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DATE: 1/17/81

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Special Analysis

PAKISTAN-US: President Zia's Visit

President Zia will try to assess the strength of the US commitment to Pakistan during his visit to Washington next week. He will be most concerned about indications of the overall seriousness of the commitment. At the same time, however, Islamabad sees continuing US aid as the prime test of US reliability and will push for full funding of the economic assistance and military sales package for Pakistan.

Zia values Pakistan's relationship with the US as a counter to Soviet pressures from Afghanistan. [REDACTED] however, the President, his senior generals, and most other Pakistanis question the durability of the US commitment. [REDACTED]

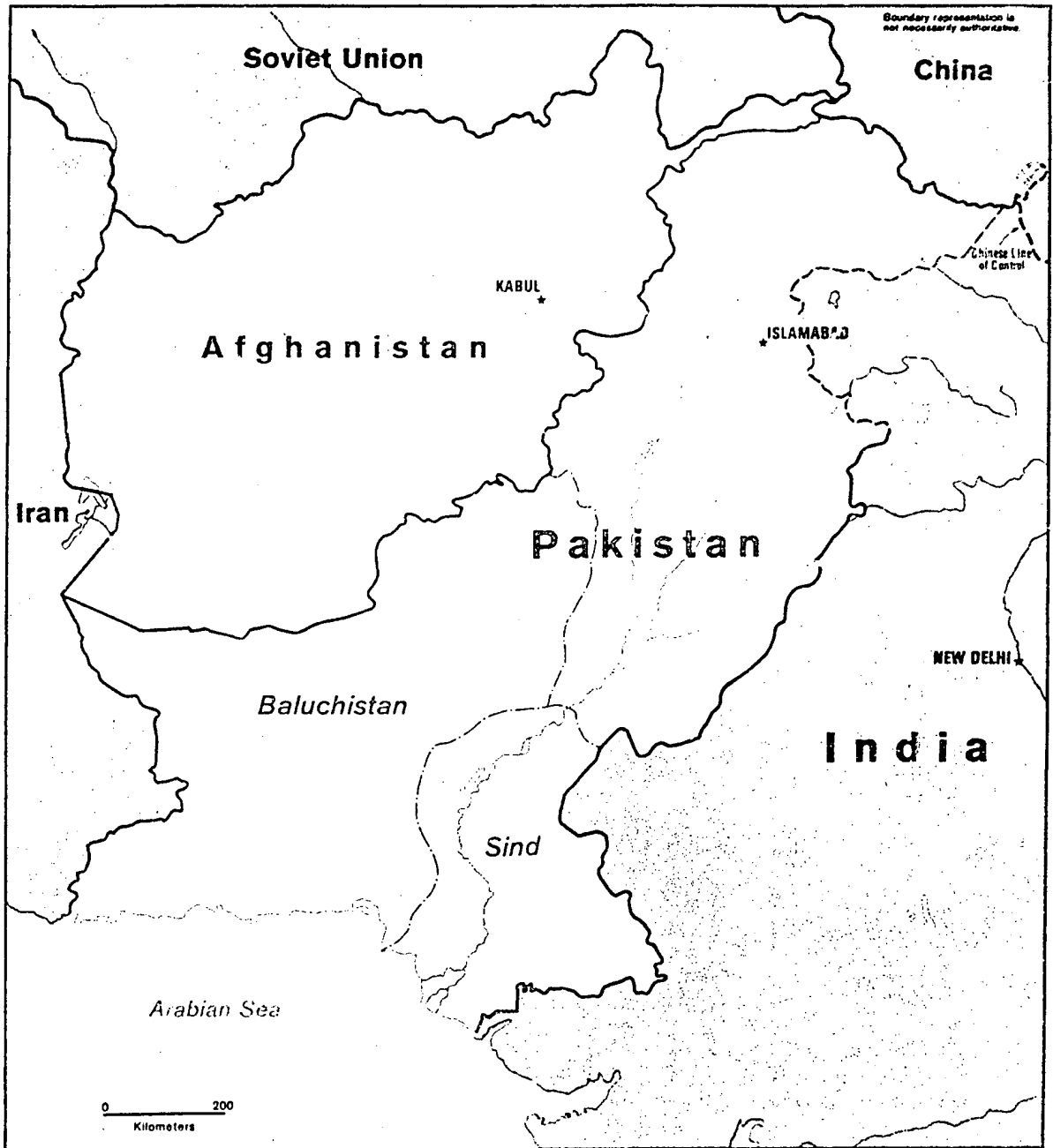
[REDACTED] Islamabad is concerned that the US will not provide protection against India, which Pakistan continues to regard as its primary foe. They also worry that the US will lose interest in Afghanistan and leave Pakistan to face the USSR alone. [REDACTED]

The Pakistani leader probably will suggest that, because his country is threatened by India and the USSR, it has to have strong US backing in order to continue following policies that support US interests. Zia will take this line in part to encourage Washington's support. [REDACTED]

Zia's authority remains firm for now, but his lack of a strong domestic power base probably limits his ability to make concessions on key bilateral issues. His failure to fashion acceptable political institutions and to win broad popular backing leave him vulnerable in the event he blunders, the economy stagnates, or a popular leader emerges to unite the opposition. [REDACTED]

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TCS 2979/82
1 December 1982



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[REDACTED] increased impatience with martial law and stronger calls for a return to civilian government through elections. The opposition remains ineffective, however, and apparently has failed in its plans to embarrass Zia by staging mass demonstrations before his US visit. [REDACTED]

Ethnic tensions in Baluchistan and Sind Provinces continue to be irritants, but Zia is more concerned about terrorist incidents over the past year. The incidents have undermined public confidence in the government's ability to maintain public order. [REDACTED]

The Afghanistan Issue

Zia probably will emphasize the extent of Soviet support for his domestic opponents and other pressures on Pakistan to stop supporting the Afghan insurgents.

[REDACTED] Moscow is giving some financial support to Zia's political opponents and is indirectly sponsoring both the terrorist group headed by former Prime Minister Bhutto's sons and tribal separatists along the Afghan border. [REDACTED]

In addition, the 2.7 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan have become a major concern to Islamabad. Rising local resentments and concern in the Army that the refugees will become a permanent problem for Pakistan have lent urgency to Pakistan's search for a political settlement to the war in Afghanistan. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Soviets have sought to persuade Islamabad to change its policy on Afghanistan by offering economic aid and Kabul's acceptance of the long-disputed border. Major concessions, including recognition of President Babrak's government and acceptance of the Soviet presence, are unlikely to be offered in the foreseeable future. [REDACTED]

Islamabad would have to take into account US, Chinese, and Saudi concerns--as well as opposition from conservative religious parties and armed Afghan insurgents

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in Pakistan--if it decided to soften its position on Afghanistan. [REDACTED] some [REDACTED] [REDACTED] are urging more flexibility on this issue. As a result, Zia is being careful not to foreclose the possibility of substantive negotiations. [REDACTED]

Responses to US Concerns

[REDACTED] He probably will argue that holding national elections now would threaten Pakistan's security and that his plans for an Islamic political order will give Pakistanis more suitable forms of representation. On narcotics, he will point out that he has done far more than any of his predecessors and will reaffirm pledges to do more.

Economic Aid and Arms Sales

[REDACTED] Pakistan is increasingly concerned that the 1982 installment of the \$3.2 billion aid package will not be fully funded. Islamabad needs these

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funds to avoid defaulting on current obligations and will push for favorable Congressional action. It also will ask Washington to drop its objections to debt rescheduling and to ease up on pressing IMF-mandated economic reforms that are politically risky. [REDACTED]

US arms are the centerpiece of the Pakistani Government's ambitious plans for military modernization and the key determinant in bilateral relations. Although the issue of equipping the F-16 fighter with the ALR-69 radar warning receiver apparently has been resolved by the US, Islamabad continues to refuse the delivery of any F-16s not yet supplied with the device. It also has expressed its unhappiness at the long delay in programming the device with threat data tailored for Pakistan. [REDACTED]