

# Abetting Repression

Responding to public and Congressional shock and anger over the Pakistan Government's savage repression of Bengalis seeking autonomy in East Pakistan, the State Department sent a letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last April 23, saying:

"We have been informed by the Department of Defense that no military items have been provided to the Government of Pakistan or its agents since the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan on March 25 and nothing is now scheduled for such delivery."

Similar assurance reportedly was given last week to the Foreign Minister of India who had voiced concern over developments in Pakistan that have posed serious economic and political problems for his Government.

But yesterday a Pakistani freighter sailed from New York bearing military equipment from United States Defense Department excess stocks sold to Pakistan under State Department license. At least one other ship bearing American military equipment for Pakistan sailed from this port last month. According to the bills of lading, equipment for the earlier shipment was delivered at a New York dock on the same date that the State Department sent its letter to the Senate committee saying no deliveries were scheduled.

These shipments represent a breach of faith with the American public, with Congress and with a friendly foreign power. They serve further to undermine the credibility of the United States Government. And they put the United States in the position of abetting an act of repression that is not only morally repugnant but which constitutes a serious threat to this country's own long-term interest in peace and democratic development on the Indian subcontinent.

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