

October 1, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

President Ford and Bangladesh Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman met in the Oval Office at 3:00 p.m. today for forty-five minutes. Also attending the meeting were Ambassador Hossein Ali and Foreign Minister Kamal Hossain on the Bangladesh side and General Scowcroft on the American side.

This was the first occasion for an American President to welcome the Prime Minister of Bangladesh since the establishment of US-Bangladesh diplomatic relations in 1972. The Prime Minister has been in the United States in connection with the United Nations General Assembly in New York following Bangladesh's admission to the UN last month.

As a first meeting, the President and Prime Minister had a welcome opportunity to discuss relations between our two nations and issues of mutual interest in the area. The President affirmed our interest in continuing good relations and assured the Prime Minister of our sympathy with the needs of Bangladesh and our willingness to assist in whatever way we can with its pressing needs.

In that regard, both leaders reviewed areas of economic assistance where the US has been and will be helpful, including the negotiations currently underway in Dacca looking towards the early conclusion of a PL 480 agreement for this year which will authorize an initial 150,000 tons of foodgrains to reach Bangladesh in its time of need. In addition, the President also informed the Prime Minister that the US expects to allocate additional amounts of foodgrains for Bangladesh in response to its current emergency shortly.

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