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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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December 17, 1965

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 339

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

SUBJECT: Critical Indian Food Situation

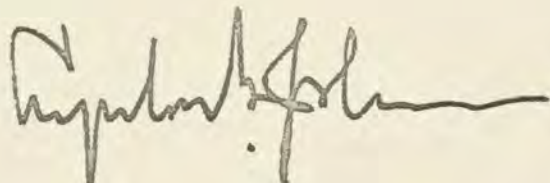
I am deeply concerned on humanitarian grounds with the near famine conditions which are developing in India, and which may require a dramatic rescue operation on the part of those nations able to assist. As you know, I have already announced that the United States would participate in such an effort.

I further understand from my discussions with you that the key bottle-neck may be less the availability of sufficient foodgrains from abroad than lack of available shipping, inadequate Indian port facilities, and inefficient food distribution facilities within India. These factors could critically hamper any international effort to get enough food to India's hungry.

Therefore, I request that you establish a special committee, including representation from the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, the Agency for International Development, and such other Departments and Agencies as you deem necessary, to examine urgently how to cope with the looming Indian famine problem. I want you to regard all available resources of the U.S. Government as being at your disposal in planning for such an effort. After assessing the likely dimensions of the crisis and what would be required to meet it, you and your group should recommend whatever imaginative emergency techniques and devices which may be necessary to help prevent mass starvation in India.

I would like personally to review your recommendations as soon as they can be made available, before deciding what action I will take along with other interested governments.

cc: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of Commerce
The Director, Bureau of the Budget
The Administrator, Agency for
International Development
Special Assistant to the President
for Science and Technology



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Authority NSC 123-71
By DLT, NARA, Date 4-11-90