

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-10

NEW YORK TIMES
12 October 1984

Pakistan Seeks U.S. Early Warning Defense Gear

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 — Pakistan has raised with the United States the possibility of buying an American airborne early warning system to help defend its borders against raids by aircraft based in Afghanistan, Reagan Administration officials said today.

The American officials said the Administration had agreed to help Pakistan improve its air defenses, but no decisions had been made in Washington yet on the Pakistan desire for an airborne early warning system.

"We recognize," one State Department official said, that the Pakistanis have "serious problems with the Soviets on their border, and we have to be cautious how we approach this thing."

Pakistan's efforts to improve its air defenses against Afghanistan have risen in recent months after a series of attacks in August by planes and artillery based in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan of Pakistan told the United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 2 that the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan had created a "direct and tangible danger" to his country.

All-Weather Turboprop Plane

He said that in August 54 people were killed in Pakistan by shells and bombs from Afghanistan, and at the end of September an additional 32 people were killed. The Pakistani Govern-

ment has said that about 200 people have been killed since the beginning of the year. Soviet troops went into Afghanistan in December 1979 to help the Marxist Government in Kabul, the Afghan capital, crush an uprising by Islamic tribesmen.

Administration officials said the Pakistanis were most interested in the Grumman E-2C, known as the Hawkeye, which is an all-weather two-engine turboprop plane equipped with radar equipment that can detect aerial targets 300 miles away, and which can also keep track of sea and land targets.

The Hawkeye was originally built for the United States Navy but it has been sold to Israel, Egypt, Japan and Singapore, where it is used over land as well as at sea.

Like the Airborne Warning and Control System planes used by the Air Force, the Hawkeye operates in conjunction with fighter planes, which it can direct to targets. The Pakistanis would like an airborne early warning system to help guide its advanced F-16 fighters.

21 F-16's Delivered

The Reagan Administration has so far supplied Pakistan with 21 F-16 fighters out of a package of 40 agreed to in 1981. Four more are to be delivered by the end of next month, and the rest will be provided in phases through the end of March 1986.

To help the Pakistanis pay for the F-16's, the United States is providing Pakistan with \$1.6 billion in military loans over a six-year period, in addition to \$1.6 billion in economic aid.

Given the 1,300-mile frontier between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the F-16's cannot be used effectively without some kind of airborne systems, the Administration officials said. But the Hawkeye might be too costly for the Pakistanis, one State Department official said. In addition, it contains highly-classified equipment that would have to be cleared before the plane could be sold to Pakistan, a longtime American ally in South Asia.

Another reason for caution, officials said, is concern that India, whose relations with Pakistan have been sharply strained in recent months, not overreact to the sale of Hawkeyes, and launch an attack on Pakistan.

India Alarmed at Purchases

The Indians have repeatedly said they were convinced Pakistan buys advanced military equipment, such as the F-16's, not to counter a potential Soviet threat from Afghanistan but for possible use against India.

In recent months, as India's troubles with its Sikhs has worsened, some Indians have accused the Pakistanis of fomenting the trouble. This, in turn, has created apprehension in Pakistan that India might attack.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz has in recent weeks urged caution on both the Pakistanis and the Indians, State Department officials said.

Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan has been in Washington for the last few days, and met today with Michael H. Armacost, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to discuss his Government's concerns, State Department officials said.

A Possible Solution

One department aide said a possible solution might be to use electronic equipment similar to that already used in the EC-130 version of the plane to modify some Lockheed C-130's, which are normally cargo planes.

In recent years the United States has sent Awacs planes to Egypt and the Sudan for brief missions to aid in air defense. But State Department officials said the Pakistanis have said they do not want American planes to be based in Pakistan because of a desire to maintain some distance from the Americans and to avoid raising the Afghanistan problem into a superpower duel.

The conflict in Afghanistan between the Soviet Union and Soviet-backed forces against the various Afghan resistance groups has continued without abatement. Officials here were unable to confirm reports that a cease-fire agreement had been reached between Soviet and rebel forces in the Panjsher Valley, the scene of Soviet attacks in recent months, that included the use of heavy bombers.

Speaking with reporters at breakfast today, Mr. Yaqub Khan said the bombings from Afghanistan in recent weeks had increased "with an intensity and frequency not seen before."