any assistance (Bass, 2013: 264).

The UN plan was laid out perfectly and George Bush Sr. was chosen as the representative to put forth the American point of view. The American point of view at the UNSC was simple- not pro-Pakistan, not pro-India, but pro-peace. Kissinger was sure that any resolution condemning India would be vetoed by the Russians and any resolution targeting the Pakistanis would be vetoed by the Chinese. Therefore, although not of much potential, Kissinger used the UN deliberations to embarrass the Soviets. Early December, two resolutions were passed by the Americans calling for a ceasefire. The Soviets vetoed it with the support of Poland. But all the other eleven members voted in favour of the resolution. Failing to reach a consensus the issue reached the UN General Assembly.

At the General Assembly the Soviet Union, its satellite states and India faced greater embarrassment. They were outnumbered with 104 countries voting in favour of the resolution and calling for a ceasefire and withdrawal. Nonetheless, this could not stop the war. The UN efforts were built on a shaky premise that world opinion matters strongly for the Indians. If this was true, India was aware of a hostile world opinion early 1971 when it embarked on a global diplomatic mission that failed to win any buyers. So, the UN debacle should not have come as a surprise.

Kissinger's Backchannel with the Soviets

Kissinger even tried to communicate with the Soviets and convince them to stop supporting the Indians. The backchannel for this purpose had been established several weeks before the UN deliberations began. His interlocutor was Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador in the US. Dobrynin did not accept any of US' assessments about India's war preparations. As war began, Kissinger started communicating with Kosygin and urged the latter to accept the American proposal for withdrawal. The American proposal insisted on a ceasefire but made no attempts at elaborating the future course of action in East Pakistan. Kosygin, thus, replied in negative citing the

infeasible nature of the proposal that draws little attention to the political solution that must be initiated by the Pakistan government.

As the Soviet vetoes continued at the UNSC, Kissinger's patience began waning. In a desperate measure, he charged at the Soviet counsellor Yuli Vorontsov and asked him to convey to Brezhnev that encouraging Indian military action against Pakistan would have ramifications on the overall US-Soviet relations. Kissinger offered American assistance at developing a political solution if the Soviets could promise a withdrawal. Vorontsov was surprised. And so was the leadership at Kremlin. The Soviets did not ascribe to the South Asian crisis the same level of geopolitical significance that the Kissinger and Nixon had attributed (Raghavan, 2013: 242-244).

Kissinger's Gunboat Diplomacy

As the deliberations at the UN concluded with little impact on the South Asian crisis, Kissinger had new questions to contend with. By November 7, India had almost finished its operations in East Pakistan. Now the question was what India was going to do next. Was India's war objectives limited to the liberation of Bangladesh or more than that? Kissinger was convinced, not based on credible intelligence analysis, but based on a single source in New Delhi, who informed him that Indira Gandhi aimed at destroying the Pakistani military completely, even in the western front. Whatever be the credibility of this intelligence, Kissinger was a ready buyer of it. He quickly suggested three parts of his gunboat diplomacy that was to come.

First, he suggested arming the Pakistanis with more weapons. This would have to be done secretly with the help of the Jordan and Iran and away from public view. Second, Kissinger suggested secretly asking the Chinese to move their troops to the Indian borders. The last suggestion was a direct American intervention through the deployment of a US aircraft carrier group to the Bay of Bengal to threaten India. According to Kissinger's plans, all these moves had to be implemented simultaneously.

Kissinger pressed Nixon to act on persuading the Iranians and Jordanians to move their squadrons to Pakistan. Kissinger's concern was the State Department getting any clue of the deal. Kissinger warned the Pakistani ambassador to hold all cables

regarding the arms shipment. Every message had to be perfectly coded. In Kissinger's own words to the ambassador, "we are working very actively on getting military equipment to you- but for God's sake don't say anything to anybody!" Accordingly, planes were transported to Pakistan from Jordan, and Iran refurbished Jordan's losses. Not only Jordan and Iran, the Saudis and Turks were also considered as options to assist the Pakistanis with aircraft.

When Kissinger began talking to the Chinese, the Jordanians had sent 17 F-104 planes and Turkey was ready to send twenty-two of them. Kissinger was sharing all these details with Huang Hua. Hua was informed by Kissinger that they had broken all laws in this regard- to help a friend. Kissinger's idea was that if the US showed its resolve to save Pakistan, then the Chinese would also feel the pressure to act. India had, however, begun to sense a Chinese threat and therefore, bought a Soviet assurance on a deterrent troop movement to the Sino-Soviet borders if China intervened with India on behalf of Pakistan. Kissinger knew this, and showed his will by telling Nixon that if the Soviets attacked China then the US would have to act. Evidently, this meant a third world war situation, yet Kissinger was ready for it. Fortunately, the Chinese had no intentions of getting involved militarily.

While the Chinese were pondering over the American requests to move their troops to the Indian borders, Kissinger implemented his final move in the gunboat diplomacy. Nixon and Kissinger set sail the USS Enterprise, an aircraft carrier, into the Bay of Bengal under the pretext of evacuating the Americans. The Enterprise was actually meant to scare the Indians and the Soviets. However, it failed to produce any deterrent effect as East Pakistan was occupied and Pakistan's General Niazi had sent a message to Indian Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw asking for a ceasefire. Also, the Soviets sent a backchannel message to Washington confirming that the Indians had no intentions in West Pakistan and took an uneasy position on the US' naval movements in the Bay of Bengal. On December 16, the surrender of the Pakistan forces was inevitable and a ceasefire was called. Kissinger, at this moment, congratulated Nixon on thwarting the annihilation of West Pakistan and relayed to Nixon how his idea of providing fighter planes through Jordan had helped Pakistan.

CHAPTER 5

KISSINGER: SECRET ELITE AND THE CRISIS IN THE SUBCONTINENT

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The fulfilment of the central objective of this research is attained when Kissinger's handling of the East-Pakistan crisis and subsequently the Indo-Pak war is analysed using the theoretical principles put forth in chapter 2. The chapter tried to build a case for the existence of secret elite in international politics using the three key principles of ideas, individual/position and secrecy. This analytical chapter uses the principles of secret elitism to assess the role played by Henry Kissinger in dealing with the politico-military developments in South Asia. The objective of this chapter is to understand why Kissinger behaved the way he did, and what operational facilitators were in place to help him singlehandedly supervise American policies towards the region.

Contextualising Kissinger within the framework of secret elitism, hence, requires his actions be understood from a historical approach to draw a psycho analysis of the individual. This is fundamentally important to comprehend the rationale for Kissinger's way of handling of the crisis. The first section of this chapter titled "Ideas" seeks to address this requirement. Once personal and professional understanding of the man's psyche is established, the chapter proceeds to the operational facilitators that provided him with the much needed freedom of action-with minimal interference from bureaucratic opponents, especially in a system of checks and balances. Therefore, the next section titled "Individual/Position" examines the position of the National Security Advisor (NSA) in general, and under President Nixon in particular, to understand the influence Kissinger wielded during the Nixon years that allowed his ideas to flourish. However, the contention of the thesis being ideas and position alone does not allow elite control of decision-making, an important operational aspect called "secrecy" forms the level of analysis in the final section. In the system of checks and balances, power and position alone could not have granted Kissinger the freedom of action and thence, it was necessary that some of the critical operational aspects remain clouded in secrecy.

Ideas

Political elite functioning is premised on the ideas and ideologies that drive their decision making abilities. In the event of a crisis or otherwise, the political elite in a democracy are constantly working on a political formula both while in power and in opposition (Tardelli, 2013). The germination of ideas is a not an end result but a process resulting out of years of learning, experience and education. On the basis of the inferences from the acquired information over the years, individuals are equipped to devise ideas and thereby, adopt the required courses of action. For example, it is assumed that an individual spending considerable amounts of time in the military profession is likely to undertake a hawkish approach in addressing issues, while experiences of business professionals and diplomatic corps would permit an inclination towards a dovish approach (Martini, 2012). In this context, what were Kissinger's ideas as political elite? How did these ideas influence his actions towards the humanitarian crisis in East Pakistan and eventually the war that could have potentially led to a superpower confrontation?

Scholarly attempts made to understand the influence of personal life on Kissinger's diplomatic feats have concluded that his early childhood had little impact, if any, on him. A young Jewish refugee from the war torn Germany was guessed to have sheltered sympathies for the Israeli cause. However, this conception was debunked with the "Shuttle Diplomacy" of 1974, in which Kissinger was extended a warm reception by the Arab leadership just as the Israelis did. Journalists of the era and Kissinger's friends in the university opine that Kissinger had put his German past behind him and in fact, was "more American than... any American." (Kamath, 1975: 26-27). The impact of Kissinger's early childhood on his ideas raises further doubts when contextualising it with the case study of this thesis. The 1971 Indo-Pak war was a result of a massive humanitarian crisis borne out of a ruthless military dictatorship. If the Nazi atrocities against Jews had left any traumatic scars on Kissinger's thoughts, the US policies would not have taken a tilt in favour of Pakistan; least out of Kissinger's persuasion. So, if the boyhood years' influence on Kissinger was insignificant, the later years as a growing up scholar provides some insights into the development of Kissinger's ideas.

Kissinger's doctoral research studied in detail the personalities of the European peacemakers Metternich, Castlereagh and Bismarck. Metternich and Bismarck are perceived as the faces of classical European realpolitik, and it is the belief held by scholarship that the lives of these personalities had a bearing on Kissinger's way of thought. Lewis (1975) puts this realpolitik argument in perspective in describing *The Kissinger Doctrine* as "obsession with order and power at the expense of humanity." Although the statement was made in Lewis' criticism of Kissinger over the "destruction of Cambodia", his opinion by and large resonates in Kissinger's management of the East Pakistan crisis. The China policy was of such paramount importance in pursuance of the balance of power strategies that the genocide in East Pakistan unleashed by the Pakistani Army was ignorable.

Words of Philip Zelikow, although describing Kissinger under the Ford era, are apt to characterise Kissinger's dealing with the crisis in the subcontinent. Zelikow (1999: 124) argues that Kissinger viewed foreign policy as guided by national interest and "a realistic assessment of (one's) own and others' interests". From the vantage point of US national interests, Kissinger sought foreign policy to be fluid and not be hamstrung by morals. The fluidic approach to foreign policy formulation is a derivative of the idea that one should not be strangled by ideals and ideologies, but be free to exercise ideas for the betterment of one's actions. This characteristic in Kissinger is well captured by Kamath (1975: 5),

"Henry Kissinger was the guy who invented a mouse trap. And then sold it... A pragmatist too. Neither a left- nor a right- winger; a man who rejected ideas in favour of deed, the inevitable in favour of the inventive. A progressive. A man who never subscribed to the ultimate solution because there was always the possibility that he might do better."

This fluidic approach to foreign policy allowed detente with the Soviet Union and the opening up of China policy in the form of "triangular diplomacy". The central aim of this venture was to ensure peace through balance of power. Therefore, befriending the Chinese was essential on the basis of Kissinger's assessment of US' national interest.

On the other hand, as Zelikow (1999: 124) suggests, Kissinger's idea of an ideal foreign policy must take into consideration the realistic assessment of the others' interests too; China in this case. In this regard, Kissinger was quick to realise that

friendship with China came at the cost of preserving the security of the weak Pakistan facing a mighty India. Caught in the crossroads were the Bengalis, either falling victim to the Pakistani armaments or fleeing to India. Obsession over shaping the world order at the cost of humanity eventually led Kissinger to adopt the gunboat diplomacy, request Chinese troops' mobilisation to the Indian borders and violate US laws in procuring third party arms transfer to Pakistan, cumulatively rising the potential of a superpower confrontation, threatening world peace.

Peter Dickson (1978) and Robert D. Schulzinger (1989) term Kissinger a Kantian, not Wilsonian. According to their thesis, Kissinger held a belief that a true statesman is to choose between the evils. This factor in decision making was central to the shift in American strategic intelligence under the Nixon presidency.¹⁰ From the vantage point of choosing the better among the evils, the triangular diplomacy advocated by Kissinger to establish a favourable world order tends to be the natural shift in American strategic intelligence analysis, while the tilt towards Pakistan in the midst of the Bengali crisis was a tactical move. Sacrificing 600 million democratic Indians, and another 60 million Bengalis led by the pro-American Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, to 800 million Chinese was the necessary trade off that Kissinger had to make in order to fulfil the China agenda. Here, Kissinger's statesmanship stretches beyond merely identifying the evil to sacrificing the benign towards the achievement of a strategic goal.

The realpolitik character of Kissinger's approach to American foreign policy is by far outlined on the emphasis laid on national interest, minimal regard for morals and ideals, and drawing a cost benefit analysis leading to trade offs and bargains. The shift in strategic intelligence was a result of Kissinger's belief that peace can be achieved as a "by-product of an international order that was stable" (Gill and Ahluwalia, 1974: 27). The importance of the China policy holds strong on this foundation. But how can one assess the East Pakistan crisis and the Indo-Pak war? To do so, beyond the strategic observation of Kissinger's South Asia policies of 1971, the operational aspects grant the researchers greater insight into the mind of the statesman. Analysis of the operational methodology employed at the domestic and international fronts (explained in detail in chapters 3 and 4) provokes one to assume that Kissinger was a

¹⁰ Strategic intelligence is an "estimate of the world situation" with a focus on "long-term trends" (Matthias, 2001: 195)

Machiavellian in his working style. Hoffman (1983) in his understanding of Kissinger's behaviour characterises him as one who employs both "ruthlessness and deceit at the expense of foreign and internal adversaries" for the preservation of the state.

The critical component of Kissinger's Machiavellian character was his affinity to the leadership and disregard of bureaucracy and public opinion. From the operational point of view, Kissinger invested in two areas- gathering the attention of the leader and then sustaining the leader's support (Kamath, 1975: 78). The Machiavellian mode of operation also works well when the individual is positioned well to exhibit traits of ruthlessness and deceit (lion and the fox), especially when one has to bypass the bureaucracy that acts as a system of checks and balances. The 1971 Indo-Pak war was quintessentially a war fought on morals and principles from the Indian standpoint- a factor that stood well with the American bureaucracy. In order to circumvent the Indo-friendly bureaucracy and attain freedom of action in favour of Pakistan, Kissinger had to be adept in characterising his behaviour according to the demands of the situation. The operational facilitators, hence, were position and secrecy. The next section is, therefore, an analysis of the elite position held by Kissinger that allowed him to transform his ideas into actions and policies, barring which, the course of events in the subcontinent might have transpired differently.

Individual/Position

Peace according to Kissinger was the by-product of an international order, as seen in the above section. Ergo, from an operational point of view, Kissinger sought a position from where favourable working conditions could be created and maintained. At the international front, an international order had to be created through dedicated efforts so that peace could naturally follow. In Kissinger's own words:

"We set ourselves the task of making conscious effort to shape the international environment according to a conception of American purposes rather than to wait for events to impose the need for decision." (Kissinger, 1979: 45).

Challenges to establish a favourable order are determined by both international and domestic actors. At the domestic front, the functioning of one's own bureaucracy

presents a hurdle if found unfavourable. Kissinger, therefore, had developed a peculiar distaste for large bureaucracies. His assessment was that a lot of time gets spent in administering them rather than “defining their purpose” (Kissinger, 1979: 45). Bureaucracies, he argued, in its complex nature, embraces the status quo owing to minimal risks and familiarity with it. However, what a statesman, on the other hand, required was an appetite for reasonable risks and development of innovative methods. But, such structural changes are incumbent on the will of the leadership, President Nixon in this case.

So, does this mean that Kissinger sought to be the President of the United States in order to amend the rules to his benefit? The answer is a clear cut ‘no’, and two factors support this argument. First, Kissinger was a scholar before a practitioner. His genius as a scholar was used by political leaders like Nelson Rockefeller and Kennedy before Nixon sent his invitation. Before joining the White House staff in 1969, Kissinger had spent nearly 15 years with Rockefeller as an advisor on foreign policy. Under President Kennedy, Kissinger worked as a part-time consultant on matters regarding national security, while he was an associate professor of government at Harvard University. In what differed from other intellectuals consulted by the policymakers, Kissinger believed that the scholarly individuals ought to take part actively in policymaking. The second factor, is more specific to Kissinger as an individual, who believed that his work was more efficient when left alone and given sufficient independence (Kamath, 1975: 78-89). All that was required was a position of authority under a leader who firmly nurtured the courage to grant him the freedom of action he desired. Kissinger has credited Nixon with this courage, without which the China trip might not have occurred. While remarking that, “What I’ve done was achieved because he made it possible for me to do it”, Kissinger has described his relationship with President Nixon as a “special relationship” (Adrianopoulos, 1988: 3).

In summary, close proximity to the leadership, authoritative management of the bureaucracy and freedom of action- were the critical requirements Kissinger sought from the position he held in the government. Such liberties were found in the office of the National Security Advisor (NSA) in the US. The power and authority of the NSA is best captured in the description offered by Stephen J. Hadley, former NSA under President George W. Bush:

“Serving as the National Security Advisor is the best foreign policy job in government. You get to spend more time with the President than any other member of the President’s national security team. You are the first to see the President in the morning when the President shows up for work in the Oval Office and the last person to see the President before he or she makes any major foreign policy or national security decision. You are the person most likely to know the President’s mind on these issues. You are involved in consequential matters that span the globe and affect the world. If you like policy over pomp, you will love this job. You spend a higher proportion of your time on policy substance than any other national security principal – being freed of the ceremonial duties that often serve to encumber your cabinet secretary colleagues. You run the interagency process that analyzes issues, develops options, and then presents them to the President. And then you oversee the process by which the President’s decisions are implemented by the various departments and agencies of the federal government.” (Hadley, 2016: 2)

In the same work Hadley professes that the position of NSA has no mention in the National Security Act of 1947 and that it only emerged effectively under President Kennedy with McGeorge Bundy occupying the position. Withal, the position of NSA gained its full momentum when Kissinger occupied it under President Nixon.

The National Security Act of 1947 established the institution of National Security Council. But, under President Truman the NSC was still in its evolutionary stage and hence, remained as an advisory body under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State. The formal composition of the NSC was finalised in mid 1949 to include the President, Vice President, Secretaries of State and Defense, and Chairman of the National Security Resources Board, thereby making it a part of the Executive Office of the President. Still, the relevance of the NSC in foreign policymaking was minimal given the irregularity in its convention. The importance of these meetings was realised only after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, and in the next three years Truman chaired 62 of the 71 weekly meetings held- giving it a critical advisory role in foreign policy making.

Truman’s successor President Eisenhower’s experience in the World War II had developed a liking for effective institutionalisation. Under Eisenhower, the position of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs was created to play the supervisory

role over the NSC. The position has also been referred to as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and, National Security Advisor (NSA). With two broad categories- NSC Planning Board and NSC Operations Coordinating Board- the NSC became the nodal agency to develop national security strategies for military planning and foreign policymaking. However, being the experimental stages the NSC turned out to be a complex and lengthy bureaucracy leading to qualitative compromises (Best Jr., 2011: 9).

President Kennedy took office planning to undo the complexities that his predecessor had created in the NSC. Based on the recommendations of the Jackson Committee, Kennedy significantly cut short the size of the NSC and enhanced the role of the NSA beyond advisory responsibilities to include active policymaking. NSA Bundy's staff was accordingly assigned the role of producing National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) to guide planning and action. In addition, the main characteristic of the Kennedy style of administration was to levy a premium on ad-hoc bodies as means of crisis management. For example, Kennedy created the Executive Committee of the NSC (ExCom)-- an ad-hoc body of advisors—to deal with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Such informality and ad-hoc constitution left negative ramifications on long-term planning, which was the intended purpose of the NSC. The death of Kennedy and succession of President Lyndon B. Johnson further damaged the role of the NSC. With greater interest in the State Department, Johnson went about reducing the size of the NSC further, and its role in foreign policymaking had reached its nadir.

Kissinger and the NSC

Under President Nixon, Kissinger sought to further revamp the NSC by gleaning the best features of the Eisenhower and Johnson experiments. Assessing Kissinger's ideas, in hindsight it can be understood that his central objective was to revamp the system in such a way that information flow would be uninterrupted to the NSC, allowing it to analyse and make recommendations. In such a system, foreign policy decisions could be managed within the White House. The position of the NSA was upgraded from an advisory stature to one of agenda setter, in consultation with the State Department (Best Jr., 2011: 13; Siniver, 2008: 42).

In order to overcome criticisms of centralisation, Kissinger sought inclusivity through a NSC Senior Review Group (SRG) composed of senior members of the State and Defense Departments, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Directors of CIA, AID, USIA as per requirement. However, centralisation of decision making with the White House was still maintained as the issues referred to the SRG were not worthy of the President's immediate attention. It was in this regard that some decisions taken during the crisis like the sailing of USS Enterprise to the Bay of Bengal and third party sale of arms to Pakistan, the group remained oblivious.

In theory, the NSC under Kissinger was quite elaborate to ensure inclusivity of all departments. Also when an issue arose, outside consultation was also encouraged (see figure 1 for the detailed structure of the NSC under Kissinger).

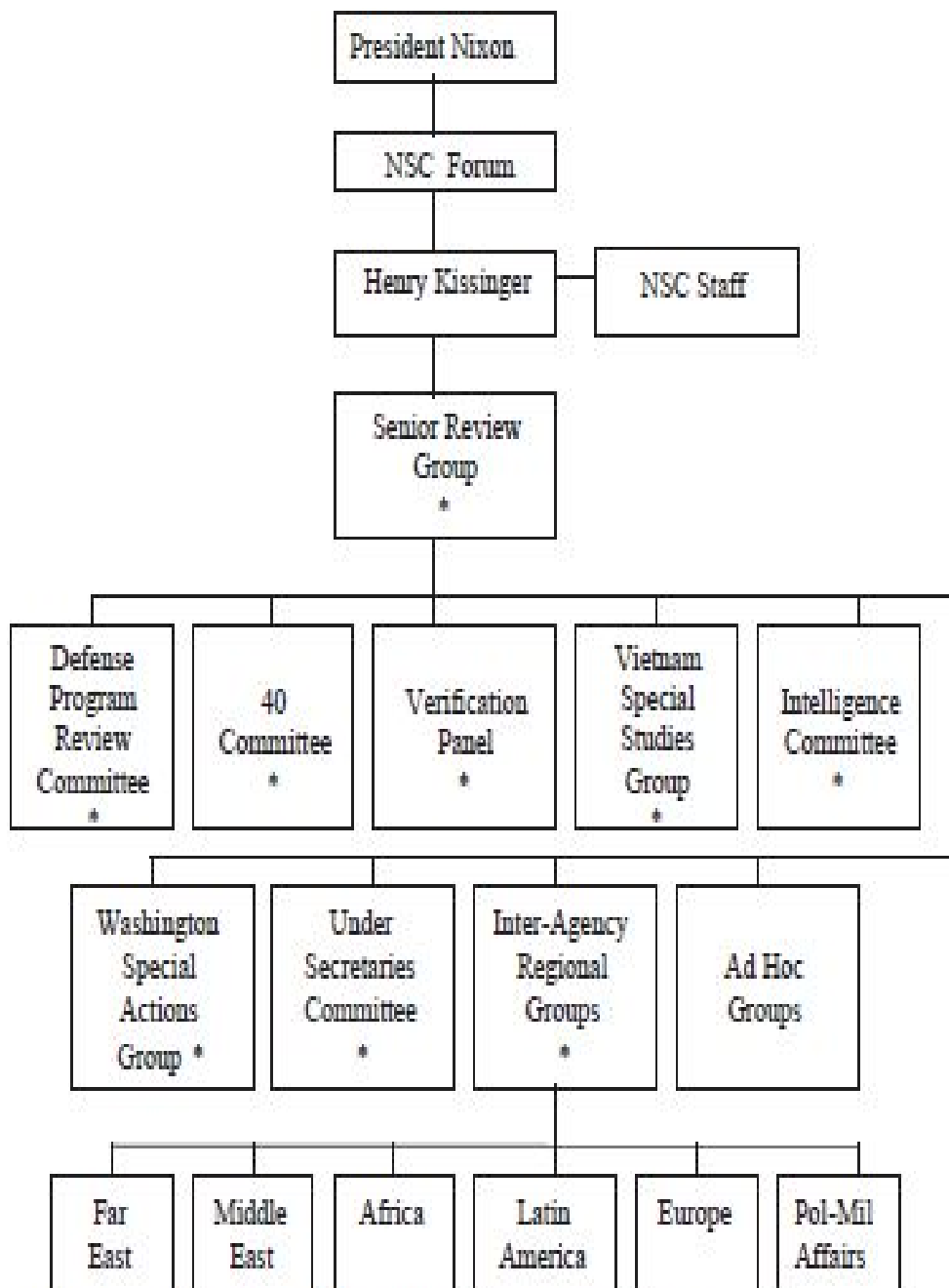


FIGURE 1 The Nixon Administration's NSC Structure.
*Chaired by Henry Kissinger.

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¹¹ Image source (Siniver, 2008: 59). It is beyond the scope of this research to dwell into the details of each sub category in the NSC. Suffice to assume that the structure in theory is elaborate, hierarchical and meant to reduce the burden of decision making on the president by providing short, medium and long-term analysis and policy recommendations.

Nevertheless, in practice the NSC failed to generate the elaboration and decentralisation of decision making that its structural form suggests. Prioritisation of results over methodology made the NSC emerge as a personality driven agency rather than one guided by rules and procedures. Within the first year of Nixon's presidency, Kissinger's clout had begun to increase in the NSC. All information flow was channelized through him and thence, the shift in the strategic intelligence analysis in the US had begun to take its roots. Many in the NSC began to quit their jobs and what remained at the end of the year were Kissinger's loyalists and admirers who liked his style of working (Siniver, 2004: 453). Finally, Kissinger had positioned himself strategically to contain departmental chiefs' access to the president and to ensure that all information reached him to examine and draw analysis. Kissinger held a conviction that such authority was indispensable in order to take charge of events and develop policy direction (Kissinger, 1979: 46). This way, the wholesome responsibility of running the US foreign policy was shouldered by Kissinger alone. It should come as no surprise that the position of NSA was subsumed by Kissinger when he was appointed the Secretary of State under Nixon's second term as president.

Despite streamlining decision making authority, Kissinger was not averse to initiating debates and discussions even when some opinions were contrary to his preconceived plans for action. In this, Kissinger was a Machiavellian possessing attributes of the lion and the fox. He was cunning in handling the bureaucracy and manipulating the courses of discussion, but he roared at his subordinates when it was deemed necessary. The crisis in the subcontinent was handled in a way ensuring it caused no squabble to the China initiative because of the "handpicked" NSC staff that reconciled Kissinger's lack of expertise on the South Asian political dynamics and also, acquiesced with his line of thought. However, the NSC Staff also repeatedly warned Kissinger of the dangers of the adopted policy line vis-à-vis Pakistan, the challenges from the State Department, and the inevitable secession of East Pakistan. With the fear of upsetting an angry Kissinger, his staff pushed forth objectivity in their analysis under the protection of Blood and Keating's reports (Bass, 2013: 65-74). Kissinger though disregarded the warnings from his own staff and the Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) members; he encouraged them to speak the truth and listened carefully, also at times posing critical questions to provide a new direction to the discussions.

The WSAG meetings held during the crisis period provide two distinct perspectives on Kissinger's role in them. First, he used the interdepartmental composition to get a perspective of each department's opinion on the crisis and US policy. He was especially wary of the State Department, which he suspected had sheltered pro-Indian biases. Using such opinions he meticulously charted his response to the crisis as well as methods to handle any domestic backlash. He observed and absorbed the views of all in the meetings and accordingly shaped his recommendations to the president when privacy made way. Second, Kissinger sought to extend his dominance over the entire policy making machinery by imposing his worldview subtly. In the words of political scholar William B. Quandt,

“[Kissinger] thought that through the process of having these endless meetings and engaging people – he was dominating every meeting he was in – he would end up shaping their worldview. They began to see the world as he and Nixon did; a strategic, cold war prism. So partly the meetings were to ensure that his and Nixon's worldview was given the stamp of approval.... and people did begin to say phrases and see things in this way.” (Siniver, 2008: 48).

Nonetheless, this “manipulation through adoption” strategy is a general perception of Kissinger's approach to foreign policy formulation and holds little relevance to the 1971 Indo-Pak situation. Despite, Kissinger's best efforts at influencing the minds of the participants in the meetings to lean towards Pakistan, they were arguably futile. At regular intervals, Kissinger used Nixon's preference of Yahya over Indira to persuade a change in general opinion, but in vain. At one point Kissinger yelled in a WSAG meeting, “I've been catching unshirted hell every half-hour from the President who says we're not tough enough. He really doesn't believe we're carrying out his wishes. He wants to tilt toward Pakistan and he believes that every briefing or statement is going the other way” (Chengappa, 2005). Ergo, what offered Kissinger a way out of this impasse was his private time with President Nixon and their secretive operational culture.

Secrecy

Secrecy as an operational aspect provided Kissinger the freedom to manoeuvre through the domestic opposition and win Nixon's confidence. At the international

front, secrecy was an indispensable vehicle guiding Kissinger's quest for an international world order. The course of events in the subcontinent, although spurred out of domestic political unrest, took shape as a result of Kissinger's and Nixon's approach towards a predetermined peaceful world order. Secrecy was the crucial operational tool that allowed Kissinger to escape the ethical and operational constraints that could have been imposed by the State Department and its ambassadors posted abroad. The first part of this analytical section offers an explanation of the role secrecy played in Kissinger's ability to gain presidential acceptance of his policy recommendations towards Pakistan. The latter part observes the role of secrecy in international diplomacy (secret diplomacy) that allowed Kissinger to include international actors to act according to his plans.

The previous section examined the restructuring of the NSC under Kissinger that allowed him to have an overarching view of opinions emanating from each and every department. But, the final recommendations to the president were less on formal basis of memorandums and more in private conversations. President Nixon, being wary of the dangers such style of policymaking can arise, secretly recorded the conversations between the two- known as the Nixon Tapes. Together with the declassified NSC and State Department documents, the tapes highlight how foreign policy formulation, especially the handling of the Bengali crisis and the 1971 Indo-Pak war, was controlled by the two men. Above all, these sources signify the level of Kissinger's influence on Nixon's decision making. Nixon's pro-Pakistan sentiments and antipathy towards India were adroitly exploited by Kissinger. To prevent Nixon from falling prey to the pressures from the Congress, the State Department, or pressures from other international actors- the Soviets- Kissinger regularly stirred Nixon's ire against India. This helped him motivate the president to take risky steps consistently towards the fulfilment of China policy.

The earliest evidence of Kissinger buttressing Nixon's prejudices to further his policies is seen in a memorandum written just as the killings were about to begin in East Pakistan. Kissinger wanting a policy of inaction and neutrality, not to upset Yahya, argued in favour of the benefits of the policy of inaction, but concluded the report with "I know you share that view." Later, as the army began its rampage, within a month's time Kissinger was informed during the course of the NSC meetings that the army was incapable of crushing the Bengali nationalism. The overall

consensus among the NSC staff, State Department, the US military intelligence and Kissinger was that an independent Bangladesh was inevitable at the end of the civil war. Yet, Kissinger sustained Nixon's will to see a unified Pakistan. Within the confines of their private discussions, Kissinger assured Nixon that it looked like Yahya had secured control over the situation. On Nixon expressing his surprise, Kissinger convinced him that the Bengalis apparently were not a good fighting breed (Bass, 2013:57)

The killings and the rebellion in the Dacca Consulate, arising from the Blood Telegram, had created minor fears in Nixon. At that time, Kissinger saw this as the president's moment of considering accommodation of the Bengalis. Once again, privacy offered Kissinger the upper hand in convincing Nixon to maintain his leaning towards his friend Yahya. Not only did he threaten the president that West Pakistan would go out of hand, but also suggested that the Bengalis were left leaning- contrary to the State Department's view that they were pro-American (Grandin, 2015: 118; Bass, 2013: 87).

The issue of military aid to Pakistan amidst the crisis exemplifies the advantage of secrecy in operational culture. Nixon and Kissinger tried to secretly exploit the one time exception and continue to the flow of arms and spare parts through the pipeline (refer chapter 3). However, when secrecy ceased to exist, after the New York Times reported the frigates sailing to Pakistan, Kissinger could do little about sustaining Yahya's demands for military aid. Eventually, a more drastic step had to be taken violating American laws to militarily equip the Pakistanis. In this instance, at least, the potency of secrecy as an operational method is well established. Kissinger's plans were threatened when secrecy ceased, while the State Department had successfully managed to tighten the noose around the pipeline using the same operational method of secrecy.

As the crisis transformed into an armed conflict between India and Pakistan, it became incumbent on Kissinger to present Nixon with a convincing perspective to keep alive Nixon's appetite for continuing the rigid "tilt" policy. Framing the events and developments in clear Cold War calculus, Kissinger presented the situation to Nixon as one in which an ally was getting raped, China overtures may go down the drain, and finally, the Russians were "playing for big stakes". Nixon picked the bait

and the next thing he wanted was proof that India pulled the trigger before Pakistan did, so that India could be condemned for aggression. From the beginning, as the clouds of conflict began to emerge, Kissinger was eagerly on the lookout for anything that could hold India accountable for aggression, more so because the president wanted to hear it. In such a scenario, any bit of information that suggested favourably was picked up by Kissinger. This is the sort of cherry picking that Kissinger did when a bulk of intelligence regarding Indian intentions reached the US. Kissinger disregarded all assessments on the secretive and foolproof nature of decision-making in Delhi and relied extensively on one source that corroborated his opinion. Kissinger placed a huge premium on the intelligence provided by a mole in New Delhi- Hersh (2013) predicts the mole was Morarji Desai- who provided the Americans an exaggerated picture of Indian ambitions on the western front. These bits were sufficient for Kissinger to convince Nixon to take a militaristic stand point to save Pakistan. He explained to Nixon that, with the combination of Indian military prowess and Soviet assistance Pakistan's total dismemberment was in the offing. The result of this would mean empowerment of Soviet clients across the world to act freely and as a result, the Chinese would view the Americans as weak (Bass, 2013: 290-291).

Nixon was enticed and the stage was set for an offensive American action against the Indians. Once again, the virtues of secrecy granted Kissinger an opportunity to present three dangerous recommendations that could potentially threaten Nixon his presidency, and the world could have witnessed a superpower confrontation. The three recommendations were,

1. Ordering the USS Enterprise, a nuclear aircraft carrier, into the Bay of Bengal;
2. Seeking a Chinese troop mobilisation to the Indian borders;
3. Transfer of arms to Pakistan through regional US allies.

Nixon readily accepted the suggestions to send the atomic powered USS Enterprise to the Bay of Bengal under the pretext of evacuating Americans from East Pakistan, and to seek Chinese troop mobilisation to threaten the Indians. The idea of seeking Chinese assertion against India could have been suggested only in private because the entire administration was hoping American assistance would go to India when faced with the communist China. Kissinger's immediate aides and the State Department were pondering over ways through which the US could offer its assistance to

democratic India in the event of a communist Chinese aggression- in line with the American interests against the Cold War backdrop (Bass, 2013: 239).

Nixon was quite nervous over Kissinger's final suggestion of arming Pakistan through third party arms transfer from Jordan or Iran as Kissinger had admitted that such an act was against American laws. Nevertheless, Kissinger tried to persuade Nixon to act by suggesting that, "What's against our law is not what they do, but our giving them permission." Nixon understood that it had to be done secretly and agreed to give them permission privately, exulting that they had committed worse things before. Kissinger, at this point, confided in Nixon that he considered the South Asian landmass their Rhineland, and criticised the American political system for forbidding sale of arms to Pakistan while the Soviets could fortify India.

Until the ceasefire agreement was signed between India and Pakistan, the possibility of a superpower confrontation breaking out was high. Kissinger shouldered the responsibility of convincing Nixon that the Chinese aggressive posture would frighten the Soviets and Indians, but failed to hypothesise what would happen if the Soviets responded with aggression. Kissinger continued to press Nixon even as Indira Gandhi wrote a strong letter to Nixon on December 15 stating that India had not territorial ambitions in West Pakistan (refer annexure I). However, Kissinger relied on the mole in New Delhi and persuaded Nixon to hold his aggressive posture. Kissinger convinced his trusting boss that it was his aggressive posture that was winning him the day, leading to a ceasefire. Eventually, as the ceasefire came, Kissinger applauded Nixon for saving West Pakistan. The latter wanted to save Pakistan for a friend- Yahya- which meant a unified Pakistan. But, for Kissinger the strategic shift in American foreign policy favouring a friendly China was far greater than any other factors.

Henceforth, secrecy offered Kissinger significant dominance in the domestic level of US foreign policymaking. Using secrecy, he could win the trust of President Nixon and keep his confidence high throughout the crisis while keeping the State Department, Congress and the public relatively ignorant of the proceedings. However, secrecy on the domestic front provides only half the picture about Kissinger's dominance over foreign policy, in particular, handling of the crisis in the subcontinent. Kissinger's secret overtures on the international diplomatic front offers

greater insights into the role of secrecy in Kissinger's ability to shape the world order and its impact on the Indian subcontinent.

Secret Diplomacy

Secret negotiations and the resultant opening up of China policy has been etched as a milestone in Kissinger's career as a diplomat. As observed in the previous chapter, the China policy could not have seen the light of the day but for two deciding factors. The first and foremost is the confidence and freedom of action that President Nixon conferred upon Kissinger. The next important factor is Kissinger's utilisation of influential individuals abroad and establishing multiple channels of secret diplomacy. The Romanian, French and Pakistani channels were all shielded in secrecy. Ultimately, the Pakistani channel turned out to be the most effective of all.

President Woodrow Wilson had argued that the secret diplomacy was the main reason for the outbreak of World War I and hence, efforts were made to institutionalise open diplomacy to ensure inclusivity of all states, irrespective of their international stature. However, doing away with secret diplomacy involves considerable compromises and delays in achieving foreign policy objectives. One of the driving factors for the continued existence of secret diplomacy, according to Stuart Murray (2016), is the basic function of the state, i.e. "survival by any means possible". With this element as the basis of observation, Kissinger's secret diplomacy with several actors culminating in the secret trip to Peking, can be argued as a necessary activity for the hegemony of the American state in a peaceful world order that accommodated the Chinese within the American sphere.

But, when viewing the 1971 Indo-Pak war as a case in point, Wilson's fears still resonate. Wilson's contention was that diplomacy must thrive freely and in open public view in order to accommodate public opinion. Public opinion, notwithstanding its anti-communist and pro-democracy stance could have jeopardised Kissinger's diplomatic designs. This in fact, led to a disconnection between the spoken word and committed action, which eventually led India to drift to the Soviets. Kissinger preceded his trip to China with a visit to India and Pakistan. In India, he clearly sensed the emotions and sentiments blooming among the Indians. They were clearly against America's assistance to Pakistan, and rising levels of nationalism owing to the

refugee crisis suggesting that if a political compromise in East Pakistan remained unlikely, India would be pressed to involve militarily. Kissinger promised the Indian leadership to use his president's leverage on Yahya to control the situation, and above all, assured that in the event of Chinese aggression the US will undoubtedly be on India's side. But, as the news of Kissinger's Peking trip came to limelight, India's fears of being dominated by the US-Pak-China nexus gained momentum and finally, pushed India closer to the Soviets. The balance of power equation in South Asia began to change and any misadventure by one of the parties could have led to a superpower confrontation. This was exactly what Wilson wanted to overcome by eradicating secrecy and conducting diplomacy in public view.

Kissinger had developed an indifference towards public opinion that became evident in an interview he gave to an Italian journalist, Oriana Fallaci. He said,

“Some believe I carefully plan whatever consequences on the public one of my initiatives or efforts may have... On the contrary, the consequences of my actions, I mean, public opinion's verdict, have never worried me... I am not at all afraid of losing my public support.” (Kamath, 1975: 78)

Therefore, unlike Wilson, Kissinger had a positive opinion on secret diplomacy. Secret diplomacy was the key to attain peace and resolve conflicts. However, the 1971 war shows that secret diplomacy is credible only until the actors are in control of the events and not the other way around. Initially, Kissinger planned his secret trip to Peking with a view of attaining long lasting peace. Gradually he realised that peace with China came at high cost. Securing Pakistan was indispensable for opening up with China. This situational demand placed greater emphasis on secret diplomacy. Kissinger, hence, began to increase the scale of secret diplomacy by including international actors who supported his plans while keeping the State Department and its officials at bay. The transfer of arms from Jordan and Iran to Pakistan demonstrates this case. Kissinger arranged for the transfer of arms in absolute secrecy conditioning the trade that not a word would be known to the US ambassadors in the region. The US ambassador in Tehran was Nixon's biggest concern and hence, he wanted the Shah of Iran to keep the secret from the ambassador. Nixon said, “I don't want the son of a bitch to know”, and Kissinger assured him, “Oh no, no, no, no.” The US embassy in Amman was also oblivious to the secret trade and only suspected that

something must have been going on when they noticed that American pilots were missing from their favourite bars (Bass, 2013).

Therefore, Kissinger sought a combination of domestic and international secrecy to settle the 1971 crisis without having to compromise on the China front.

Secret Elitism, Kissinger and the 1971 War

The theoretical chapter on secret elite tried to fathom the existence of secret elitism in international politics. From a theoretical standpoint four main determinants were put forth to examine the presence of a secret elite. First determinant was the possession and control of information. Kissinger, by virtue of his position, as the NSA, had ensured that all source information and individual departmental analysis passed through him. Residing right up the hierarchy and having the president's attention as per requirement, Kissinger was able to absorb all information emanating from South Asia, and present it to Nixon subjectively. Beginning from the Pakistan Army's capability to suppress the rebellion to the final stages of the war, Kissinger was privy to all details of the developments. This privilege was utilised to chart a course of action, taking the president into confidence, and thereby, seeking to influence international events according to his own interests. Information and analysis can be regarded as the launch pad for Kissinger into controlling American policy as well as the course of events in the subcontinent.

The second determinant for the existence of secret elite is the quest for a change. If status quo is preferred, there is little argument for why one needs to operate in secrecy. On the contrary, when a radical change is sought, for instance, a change as large as a change in international order, the individual may have to embrace secrecy. More so, if the status quo is appreciated by all and the secret elite's ideas are rejected by many, a level of operational secrecy becomes inevitable to negate checks and obstructions. Kissinger knew from the start that the State Department was Indocentric and detente with China could have invoked criticisms. Based on the illustrations in chapter 3, same can be said of the American public opinion too, which at that time, was overwhelmingly in favour of democracy over communist totalitarianism. Kissinger's China policy was a radical change of the magnitude that could have invited significant criticisms and derailed the whole process had it not

been conducted in absolute secrecy. During the second half of 1971, a similar picture emerged once again. This time Kissinger sought to tilt towards Pakistan and away from India- a radical change owing to the fact that an arms embargo was in place against Pakistan and, the American public opinion favoured democratic India over the military ruled Pakistan. To do this, the secret elite should be able to draw one's own pool of resources and also external sources. Throughout the crisis period, Kissinger employed a range of denial and deception methods to keep the military aid supplied to Pakistan using a close group of associates domestically as well as internationally.

The third and fourth determinants are interlinked with each other. Secret elite use their personal and professional experiences and thrive for personal/professional glory. This is made possible by a Machiavellian character- the fourth determinant. Personal or professional glory is a result of what one accomplishes in his/her line of work. The accomplishments must, therefore, be visible for public appreciation. At this point, when the success or failure of an operation becomes known, the secrecy surrounding the operation becomes open, barring the few operational details that are deliberately hidden. The bottom-line is that secrecy is not eternal; with the passage of time details begin to emerge.

Kissinger's China initiative was his dream project, which unexpectedly stood conditioned on American handling of the South Asian conundrum. The 90s TV show on Nixon and Kissinger surrounding their Vietnam negotiations of 1972 and the Watergate scandal casts each of the characters vying for personal glory (Scott, 1995). Beyond popular art, Nixon himself had observed Kissinger's oscillating enthusiasm between operations that assured him personal glory and the ones that did not (Johnstone and Priest, 2017). So, when the 1971 war came in the way of the China policy, Kissinger was furious and was ready to go any distance to secure the deal. The dangerous three recommendations he made to Nixon stand testimony to this. Kissinger seemed blinded by personal glory that he was willing to risk a superpower confrontation. However, the cunning NSA knew that secrecy would soon expire and when the truth reveals itself, the blame must be stuck to Nixon. He contacted his deputy, Alexander Haig, who provided him three telephonic conversations that would help Kissinger blame Nixon for having authorised the sale of weapons from Jordan and Iran to Pakistan. Not just this instance, Kissinger's functioning throughout the crisis period was akin to the lion and fox characteristics enunciated by Machiavelli.

While his subordinates and State Department staff had received a large share of his anger and tantrums, he also constantly accommodated their analyses and opinions, denying them any chance of professional criticisms against him. His interactions with Nixon, especially, are noteworthy in his Machiavellian character. Throughout the crisis, there were only two interconnected factors driving Nixon's favour towards Pakistan, i.e. friendship with Yahya and dislike of India and Indira Gandhi. Bass (2013) observed that Nixon was not just anti-India but also described American sympathies for India as a "psychological disorder". He shared these views with Yahya in conversations that carried "an uncharacteristic blend of admiration and affection." However, as observed in this thesis, friendship between the two could not have sustained long in the face of the humanitarian crisis, hostile State Department, and the changing regional dynamics. It was essentially the genius of Henry A. Kissinger that sustained Nixon's will with sly manipulative tactics.

In summary, the theory chapter tried to define secret elite in liberal democracies as "the individual, who wields significant influence among the political elite by virtue of position, power, deceit and intelligence, and attributes successful outcomes to the law of secrecy and information control." Kissinger's management of the Bengali crisis, the 1971 Indo-Pak War and the agenda behind the China policy clearly show that power, position, intelligence and deceit were clearly the determinants of his behaviour. At the operational level, his position guaranteed him a wealth of information supplied steadily, which were self analysed and used to make recommendations to the president. The success of Kissinger's diplomacy shows that his position not only granted him information from within the American bureaucracy but also from friends abroad. Kissinger's 1971 saga as secret elite, henceforth, thrived on "position and secrecy" that allowed his "ideas" to flourish even in one of the most transparent liberal democracies in the world. In retrospect, one can assume that the Bangladeshi history and the Cold War dynamics of the South Asian region could have been significantly altered if not for the policies of Kissinger. If secrecy had not made way for Kissinger- the individual, there was the State Department, the media, public

opinion and the Congress to ensure that the world's two largest democracies would not fallout against each other, either over protecting a military dictator or establishing confidence in a communist totalitarian state.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The present research has examined the theoretical proposition of the existence of secret elitism in decision making in liberal democracies. It has also scrutinised the role of Henry Kissinger in the formulation of US foreign policies towards South Asia during the year 1971 that witnessed the Bengali uprising in East Pakistan, the Indo-Pak War and the subsequent, independence of Bangladesh. The goal was to review if Kissinger had any role in influencing the course of events that transpired in the subcontinent. To this end, the research had adopted two hypotheses that answered these research questions in positive. At this point of termination of the research, it is concluded that both the hypotheses stand validated.

Several attempts have been made by scholarship to understand decision making, particularly foreign policy decision making, in liberal democracies. If the society, internal factors, bureaucratic politics have formed the crux of some of the analysis in decision making, others have focused on the political leadership. Such focus on political leadership and excessive control of decision making in the hands of the political leader alone contributed to the formulation of theories like “imperial presidency”. This research, however, sought to go beyond the concept of imperial presidency and study the influential individuals operating in the shadows of the political leader. The concern was to explore the possibility of such individuals wielding power in liberal democratic structures amidst political opposition, public and media scrutiny.

Based on an initial survey of literature, it was suspected that such individuals can indeed exist in liberal democracies. Through the survey of literature it was also decided that adopting the elite theory of sociology to contextualise these shadow individuals would be apt. Thereby, a study on elite theory and its influences on decision making was studied, and this helped extract some of the fundamental principles on which these shadow decision makers—secret elite—can function in liberal democracies. The principles included fundamental aspects like ideas and character, and operational aspects like position, secrecy, diplomacy, information control and deceit.

In order to validate the theoretical exposition (refer chapter 2), the principles were applied on the case of Kissinger's diplomacy and decision making during the 1971 South Asian crisis. From a decision making point of view within the liberal democratic structures, Kissinger's case was felicitous. Being the National Security Advisor (NSA), leading a team in the National Security Council (NSC), Kissinger had a pivotal role to play in US foreign policy making. However, the instance of Kissinger as the NSA was marked by a radical transformation in US foreign policy making, owing to wilful attempts made at checkmating the State Department and the Congress in order to preserve an unmatched authority over decision making. Chapter 3 has elaborated on the activities that highlight the inter rivalry between Kissinger and the other departments, during the crisis timeframe. Complementing chapter 3 is chapter 5, which has rationalised Kissinger's success in domestic battles over decision making through an analysis of the operational aspects of secret elitism. The crisis in the subcontinent and the war that followed was viewed differently by the NSA and the president, and the other departments active in the region. Amidst all the tensions and disagreements, President Nixon took decisions and sided with Pakistan, contrary to the expectations of the State Department, the Congress, the media and the public opinion.

As the crisis in Pakistan began to draw India into it, due to the massive refugee crisis it generated, the issue was no more a subject of US-Pakistan relations, but of larger international relations with multiple nations getting involved actively. Coinciding with Kissinger's secret trip to China and the larger Sino-US rapprochement that the visit sought to achieve, the crisis in South Asia had a significant bearing on Sino-US and Indo-Soviet relations as well. Such complexities forced Kissinger to manage the crisis from a perspective that fit his plans of an international order. The secret trip to China was indeed a result of Kissinger's project of a favourable international order. While decision making was one part, diplomacy was the executive part of strengthening Pakistan's military ventures and sustaining the Chinese trust in the Americans.

Chapter 4 illustrated Kissinger's diplomatic ventures with China, with allies and international organisations amidst the conflict, and also with the parties involved, i.e. India, Pakistan and the Awami leaders. Kissinger's genius as a diplomat is seen in his sustenance of open and secret formats of diplomacy as per the requirement of the

situation. Beginning from the China trip to negotiations that led to the empowerment of Pakistan's armed forces amidst the crisis were all a result of Kissinger's secret diplomacy. Unaware of these developments the traditional checks and balances provided by the US constitution could do little in obstructing Kissinger's unilateral control over decision making. Even so, the secretive nature of negotiations conducted by Kissinger destroyed the efforts of former President Woodrow Wilson, who sought transparent and open means of diplomacy to avoid global catastrophes. In the end, as Wilson feared, Kissinger's secret negotiations did indeed bring the world to the brink of a superpower confrontation, but it was the Soviet and Indian restraint that prevented escalation to that limit.

So, answering the fundamental question regarding the existence of secret elitism in decision making in liberal democracies, the research tested the hypothesis and found that secret elitism does exist and the individual—secret elite—do influence decision making on foreign affairs. The case of Kissinger's overbearing control over the US foreign policies of the era, overruling other institutions and actors has validated this hypothesis. The influence of the secret elite on the political leadership has also been effectively examined by highlighting instances of Nixon's decisions being held hostage by Kissinger's wisdom and persuasion. Therefore, despite claims to Nixon's personal experience in foreign policy prior to taking office as the President of the US, the larger rationale for the policies adopted vis-à-vis the South Asian crisis is better understood from the perspective of secret elitism. The transforming nature of US foreign policy was largely due to Kissinger's ideas, although the fortitude provided by Nixon's aegis also deserves its due credit.

This leads to the second research question that sought to assess if Kissinger had a role to play in the creation of Bangladesh. The reasoning put forward for the birth of Bangladesh was that it was a result of Kissinger's perseverance to establish a favourable world order. This hypothesis stands partially, yet significantly, justified. The Bengali resolve to secede and Pakistan's disproportionate use of force against the protestors were enough to predict the future of Pakistan. Even Kissinger had acquiesced to the analysis of the State Department that Pakistan's bifurcation was inevitable, though he had relayed the contrary to Nixon. But, there is no denying that the American silence/inaction on the killings than to appease Yahya Khan, and the decision to protect Pakistan in order to assure China of American commitment

towards her allies, led to the loss of all opportunities for formulating a political solution that could have kept Pakistan's geography intact. Kissinger's determination to see through the China policy and establish the preferred international order increased the woes of the Bengalis, raised the prospects of an armed conflict with India and Pakistan and ultimately led to the birth of Bangladesh and a transformation in South Asia's cold war dynamics.

Along with the two fundamental areas of inquiry, the research desired to hunt the predominant operational facilitator in guaranteeing secret elitism. The guiding thought was to understand what makes detection of secret elitism in decision making in liberal democracies a difficult task despite several actors and institutions in place to oversee decision making. The research worked on the assumption that secrecy was indispensable in individual control of decision making. The assumption was tested on Kissinger's ability to sustain command and control over his subordinates and peers, and make personalised recommendations to the president. With access to uninterrupted information supply and privy to opinions from different circles of policy making, the research has found that Kissinger utilised secrecy adroitly to manage domestic politics and drive international relations. Minus secrecy, Kissinger's efforts at manipulating US foreign policy in accordance with personal preferences would have been a mammoth task considering the stiff opposition presented by the State Department and the Congress.

In the final comments, the 1971 Indo-Pak War will remain a landmark event in the history of the subcontinent, a hallmark pride for the Indian politico-military leadership, and a symbol of secret elitism in liberal democracies, especially the US, where democratic principles like public opinion and consensual decision making took a backseat. The developments in the US in 1971 as reflected in the declassified materials show that Kissinger worked primarily on the footing of personal glory. The Machiavellian strategies practiced by Kissinger stands as a recipe for secret elites across democracies to control and dominate decision making.

Millions of soldiers died on either sides of the battlefield, civilian casualties and refugees were even more. The impetus to the atrocities was provided by General Yahya Khan, but kept alive by a strategist in Washington D.C. This case also suggests that, contrary to beliefs that secret negotiations help in conflict resolution, Kissinger's

secret diplomacy did little to end the plight of the Bengalis facing the Pakistani barrels. The Bengalis in East Pakistan were pro-America, Yahya was a military dictator and the Chinese totalitarianism was opposed to American values of liberty and democracy. Yet, Kissinger's assertion that foreign policy should not be constricted by morals, values and principles allowed him to make such tactical decisions that did not stymie his strategic goals.

The purpose of this research was to test the possibility of secret elitism in liberal democracies and investigate Kissinger's scheme in the creation of Bangladesh. Both these objectives are met adequately and hypotheses validated successfully. However, in the interest of greater justice to scholarship on international relations and decision making, the principles of secret elitism formulated in this research are to be tested in other cases involving other countries to validate or falsify the theoretical construction—and also explore other factors, if any, that contribute to secret elitism. For this, it would be necessary to overcome the fundamental challenge of information classification by governments as scholars would need greater access to the decision making processes in order to comprehend the level of influence the shadow individuals have on decision making. In so far as the foreign policy formulation in the US is concerned, especially the case of Kissinger and the 1971 crisis in the subcontinent, secret elitism is an existing reality and an effective mode of explaining decision making.

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE I

LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI TO PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON (December 15, 1971)

Washington, December 15, 1971.

Excellency,

I have the honour to convey to Your Excellency the following message from Her Excellency the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi:

"Dear Mr. President,

I am writing at a moment of deep anguish at the unhappy turn which the relations between our two countries have taken.

I am setting aside all pride, prejudice and passion and trying, as calmly as I can, to analyse once again the origins of the tragedy which is being enacted.

There are moments in history when brooding tragedy and its dark shadows can be lightened by recalling great moments of the past. One such great moment which has inspired millions of people to die for liberty was the Declaration of Independence by the United States of America. That Declaration stated that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of man's inalienable rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, it was the right of the people to alter or abolish it.

All unprejudiced persons objectively surveying the grim events in Bangla Desh since March 25 have recognised the revolt of 75 million people, a people who were forced to the conclusion that neither their life, nor their liberty, to say nothing of the possibility of the pursuit of happiness, was available to them. The world press, radio and television have faithfully recorded the story. The most perceptive of American scholars who are knowledgeable about the affairs of this sub-Continent revealed the anatomy of East Bengal's FRUS, Volume XI, South Asia Crisis, 1971trations.

The tragic war, which is continuing, could have been averted if during the nine months prior to Pakistan's attack on us on December 3, the great leaders of the world had paid some attention to the fact of revolt, tried to see the reality of the situation and searched for a genuine basis for reconciliation. I wrote letters along these lines. I undertook a tour in quest of peace at a time when it was extremely difficult to leave, in the hope of presenting to some of the leaders of the world the situation as I saw it. It was heartbreaking to find that while there was sympathy for the poor refugees, the disease itself was ignored.

War could also have been avoided if the power, influence and authority of all the States and above all the United States, had got Sheikh Mujibur Rahman released. Instead, we were told that a civilian administration was being installed. Everyone knows that this civilian administration was a farce; today the farce has turned into a tragedy.

Lip service was paid to the need for a political solution, but not a single worthwhile step was taken to bring this about. Instead, the rulers of West Pakistan went ahead holding farcical elections to seats which had been arbitrarily declared vacant.

There was not even a whisper that anyone from the outside world, had tried to have contact with Mujibur Rahman. Our earnest plea that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be released, or that, even if he were to be kept under detention, contact with him might be established, was not considered practical on the ground that the US could not urge policies which might lead to the overthrow of President Yahya Khan. While the United States recognised that Mujib was a core factor in the situation and that unquestionably in the long run Pakistan must acquiesce in

the direction of greater autonomy for East Pakistan, arguments were advanced to demonstrate the fragility of the situation and of Yahya Khan's difficulty.

Mr. President, may I ask you in all sincerity: Was the release or even secret negotiations with a single human being, namely, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, more disastrous than the waging of a war?

The fact of the matter is that the rulers of West Pakistan got away with the impression that they could do what they liked because no one, not even the United States, would choose to take a public position that while Pakistan's integrity was certainly sacrosanct, human rights, liberty were no less so and that there was a necessary inter-connection between the inviolability of States and the contentment of their people.

Mr. President, despite the continued defiance by the rulers of Pakistan of the most elementary facts of life, we would still have tried our hardest to restrain the mounting pressure as we had for nine long months, and war could have been prevented had the rulers of Pakistan not launched a massive attack on us by bombing our airfields in Amritsar, Pathankot, Srinagar, Avantipur, Utterlai, Jodhpur, Ambala and Agra in the broad day light on December 3, 1971 at a time when I was away in Calcutta my colleague, the Defence Minister, was in Patna and was due to leave further for Bangalore in the South and another senior colleague of mine, the Foreign Minister, was in Bombay. The fact that this initiative was taken at this particular time of our absence from the Capital showed perfidious intentions. In the face of this, could we simply sit back trusting that the rulers of Pakistan or those who were advising them, had peaceful, constructive and reasonable intent?

We are asked what we want. We seek nothing for ourselves. We do not want any territory of what was East Pakistan and now constitutes Bangla Desh. We do not want any territory of West Pakistan. We do want lasting peace with Pakistan. But will Pakistan give up its ceaseless and yet pointless agitation of the past 24 years over Kashmir? Are they willing to give up their hate campaign posture of perpetual hostility towards India? How many times in the last 24 years have my father and I offered a pact of non-aggression to Pakistan? It is a matter of recorded history that each time such offer was made, Pakistan rejected it out of hand.

We are deeply hurt by the innuendos and insinuations that it was we who have precipitated the crisis and have in any way thwarted the emergence of solutions. I do not really know who is responsible for this calumny. During my visit to the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria and Belgium the point I emphasized, publicly as well as privately, was the immediate need for a political settlement. We waited nine months for it. When Dr. Kissinger came in August 1971,^{1/2/} I had emphasized to him the importance of seeking an early political settlement. But we have not received, even to this day, the barest framework of a settlement which would take into account the facts as they are and not as we imagine them to be.

^{1/2/} Kissinger visited India in July rather than August; see Documents 90-94.

Be that as it may, it is my earnest and sincere hope that with all the knowledge and deep understanding of human affairs you, as President of the United States and reflecting the will, the aspirations and idealism of the great American people, will at least let me know where precisely we have gone wrong before your representatives or spokesmen deal with us with such harshness of language.

With regards and best wishes,
Yours sincerely,
Indira Gandhi."

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.
L.K. Jha

ANNEXURE II

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN HENRY KISSINGER AND RICHARD NIXON (December 16, 1971 10:40 a.m.)

TELCON President/Kissinger 10:40 a. m. 12/16/71

K: The Indians have just declared a unilateral ceasefire in the West. We have make it.

P: What's it mean?

K: Ordered forces to stop fighting.

P: What's territory? From what you said yesterday -- taken Kashmir?

K: In West have some desert and Pakistanis have taken a bit of Kashmir.
Major is to stop defeat of Pakistan army.

P: What's the source?

K: Official announcement.

P: It's the Russians working for us. We have to get the story out.

K: Already a call from State. Until this morning we were running the UN thing. Now they are and say they will go over resolution. They are pulling off the British Resolution. You pulled it through and should take credit. I will give a backgrounder tomorrow afternoon.

P: Get people in and set story for the weekly news magazines.

K: Can't do it today. We have to clean it up.

P: Any other thing -- in view of Time Man of the Year thing get Schechter in. He will understand it. Or who at Time would know more about this subject?

K: I will start with Schechter. He has been decent.

P: Time might write best analysis of crisis. You really feel that they mean --let me come back to it. You were bearish last night.

K: I felt nothing would happen until Dacca fell. Soviets were dragging their feet because Indians took longer on taking Dacca then they figured. So this morning I said next 24 hours will tell.

P: If Soviets have cooperated on this I think we have got to play on an arms-length deal.

K: We have to get straight what they did.

P: What they did in '67 June war.

President/Kissinger
10:40 a. m. ; 12/16/71

K: 60% instead of 100%.

P: June war.

K: Except they lost.

P: They got credit for bringing peace to the M. E. Agreed to peace after defeat of their army. And they were responsible for the war. Not a public statement but internal relations with Soviets. You handle that. ? ? ? ? You agree?
they

K: Absolutely. So far they have not done anything. Indians did official doing. But I am sure its Soviets that produced it.

P: On the unilateral ceasefire or what?

K: UN resolution making it official. When in for weeks they want to come out and mastermind it. We have agreed to the British. Chinese are set with it. I will say I have talked with you and it is what you want done.

P: The President is committed to it. We have told the British and Chinese. Will the Russians accept it?

K: Probably.

P: Might not. If they do it's done.

K: One way or other there will be a resolution to put it together. State is trying to scavenge on your agony. Put it together mix with a UN resolution.

P: The average person doesn't understand about this. Pick the real movers and shakers. Ask Scali and let him sit in. Ask him and Ziegler who and Make it small enough to be powerful. I don't care if they are friends or enemies Maybe Kraft. It's very important to do Time people and maybe a couple of network people.

K: Chancellor.

P: Anybody. You sit down there. Work it out. Get hold of Scali. A cold blooded deal. On other levels let Scali carry the line and Ziegler.

K: That would be good.

P: It's good to hear.

President/Kissinger
10:40 a. m. 12/16/71 -3-

K: The record will show again that you were ready to go the whole way this morning.

P: I almost called at midnight last night to say to Russians we are putting the summit on the line.

K: India would have taken Kashmir and

P: Shastri got India's victory wings. Only 30% of them.

K: 30% more then we expected.

P: You think the Russians did it? India would not have done it for us.

K: For us they would have done it (?).

P: I want strictest -- President makes own decision. Hannah, Sisco, Rogers. I don't want Indian aid to leak out but I will decide it. Shultz to examine budget and no Indian Aid init.

K: \$300 million for S. Asia. \$200 million to Pakistan and rest we will hold.

P: Give it to Ceylon.

K: Then we don't get argument we are cutting it. We can give agricultural stuff to India for economic relief.

P: They have to pay for aid.

K: Congratulations, Mr. President. You saved W. Pakistan.

P: Go off to other. No backgrounder until tomorrow.

K: As soon as it's cleaned up. I will get on it.

P: Don't do it pre-maturely.

K: Get Sunday papers.

P: Time and networks.

K: Congratulations!

ANNEXURE III

TEXT OF THE BLOOD TELEGRAM

Dacca, April 6, 1971, 0730Z.

1138. Subj: Dissent From U.S. Policy Toward East Pakistan.

1.

Aware of the task force proposals on “openness” in the Foreign Service, and with the conviction that U.S. policy related to recent developments in East Pakistan serves neither our moral interests broadly defined nor our national interests narrowly defined, numerous officers of AmConGen Dacca, USAID Dacca and USIS Dacca consider it their duty to register strong dissent with fundamental aspects of this policy. Our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy. Our government has failed to denounce atrocities. Our government has failed to take forceful measures to protect its citizens while at the same time bending over backwards to placate the West Pak dominated government and to lessen likely and deservedly negative international public relations impact against them. Our government has evidenced what many will consider moral bankruptcy, ironically at a time when the USSR sent President Yahya a message defending democracy, condemning arrest of leader of democratically elected majority party (incidentally pro-West) and calling for end to repressive measures and bloodshed. In our most recent policy paper for Pakistan, our interests in Pakistan were defined as primarily humanitarian, rather than strategic. But we have chosen not to intervene, even morally, on the grounds that the Awami conflict, in which unfortunately the overworked term genocide is applicable, is purely internal matter of a sovereign state. Private Americans have expressed disgust. We, as professional public servants express our dissent with current policy and fervently hope that our true and lasting interests here can be defined and our policies redirected in order to salvage our nation’s position as a moral leader of the free world.

2.

Our specific areas of dissent, as well as our policy proposals, will follow by septel.

3.

Signed:

- Brian Bell
- Robert L. Bourquein
- W. Scott Butcher
- Eric Griffel
- Zachary M. Hahn

- Jake Harshbarger
- Robert A. Jackson
- Lawrence Koegel
- Joseph A. Malpeli
- Willard D. McCleary
- Desaix Myers
- John L. Nesvig
- William Grant Parr
- Robert Carce
- Richard L. Simpson
- Robert C. Simpson
- Richard E. Suttor
- Wayne A. Swedengurg
- Richard L. Wilson
- Shannon W. Wilson

4.

I support the right of the above named officers to voice their dissent. Because they attach urgency to their expression of dissent and because we are without any means of communication other than telegraphic, I authorize the use of a telegram for this purpose.

5.

I believe the views of these officers, who are among the finest U.S. officials in East Pakistan, are echoed by the vast majority of the American community, both official and unofficial. I also subscribe to these views but I do not think it appropriate for me to sign their statement as long as I am principal officer at this post.

6.

My support of their stand takes on another dimension. As I hope to develop in further reporting, I believe the most likely eventual outcome of the struggle underway in East Pakistan is a Bengali victory and the consequent establishment of an independent Bangladesh. At the moment we possess the good will of the Awami League. We would be foolish to forfeit this asset by pursuing a rigid policy of one-sided support to the likely loser.

Blood

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