



# International implications of an independent "Bangla Desh"

Here we publish an excerpt of a report titled "Conflict in East Pakistan: Background and Prospects" by three Harvard Professors published on April 1, 1971.

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FROM news reports now available it would appear that the use of massive military fire power has broken the Awami League and its supporters in most urban centers. But control of urban centers at gunpoint in a country where 90% of the population lives in rural areas hardly constitutes a framework for any effective government, let alone a popular one. The immediate prospect is for ruthless military rule in urban centers, with tenuous control over a countryside which is likely to become increasingly the base for armed guerrilla resistance.

The base for such a movement clearly exists. The overwhelming support for the Awami League's demand for autonomy was clearly shown in the election results of December when 167 out of 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan were won by the League. As reports of military massacres<sup>1</sup> are carried by urban refugees to the rural areas, the democratically expressed sentiment for autonomy is likely to be converted to a militant desire for independence. It is possible that a West Pakistani army of occupation can suppress the Bengali nation for two months, six months, or a year, but the American experience in Vietnam illustrates only too painfully the impossibility of holding an entire population captive by force of alien arms alone.

The emergence of an independent Bangla Desh appears to be inevitable in the long run. What remains in question is how much blood will flow before it occurs. Politically it is clear that the longer it takes to achieve independence, the more likely it is that control of the independence movement will slip away from the moderate leadership of the Awami League to the more leftist National Awami Party (which did not contest the December elections).

Assuming that the independence movement succeeds while under Awami League control, certain predictions may be made about its relations with neighbors and super-powers. As expressed in public statements of Sheikh Mujib, an independent Bangla Desh will establish friendly relations with India and set up economic trade to their mutual advantage. Up to now such trade - and all cultural ties - have



PNS Ghazi (previously USS Diablo) was a diesel-electric submarine and the first ever attack submarine of Pakistan Navy (PN), leased from the United States in 1963. It remained the Pakistan Navy's flagship submarine until she sank near the eastern coast of India during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War en route to the Bay of Bengal.

been frustrated by the West Pakistanis who dominate the Central Government. They believe that, short of war, their only lever to force a settlement of their Kashmir claim is the economic interest of India in trade with East Pakistan. By contrast, East Pakistan has never been aroused by Kashmir, and in the 1965 war no military activity took place within its borders. Strong linguistic and cultural ties with the state of West Bengal in India are likely to help cement durable good relations between the two countries and reduce tension in the area. Unable to share the burden of military expenditures with the East, West Pakistan is bound to tone down its policy of confrontation with India, a confrontation which for the past 24 years has diverted scarce resources of both these poor, populous countries from

much needed economic development to defence. As an independent nation, Bangla Desh might conceivably establish marginal economic contacts with Communist China. But these are unlikely to be any greater than the current scale of trade and aid between China and Pakistan, and will certainly be less than the likely range and depth of East Bengal's economic ties to neighboring India. As long as India is the main trading partner (and both pronouncements of Awami League leaders and the economic geography of the region support this possibility), it is unlikely that Bangla Desh will become a satellite of Communist China. The U.S.S.R. has in the past three years become an active patron of the military clique that controls Pakistan. Soviet aid has included

considerable economic aid (including agreements for a steel mill in West Pakistan) and some military aid. The Soviet initiative has been largely a response to growing Communist Chinese ties with Pakistan. This competition between rival giants has redounded to the benefit of West Pakistan where the central government and military establishment are based. The U.S.S.R. has not been sensitive to the aspirations of East Pakistanis in the past, and is unlikely to make a new Bangla Desh an arena for super-power competition for influence.

A major goal of U.S. foreign policy in this area has been the reduction of the debilitating confrontation between India and Pakistan. This goal will surely be advanced by the existence of an independent Bangla Desh friendly to India. Most observers believe that the Awami League leadership will follow a neutral foreign policy, particularly if the U.S. and multilateral aid agencies like the World Bank are the major aid donors.

Bengali independence will be inimical to American interests only if by following short-sighted policies we drive East Pakistan into the arms of another power - the U.S.S.R. or China. To the extent that Bengali independence is delayed by means of American arms, the image of the United States will suffer, and rightly so. The offer of arms to Pakistan by the United States Government in October 1970, whatever its ostensible purpose, will, if implemented, oil a Pakistani military machine that is making war on its own citizens. The United States Government must rescind this offer forthwith. No further military aid, or economic aid - which directly or indirectly provides foreign exchange that makes it possible to buy weapons abroad - should be given to West Pakistan until it withdraws its occupation force from East Bengal and recognizes the independence of the Bengali nation.

<sup>1</sup>The eyewitness account of a British correspondent in Washington Post, March 30, leaves no doubt about the appropriateness of the word "massacre."

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## AUSTRALIA

### Cherry-picking Human Rights to Fight for

The choice: facing trial for drug crimes resulting in a penalty of death or facing indefinite detention for no crime based on a secretive bureaucratic process... Which is crueller?

ANDREW EAGLE

THE choice: facing trial for drug crimes resulting in a penalty of death by firing squad or facing indefinite detention for no crime based on a secretive bureaucratic process... Which is crueller? If you had to, which would you choose?

The former option is the fate of two Australians, Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan, found guilty in Indonesian courts of attempting to export heroin from Bali to Australia. Final preparations underway, it looks as though the two will be executed in coming days.

The latter option is the fate of thirty-four refugees in Australia, mostly Tamil Sri Lankans deemed by the largest security agency, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), to be a threat. Those detained, as they are genuine refugees, cannot be returned to their country of origin. They are not allowed to settle in Australia due to the negative security assessment.

Let's be clear: these refugees are not charged with any crime. They have no opportunity to counter the bureaucratic findings made against them by an agency of

dubious decision-making ability, demonstrated most recently by ASIO's reported failure to properly monitor the gunman who perpetrated the Sydney siege last December, which resulted in three deaths.

The Australian government argues that refugees held under such circumstances may be resettled in a third country. Unsurprisingly no third country agrees to take them.

The number of refugees in indefinite detention was over fifty a few years ago. A number has been quietly reassessed and released - a course of action that may suggest they were never a genuine security threat in the first place. It may reflect the Australian government's wishes to distance itself from a secrecy-riddled draconian policy that remains a perpetual international embarrassment. Yet thirty-four remain in indefinite detention.

Ethics is a funny thing. To be taken seriously requires consistency. It makes the vocal and persistent efforts of both the Australian government and the opposition Labor Party to save the lives of two Australian drug dealers confusing. Neither party advocates against indefinite detention. Neither advocates accountability for its past and present prac-

tice.

Australians were entertained recently by two rousing parliamentary speeches against the death penalty: by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and her Labor Party counterpart Tanya Plibersek. Many Australians welcome efforts to save the lives of two citizens and for politicians the issue is without risk of voter backlash because both major parties have the same stance. But there's a problem: people can join dots.

While ever the country's security sector rules the roost over government policy favouring extrajudicial indefinite detention of some refugees, Australia is well-positioned as an international laughing stock in the realm of human rights.

It's a significant price to pay for protection against Tamils, who would seem unlikely domestic terrorists in Australia, particularly these days. Potentially Sukumaran and Chan are about to pay for Australia's perennial lack of human rights credentials with their lives. After all, nobody is easily convinced by hypocrisy.

Furthermore, one wouldn't hold one's breath to see the same level of political action for any Australian held on death row in the United States. It's undeniable that

defending the two is popular because it's happening in Indonesia.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott's unfortunate comments linking the issue to foreign aid granted to help Indonesia recover from the 2004 tsunami aside, there remains the whiff of "white man's burden" in Australia's official response, of trying to "civilise" the Muslim-majority neighbour.

Nor does such hypocrisy escape Australians. Australian politicians are held in low regard by most constituents, evidenced not least by membership of political parties sitting at a paltry 0.5 percent of the population. There are more than twice as many Australians waiting to join the Melbourne Cricket Club as there are members of all political parties combined.

While Australian politicians scratch their heads wondering why so few bright minds wish to take up their profession or join their beloved parties, one reason is certainly that decent-minded Australians do not wish to sign their name to fundamentalist policy.

De facto indefinite detention without charge as a system, if not currently considered a crime against humanity, absolutely should be. Those refugees still detained

must be released. Formal charges at an international level against those responsible must be considered.

Many Australians would love to see rousing human rights speeches in parliament not only for two convicted drug peddlers but for everybody. Australia as a wealthy, developed country certainly has the potential to adopt the world's best practice standards in many areas including human rights. It should be a leader. It could be taken seriously.

As such, ethical consistency would be a novel and welcome approach. At the moment, in observing due process Indonesia's police, gaolers, justice officials and also executioners seem to have an undeniable ethical upper hand over most of Australia's politicians.

While one may be of the personal view that applications for clemency against the death penalty should generally find favour, Indonesia will and should consider the issue from their own sense of humanity and not because of any confusing noises emanating from the south.

The writer is a feature writer and English Language trainer at The Daily Star.

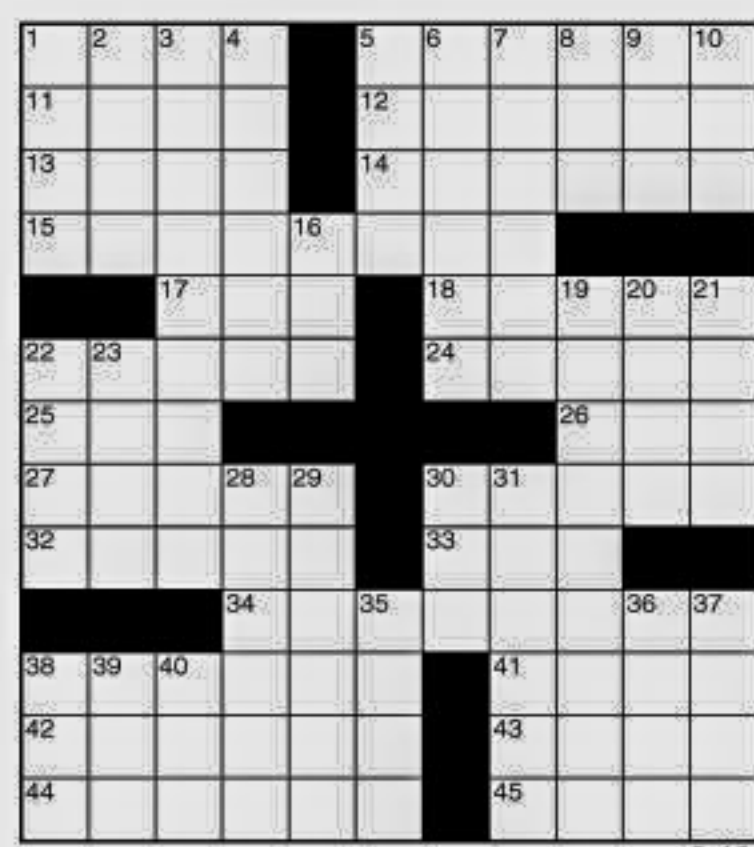
#### CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

##### ACROSS

- 1 Mount Olympus group
- 5 Sermon site
- 11 Creative germ
- 12 New York lake
- 13 Frolic
- 14 Warning horn
- 15 Remarkably striking
- 17 Kicker's aid
- 18 Like some messages
- 22 Stage comment
- 24 Opposition
- 25 Scary cry
- 26 Complete
- 27 Batting ploys
- 30 Giraffe features
- 32 Fiery crime
- 33 Firm
- 34 Seamstress's need
- 38 Understanding
- 41 Big book
- 42 Orchestra pieces
- 43 Privy to
- 44 Maximally
- 45 Invites

##### DOWN

- 1 Encircle
- 2 Sneaker problem
- 3 Military punishments
- 4 Weakened
- 5 Elbow
- 6 Loosen, in a way
- 7 Entice
- 8 Films, slangily
- 9 Wedding words
- 10 Sandy color
- 16 Singing Sandra
- 19 Prayers
- 20 Give off
- 21 Colors
- 22 "Waterloo" band
- 23 Pucker-producing
- 28 Heckler's weapon
- 29 Herpetologist's study
- 30 That lass
- 31 Shylock's outwitter
- 35 Try out
- 36 Wild
- 37 Microscope
- 38 Mex. neighbor
- 39 Place
- 40 Singer McGraw



#### Yesterday's answer

Y	A	L	E	S	Q	U	E	A	L
O	V	A	L	A	U	R	O	R	A
D	I	S	K	L	I	N	N	E	Y
A	S	H	H	E	R	S			
	E	R	A	S	E	C	A	P	
J	A	D	E	D	S	N	A	R	L
A	X	O	N	O	S	L	O		
B	L	U	E	S	N	O	H	O	
S	E	T	A	W	A	K	E		
	F	I	R	M	D	A	M		
F	E	M	A	L	E	T	O		
A	M	A	Z	O	N	H	U	G	O
T	U	N	E	R	S	E	T	O	N

#### CRYPTOQUOTE

HQNUJHMAQHH LTHO DNPDPWH ZQ UUVFJSQA, WXT BAXP, ZQKDTHQ OMQVQ JH AX MXEQ XU D KTVQ.

-- YDAQ DTHOQA

Yesterday's CRYPTOQUOTE: HOWEVER DIFFICULT LIFE MAY SEEM, THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO AND SUCCEED AT. -- STEPHEN HAWKING

#### BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



#### HENRY

by Don Trachte



QUOTABLE Quote

Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.

Dr. Seuss