

Conversation Among President Nixon, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), and the President's Chief of Staff (Haldeman), Washington, November 5, 1971, 8:15-9:00 a.m.

Nixon: This is just the point when she is a bitch.

Kissinger: Well, the Indians are bastards anyway. They are starting a war there. It's—to them East Pakistan is no longer the issue. Now, I found it very interesting how she carried on to you yesterday about West Pakistan.

Nixon: I think I'll make the meeting today a rather brief—cool. [unclear] I don't mean by that cool in terms of not trying to bring up [unclear] I'll talk to her a little about Vietnam, and—

Kissinger: I'd let her talk a little more, maybe today—

Nixon: Yeah?

Kissinger: —to be a little less forthcoming. But basically, Mr. President—

Nixon: So I was trying to give her no excuses. Now I've talked to her, told her everything we're going to do. Now it's up to her.

Kissinger: While she was a bitch, we got what we wanted too. You very subtly—I mean, she will not be able to go home and say that the United States didn't give her a warm reception and therefore, in despair, she's got to go to war.

Nixon: Yeah.

Kissinger: So her objective—she has a right to be a little sore because you thwarted her objective. She would rather have had you give her a cool reception—

Nixon: That's right.

Kissinger: —so that she could say that she was really put upon.

Nixon: Oh, we really—

Kissinger: And—

Nixon: We really slobbered over the old witch.

Kissinger: How you slobbered over her in things that did not matter, but in the things that did matter—

Nixon: Yeah.

Kissinger: —you didn't give her an inch. So that she's—

Nixon: She knows.

Kissinger: She knows she isn't coming out of here with any—she can't go home and say, "The president promised to do the following for me," and then when you don't do it—

Nixon: Did you get across with that clown yesterday afternoon at 5:00? You went on the, that as far as the, as she was concerned that she would consider letting him—

Kissinger: Yep.

Nixon: —consult with regard to the designation. We want to be sure he understood that was the situation.

Kissinger: Right, and I fixed it in the memorandum of conversation which I'm giving him in such a way that it— just a little. I've made it a little more explicit.

Nixon: Now you've covered Rogers for long enough—

Kissinger: Oh yeah, Rogers is in good shape.

Nixon: He's prepared to be told this?

Kissinger: Oh yes. They've apparently treated him personally in a way that he doesn't like, so he's very—

Nixon: Ha!

Kissinger: No, no. He'll be very tough with them.

Nixon: Yeah, he's likely to be sharper with them than I was, you know. He can do that [unclear].

Kissinger: Well, he will be personally sharper but he doesn't like her. In substance he won't be as tough as you—

Nixon: He's likely [unclear].

Kissinger: —because he doesn't know the subject so well. I mean the skill—

Nixon: You should have heard, Bob, the way we worked her around. I dropped stilettos all over her. It's like, you know—

Kissinger: She didn't know [unclear exchange] about the guerrillas in East Pakistan. [unclear]. One thing that really struck me, the blown up [unclear] and that takes a lot of technical training. I wonder where they got that.

Nixon: She [unclear] so fast.

Kissinger: She said the East Bengal rifles [unclear—used to?]. That's where it came from.

Nixon: That's right. We also stuck it to her on that book—Henry's book about India-Pakistan.

Kissinger: She said she studied a lot about the problems—how these conflicts started. Read a book by Maxwell, called *India-China War*, which is a book that in effect proves that India started the '62 War. It was done with an enormous politeness and courtesy and warmth.

Nixon: Well I acted as if I didn't know what the hell had happened—

Haldeman: Yeah.

Nixon: —so she couldn't say anything. But she knew goddamn well that I knew what happened, don't you think?

Kissinger: Oh, yeah. You stuck it to her about the press.

Nixon: On that I hit it hard.

Kissinger: And I told—

Nixon: I raised my voice a little.

Kissinger: And I told her assistant—I told my opposite number that the thing that is really striking to us is that last year Mrs. Gandhi, during her election campaign, made official protests that we were intervening when we weren't. And she never produced any proof. And yet every opposition candidate gets a royal reception, tremendous publicity, personal meetings. And then after you do all of this you come over here and ask us to solve all your problems.

Nixon: You told him that?

Kissinger: Oh, yeah.

Nixon: Good for you.

Kissinger: I said look at the record the last 3 months. You've had a press campaign against us. You put out the word that our relations are the worst ever. You get Kennedy over. You get that Congressman Gallagher over. You make a treaty with the Russians. And then you come here and say we have to solve your problems for you.

Nixon: Well if it was any—

Kissinger: But, Mr. President, even though she was a bitch, we shouldn't overlook the fact that we got what we wanted, which was we kept her from going out of here saying that the United States kicked her in the teeth. We've got the film clip of this; you've got the toast. You've got the general warmth that you generated in the personal meeting.

Nixon: I do think at dinner tonight [unclear].

Kissinger: You didn't give her a goddamn thing.

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: If you would have put on a Johnson performance, it would have been emotionally more satisfying but it would have hurt us. Because—I mean if you had been rough with her—

Nixon: Yeah.

Kissinger: —then she'd be crying, going back crying to India. So I think even though she is a bitch, I'd be a

shade cooler today, but—

Nixon: No, no. I mean, “cool” in terms of, like yesterday, as you noted, I tried to carry the conversation.

Kissinger: No, I’d let her carry it.

Nixon: And was sort of saying, “look, we’re being as good as we can in dealing with Pakistan. What else can we do?” Today, I’m just going to say [unclear].

Kissinger: That’s what I would do. Except for Vietnam, I’d give her 5 minutes of the Tito talk because it will go right back to the Russians as well as to the Vietnamese.

Nixon: Will it?

Kissinger: Oh, yeah. They have the closest diplomatic ties now with Russia. They leak everything right back to them.