

Why I Blew The Whistle

by Jack Anderson

STATINTL

EDITOR'S NOTE: Newspaper columnist Jack Anderson, who exposed the U.S. role in the recent Indian-Pakistan conflict, has been with PARADE nearly 20 years and is today its Washington Bureau Chief. Readers will recall such articles in these pages as "Congressmen Who Cheat," "The Great Highway Robbery," and "Let's Retire Congressmen at 65."

Like all investigative reporters, Anderson is provocative and controversial. Many government officials and politicians of both parties object to his ferreting out secrets they would rather keep hidden.

In this article, Jack Anderson tells why he believes the people have a right to know.

PARADE welcomes the opinions of its readers. Tell us what you think of Anderson's views and in a future issue we will present a cross-section of the comments.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Do you feel as an American citizen that you have the right to know about an impending war?

This question is pointed up by the secret documents I got out of the White House. They tell a chilling story. While Americans sang of peace on earth last December, grim men sat in guarded rooms in Washington, Moscow and Peking making life-and-death decisions. The world might have awakened on Christmas morning, not to jingle bells, but to the roar of nuclear warfare.

When I became aware of the developing confrontation, I was determined to inform the American people. The only way this could be accomplished was to rip the secrecy labels off the details. For the dangerous drift toward Armageddon, during the second week of December 1971, was classified top secret.

Two third-class powers, India and Pakistan, were fighting over the fate of East Pakistan. Just offstage, the world's three great powers—China, Russia and the United States—began making moves in a far more dangerous game.



A tireless muckraker, Jack Anderson is responsible for important exposés.

On Dec. 7—30 years to the day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor—a message was received in the situation room in the basement of the White House. It was stamped "Top Secret Umbra." Umbra means the darkest part of a shadow. In U.S. intelligence circles, it is the symbol for the darkest of secrets.

This cable warned that three Soviet ships—a destroyer armed with missiles, a seagoing minesweeper and a tanker—had passed eastward through the Strait of Malacca to join other Soviet warships in the Bay of Bengal.

China rumblings

Intelligence reports brought into the White House other evidence that the Soviets were supporting the Indian thrust into East Pakistan. There were simultaneous rumblings out of China that the Chinese might intervene on the side of Pakistan.

It was a situation that the U.S. was better equipped to observe than to alter.

On Dec. 8, Henry Kissinger, the President's foreign policy czar, told a strategy meeting grimly: "We may be wit-

Soviet Union, turning half of Pakistan into an impotent state and the other half into a vassal." He warned the assembled policymakers that they must consider the long-range consequences.

They began planning at once to counteract the Soviet ploy. On Dec. 10, a decision was made to send an American flotilla, led by the carrier Enterprise, into the Bay of Bengal. The ships, called Task Force 74, were to make "a show of force." It was suggested the flotilla would divert Indian ships and planes from the war with Pakistan and, thereby, relieve the pressure on President Yahya Khan's beleaguered forces.

Forces alerted

The risks were apparent. On Dec. 10, the commander of the Seventh Fleet flashed the secret word that the "primary air threat would be from IAF (Indian Air Forces) aircraft . . ." The next day, Washington warned Task Force 74 that it "must be alert to the possibility of provocative and irrational acts by hostile forces."

Adm. John McCain, the Pacific commander, asked for and received permission to maintain aerial surveillance of the Russian squadron.

Not long afterward, a new Soviet squadron, including two guided-missile destroyers and a pair of submarines, set sail from Vladivostok for the troubled waters.

The scene was set for another Gulf of Tonkin incident. In the secret documents, the parallels are frequent and frightening.

Meanwhile, other moves were taking place on the ground. The White House situation room learned the Chinese were gathering weather reports along the China-India border, an unusual move indicative of military interest.

The Chinese were a worry to the Russians. In remote Kathmandu, Nepal, in the Himalayas, the Soviet military attaché warned the Chinese attaché that Chinese intervention to aid Pakistan would be met with massive Russian force.

The same day, U.S. intelligence reported: "According to a reliable clan-