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"The Daily Star"
House #11, Road #3
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To the Editor:

I have been reading in your paper the moving accounts of the Bangladesh liberation war with special attention. My husband and I were among the Americans in Washington, D.C., who congregated there from all over the country to lobby as best we could against our administration's dastardly and incomprehensible policy towards the cause of Bangladesh. I would like to mention this lobbying effort as an addition to Shah A.M.S. Kibria's insightful account, "Some Reflections on the Victory Day, Nixon-Kissinger's Tilt Policy," (The Daily Star, December 16, 1993).

Americans who had lived in Bangladesh during the 1960's were so in love with the country that they could not sit by while they knew their friends were in danger or were being killed. Spontaneously without previous organization, engineers, teachers, doctors, husbands and wives, dropped their usual occupations and started pouring into Washington. An ad hoc office was set up in an old house near the Capitol building while lobbyists came and went, sometimes sleeping on the floor of the office and spending long hours in the corridors, antechambers and chambers of Senators and Representatives. It took three months before a draft bill which would demand stopping aid to Pakistan began to move towards a vote. Finally voted in, it was an accomplishment that came somewhat "too little, too late." But by then many government officials had been educated as a result of the lobbying; many who had been ignorant of even where Bangladesh was located had become informed and sympathetic.

It was a time that "Dhaka alumni and alumnae" will never forget. Today, as people here in Bangladesh commemorate their heroes and all those who suffered through those terrible times, we, too relive the fight and grieve again.

Sincerely,

Mary Frances Dunham
An admirer of the Bangladeshi people