

# AGENTS OF CHANGE

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## The Liberation War: A reading list

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

In 1971, the people of the then East Pakistan rose up against their military oppressors, firm on their goal to carve out a separate identity for themselves. A nine month-long war ensued, resulting in the long-awaited birth of Bangladesh, claiming the lives of around three million people. Ever since independence, artists and scholars have been culling stories from the arena of Bangladesh's Liberation War in an attempt to immortalise the nation's blood-tinged history.

Like films, books of fiction and nonfiction have contributed to preserving the memory of the war. Turning to these books will undoubtedly help today's youth make sense of the war and get a glimpse into Bangladesh's origin story.

**The Cruel Birth of Bangladesh: Memoirs of an American Diplomat**

Written by Archer K Blood, the former American consul to Bangladesh, this memoir sheds light on the time before, during, and after the war from the perspective of an American sympathetic to the cause of Bangladeshi self-determination. Blood reflects on his time spent in Dhaka, giving the readers a vivid snapshot of the capital city in the late 1960s and 1971. He briefly profiles the three leading figures who shaped the war: Yahya Khan, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Blood unflinchingly condemns Washington's silence and support for West Pakistan after the war's eruption. This book is essential reading for those who want to grasp what role the Cold War played in the 1971 war.

**The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger, and a Forgotten Genocide**  
The Blood Telegram is based heavily



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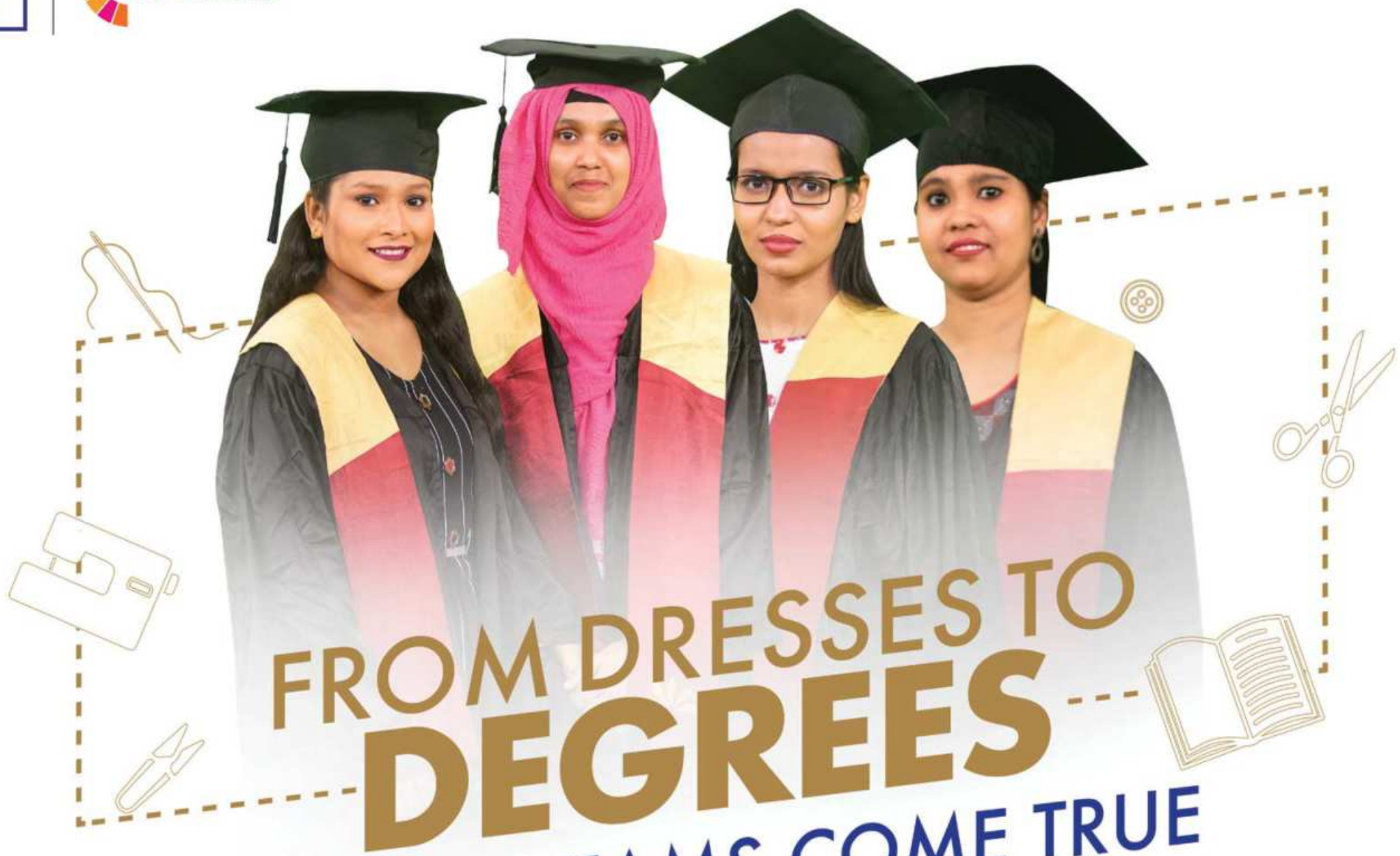
on the telegrams Archer Blood sent out from Dhaka to Washington during the war condemning Nixon and Kissinger's policies. In this book, Gary J Bass carefully unearths and

examines how Nixon and Kissinger, in order to establish an economic entry into China, chose to condone West Pakistani genocidal tactics against the population of East

Pakistan. Bass argues and highlights that the American silence was largely attributed to the fact that Pakistan shared friendly ties with China, and the US was keen on building

economic relations with the East Asian country. Bass also explores how India's animosity with China and Pakistan,

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