

Bangabandhu's interview by David Frost

Here we publish an excerpt of the transcript of interview telecast in The David Frost Show, WNEW-TV, New York on January 18, 1972

**Frost :** Here in Chakrapadi, as you can probably see, life in the new-born State of Bangla Desh under their beloved leader Sheikh Mujibur is returning to normal- or at least as normal as it possibly can considering the events of the past few months. Events like this: these were houses and then what happened here in Chakrapadi was terrifyingly simple (Pointing in different directions). West Paskistani army tanks at that end, West Pakistani army tanks at this end, first of all shelling into this densely populated area. The results you see all around me. Then the resistance was softened up with light machine-guns. Then the troops moved in simply and terrifyingly into each house chasing the surviving residents up towards the roofs where they were bayoneted and, in many case, thrown back down in the street again. It is estimated that 10,000 people died here in Chakrapadi alone; but now a new nation has been born and today Sheikh Mujibur, the beloved leader of that new nation, talks on Television for the first time. This is his story of the past few months of bloodshed out of which Bangla Desh has been born. Joi Bangla!

On the night that you were arrested, on the night when in fact West Pakistan was about to invade where they'd been talking with you for sometime disguising their intentions and then they invaded, now at 8 O'clock you were at home on the night you were arrested and you got a warning, I believe, by phone that the army was on the way. Why did you decide to stay and be arrested?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** You see, there is a most interesting story on this point. That evening, my house was surrounded by commandos and they wanted to kill me if I came out of the house, giving the names of my own people and saying that Mujib Rahman has been killed by the extremists of Bangla Desh. Then they decided to take action by telling the world that we are negotiation with Mujibur Rahman but the extremists killed Mujibur Rahman and that Yahya Khan has no alternative but to take action against that. That was their first idea. I know they are brutes, uncivilized. They will kill my whole people. They will make a massacre. I thought it is better I die and at least save my people who love me so much.

**Frost:** You could have gone to Calcutta perhaps.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I could have gone to any place if I was ready to go, but how I can leave my people? I am a leader of the nation. I can fight and die, but I asked my people to resist.

**Frost:** You were right of course because this is what in the past nine months made you such a symbol for people to believe in. They think of you now as almost a God.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I don't say that, but I say that they love me. I love them and I wanted to save their lives. But those brutes arrested me, destroyed my house, destroyed my village home where my old parents are living. My father was 90 years of age, my mother was 80

years of age. They were living in my village house, my ancestral house in the interior of the village. They sent the army, drove my father and mother from the house and burned the house in front of them. So they had no shelter. This way they have burned everything. I thought if they get me at least they will not kill my unfortunate people. But I know, my Party is sufficiently strong enough. I have organised a Party and the people who are behind it will fight it out. I told them, you must fight every inch. I have told them it might be my last order until and unless you get emancipation. You continue fighting.

**Frost:** How did they actually arrest you? It was 1-30 in the morning wasn't it? What happened?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** They machine-gunned my house first.

**Frost:** Where were you when they arrived?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I was sitting in my bedroom - this is my bedroom. They started machine-gunning from that side. Some machine-guns were this side and from that side they started firing on the windows.

**Frost:** This was all destroyed?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** All destroyed. I was with my family and a bullet entered my bedroom. My six-year old child was sleeping on the bed. My wife was here with two children.

**Frost:** Where did the Pakistani troops come in?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** All sides and they started shooting through the window. Then I told my wife to sit here with my two children. I went out leaving my wife.

**Frost:** What did she say?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Not a word. I only kissed her a farewell kiss. I opened the door and came out and I told them to stop shooting. I said, "Stop shooting, I'm here. Why are you shooting, what for?" Then they started rushing from all sides, these military persons with bayonets to charge me. One officer was here. He caught hold of me like this. "Don't kill him," he said.

**Frost:** Just one officer stopped them?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes. Then they took me, dragged me from here and started giving me blows from the back on my legs and with the back of their guns started pushing me here and there. The officer caught me but still they were pushing and dragged me down. "Don't drag me," I said. "Wait, allow me to bring my pipe and tobacco or get it from my wife; I require my pipe." Then I came up again and saw my wife standing with my two

children. They brought the pipe for me and a small suitcase. I went away. I could see fire from all sides burning everywhere. They took me from here.

**Frost :** As you left your home at 32, Dhanmandi, did you think you would ever see it again?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** I didn't, I thought this was the last, but if I die as a leader with my head up, at least they will not be ashamed; but if I surrender to them, my nation, the people of my country cannot show their face to the world. It is better that I die keeping the prestige of my people.

**Frost :** You once said, "You cannot kill someone who is ready to die," didn't you?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** I told them that a man who is ready to die, nobody can kill him. You can kill a man physically, but can you kill a man's soul? You can't. It's my faith. I'm a Mussalman and a Mussalman dies only once, not twice, I'm a human being. I love humanity. I'm a leader of this nation, and my people love me and I love them. There is nothing I expect from them now. They have given everything for me because I was ready to give everything for them. I want to make them free. I have no objection to die. I want to see them happy. I become emotional when I feel the love and affection my people gave me.

**Frost :** Did the Pakistanis loot everything from your house?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, my whole house, even the beds, almirahs, clothes, everything. All has been taken by them. There is nothing you see.

**Frost:** That was not taken by the builders, but by the Pakistanis?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** Yes, the Pakistani troops. I don't mind about them having taken my almirahs, furniture, clothes, my children's clothes, but I only mind that they have taken my life's history. I had my diaries for 35 years of my political life. I had a wonderful library. They have taken every book of mine and some valuable documents. Everything has been taken by the Pakistan Army.

**Frost:** Again the question comes, once again. Why, why did they take everything?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** I don't know. They are not human beings, they are criminals, they are fanatics, inhuman, uncivilized creatures. Forget about this whole thing of mine. I don't mind it. Think about them killing a 2-year old child, a 5-year old child, womenfolk. They have killed all innocent people. People who had no hearths or homes. I have shown you how they burnt the poor quarters. These were absolutely hungry people who used to live

in these small places. Their homes were burning. People rushed from their homes, they couldn't live there. They were machine gunned from all sides and killed in thousands.

**Frost :** You mean they forced them out of their homes and when they came out in the open they were gunned down?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, gunned down.

**Frost :** They didn't know whom they were doing it do?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** No.

**Frost:** They just did it to anybody?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** Anybody. Their idea was that everyone was a Sheikh Mujib follower, so everyone should be killed.

**Frost :** When you see human beings do something like that, do you feel that human beings are basically good, or does that make you feel that the human nature is basically bad?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** There is good and bad everywhere. I've seen many human beings with human qualities, but I think the soldiers of West Pakistan are not human beings, they are worse than animals. People may have animal qualities, but people cannot be worse than animals. But these people are worse than animals, because an animal would kill a man attacking it, but not torture it. But they killed my people torturing them for 5 days, 7 days, 15 days.

**Frost :** What about your trial?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** They made it a court-martial with five military officers and all civil officers.

**Frost :** What did they charge you with?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Treason, war against the Pakistan Government, against the armed forces, wanting to make Bengal independent and what not. Twelve charges out of which for six charges the punishment is hanging.

**Frost:** And did you have defence?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** The Government was giving defence first but when I saw the situation and the position I thought, "No use defending me, because this is a mock trial. It is a farce." Then I got up in the court and said, "Mr. Judge, kindly ask the defence lawyers to go away because you know it is a camera trial. I am a civilian. I'm not a military person and they are giving me court-martial. Mr. Yahya Khan is not only the President but also the Chief Martial Law Administrator. He is the confirming authority. He is the convening authority of this court."

**Frost:** So at the end, you mean, he can decide anything?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He can decide anything.

**Frost :** Did you carry on going to the court or did you stop?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I had to. I was a prisoner.

**Frost:** You didn't have much freedom of choice I suppose. Did they ever reach an official verdict?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** After the court finished the proceeding of December 4, immediately Mr. Yahya Khan called on all the judges, that means the Lt. Colonels and Brigadiers, to Rawalpindi to dictate the judgment. There they decided to hang me.

**Frost:** And, indeed, I believe that you discovered that in the next cell to you they were digging a grave.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, just near my cell they dug a grave. I saw that.

**Frost:** You knew they were doing that?

**Sheikh Mujibur :** Yes, I've seen it with my own eyes, and I said, "I know, this is my grave perhaps. All right, I'm ready."

**Frost:** Did they say, "Yes, this is your grave" ?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** No, they would not say that.

**Frost:** What did they say?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** They said, "No, no, no, no. We are making some arrangement that if we have some bombing then you can take shelter."

**Frost:** And at that moment what were your thoughts? Had you thought you were about to die all the nine months?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I knew all the nine months that any day I can die. Because they are uncivilized.

**Frost:** And how did you face up to that? Did you pray?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I could face it for my conviction, for my principle, for my 75 million people who love me as their brother, their father, their leader.

**Frost:** And when you see them digging a grave and you think of everything you will have to leave behind you, do you think of your country or, for instance, of your wife and children first?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I feel for my country and my people and then my family. I love my people more. I suffered for my people and you have seen how my people love me.

**Frost:** But if you were the leader of a country like Bangla Desh, fighting for independence, you have to love your people first, your family second.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, I love my people first. I know that a human being has to die one day, either today, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Therefore, every human should die like a courageous man.

**Frost:** And who saved you from that grave?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I think God, the Almighty God saved me.

**Frost:** Did the jailer move you at one point? Did he move you away when Yahya Khan came to collect you to kill you, as I read in one account?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** They created a situation in the jail and mobilised some prisoners in the jail to attack me early in the morning and kill me. The officer who was in charge of me took a liking to me, I think. Perhaps he knew that Yahya Khan's days were numbered, and at 3 O'clock at night he took me out of the jail and kept me in his bungalow for two days without any military guards. After two days, he took me from there to another deserted area in a colony. There he kept me for four, five or six days. Nobody knew where I was except some poor officers.

**Frost:** I wonder what has happened to them!

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I don't know. I don't think they can do anything to them. But I wish them good luck.

**Frost:** And even when Yahya Khan was handing over to Mr. Bhutto, I gather he again suggested that you should be hanged. Is that right?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Absolutely right. That is the most interesting story that Mr. Bhutto told me. When Yahya Khan wanted to surrender power to Mr. Bhutto, he said, " Mr Bhutto, I've created the greatest blunder of not killing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

**Frost:** He said that?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes. He went on, "Now, kindly allow me, before banding over power, to kill Mujibur Rahman giving anti-date, back-date-hanging now and then hand over power." But Mr. Bhutto refused.

**Frost:** Did Mr. Bhutto tell you what he said?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes.

**Frost:** What did Bhutto say?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Bhutto said that, "I can't allow because then there will be a serious reaction. One lakh twenty thousand armed forces and civilians have been arrested in Bengal and are in the hands of allied forces of Bangla Desh and Indian Army and about five or ten lakhs of non-Bengali population are in Bangla Desh. If you kill Mujibur Rahman now and I take over power, not a single soul will come from Bangla Desh to West Pakistan again and there will be reaction in West Pakistan and my position will be precarious." I am very grateful to Mr. Bhutto. There's no doubt about that.

**Frost:** If you came face to face with Yahya Khan today, what would you say ?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He's a criminal. I don't like to see his photo even. He has killed my 3 million people of Bangla Desh through his soldiers.

**Frost:** Mr. Bhutto has him under house arrest. What should Mr. Bhutto do, do you think?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** You know what has happened in Bengal ? I will tell you. Three million people have been killed, including children, women, intellectuals, peasants, workers, students. At least 25 per cent to 30 per cent of houses are burned and looted in Bangla Desh. All the food godowns have been destroyed.

**Frost:** And how do you know that the number was as high as three million?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Before my coming, my people had started collecting the information. I have messages coming from all areas where I have a base. We have not finally concluded, it might be more, but definitely it will not be less than three million.

**Frost:** And this was just pointless killing? They just dragged people out of their house.....

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, these were just peaceful people living in their houses in a village. They don't know anything of the world. The armed forces went there and started shooting them like birds.

**Frost:** Why, why, why?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I don't know. I can't understand it. It's never happened in the world. Never in the history of the world has something like this happened.

**Frost:** And it was Muslims killing Muslims?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** They proclaim to be Muslims. How the Muslims have killed Muslim girls. We tried to rescue thousands. Many of them are still in our camps. Their husbands are killed, fathers are killed. In front of the father and mother they have raped daughters, in front of the son they've raped the mother. You can't think of this. I cannot stop my tears. How these people can claim to be Mussalmans. They are worse than animals. I have a friend, one of the top leaders of my Party, Mr. Mushir Rahman. (He weeps openly.) He was ex-Minister of the Government of Bangla Desh. He was killed, tortured. They tortured him for 24 days, cut one hand first, then the left hand, then his ears, then his legs...24 days! The poor man. And this is only one case I'm telling you. Many leaders, many workers, many intellectuals, many government officials, were taken from custody and killed after being tortured for 7 days, 10 days and then killed. This inhuman torture I have never heard of in history. Even the animal, even the tiger, will kill a man but never like this.

**Frost:** And what did they hope to achieve?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** They wanted to keep this land as a colony. You know that they killed my police, Bengali police, Bengali armed forces, Bengali professors, Bengali teachers, Bengali engineers, Bengali doctors, Bengali youngsters, students, all sections of people have been killed.

**Frost :** And they took out and killed 130 intellectuals even as the war was ending here in Dacca?



**Sheikh Mujibur:** Just one day before the surrender, and only in Dacca. They have killed 300, not 150, intellectuals from the University, from the Medical College, from the Engineering University. These people were killed in their own houses. Another terrible thing I will tell you. They declared curfew so that people could not leave their houses. Then they entered the houses and killed them.

**Frost:** Using the curfew so that nobody knows what's going on?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes.

**Frost:** Do you think Yahya Khan was a weak man led into evil by others, or was he an evil man himself?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He himself is an evil man, and his own friends and colleagues are saying this. You cannot put the responsibility on others, because he is a hypocrite and a dangerous man. From what I have seen when talking to him when he was President and I was the leader of the majority Party that time.....

**Frost:** He misled you, didn't he?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He could not mislead me. I understood what he was going to do, but I was also preparing to hit and he has now got the hit.

**Frost:** Preparing to what?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Hit him back and he has got the hit back.

**Frost:** Did you see him after you were imprisoned? Did you ever see him?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** No. He is not a human being even.

**Frost:** What do you think would be the right thing for Mr. Bhutto to do now?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He should give him a full trial, an open trial, I think.

**Frost:** He is under house arrest. Do you think Mr. Bhutto will do that?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** He should.

**Frost:** What do you think now of Mr. Bhutto? Do you think one day, as Prime Minister or as President of Pakistan, he will ever visit free Dacca? Will he ever come here for talks?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I don't know. But let him recognise the reality now that Bangla Desh is an independent country, and then he should know that there is no use shouting that Bengal is his territory. It is not, because for all practical purposes if they claim to be one Pakistan then you know that I have the majority and I could claim to be the President of Pakistan with West Pakistan as my territory. If they believe in democracy, I can claim that mine is the majority Party- I can call a meeting - declare the whole country as Bangla Desh and tell them that West Pakistan is my territory. You, Bhutto, get out, I am appointing the Governor. This is my territory, you withdraw otherwise I will send my army with the allied forces to occupy West Pakistan. I don't want this trouble. I have no ambition for territory. Let Mr. Bhutto be happy with West Pakistan. I want to be happy with my people of Bangla Desh and Bangla Desh is a sovereign independent country.

**Frost:** How many of the 75,000,000 people of Bangla Desh are hungry today, are in a state of famine today ?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I think about 75 per cent.

**Frost:** 75 per cent ?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, because they destroyed everything, even the people who have a capacity to eat from their own godowns - their godowns have been looted. Even the people who have little money have been looted. I think it might not be 75 per cent, it might be 85 per cent people who are in a very difficult position. My people are very good and peace-loving. They have full confidence in me and they are waiting for me to arrange something for them. I am very glad that India after recognition have come to my help so that my machinery can function. Communications should be restored, because, before their surrender, the Pakistanis destroyed my railway, the biggest bridges, the oil tanks, my industries. They have destroyed everything humanly possible.

**Frost:** You have so much to do in the first week of a new country, you have also selected, for instance, a flag and a national anthem.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes. That was the flag used long before, but there is only a small change. This was our national song long before, but I wanted to give it official recognition and I have given the official recognition now. I'm only making a small change in my flag because in my flag there was a map of Bangla Desh. No country can give a map of its territory in their national flag.

**Frost:** Why is that?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** It has never happened in any part of the world. We don't want to keep my territorial map in the flag. What I have done, and my people also accepted it, was to take out the territory map and keep the rising sun.

**Frost:** And who wrote the national anthem?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** It is an old song of Rabindranath Tagore.

**Frost:** What does it say in English?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** It says in English "I love my golden Bengal." That's how it starts. "Golden Bengal, I love you."

**Frost:** And this is a song that has been sung in Bangla Desh for many years?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Many years. On March 7th, when I held the last meeting at the race course maidan where one million people were present and they were shouting 'Independent Bengal' slogans and the boys started singing, we all 10 lakhs of people got up to attention to salute the song. That time we accepted our present national anthem.

**Frost:** Do you wish that on March 7th at the race course you had declared the independent state of Bangla Desh then?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I knew what was to come and I declared in that meeting that this time the fight was for liberation, emancipation and freedom.

**Frost:** If you had to say, "I, today declare the independent state of Bangla Desh," what would have happened?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I didn't want to do it that day particularly because I didn't want to allow them then to tell the world that Mujibur Rahman has declared independence and we have no alternative but to hit back. I wanted them to hit us first and my people were ready to resist it.

**Frost:** But you did not want to start it?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** No, I wanted them to start it.

**Frost:** When do you think Bangla Desh will be recognised by Britain?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I expect any time. I know the British people.

**Frost:** You talked with Mr. Heath in London?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I talked with Mr. Heath, I talked with Mr. Wilson and I'm happy with the talks.

**Frost:** And you smoke English tobacco?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes, for a long time.

**Frost:** What tobacco is it?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Edin More's.

**Frost:** You like that?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I like it. I've been smoking it for about 14 years. Even in the jail, I told them that they must supply me with this tobacco. And they kindly supplied it also.

**Frost:** Even in solitary confinement?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** At least I am grateful to them for that. (He laughs)

**Frost:** This is a hungry city, but a happy city. Do you know yet how much money you need?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I can't say now. I can tell you nothing. Even when they went from here they burnt the bank notes. The money in the bank they brought it and burnt it before they surrendered.

**Frost:** And then there is other money of East Pakistan, as it then was, which is in West Pakistan.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** There is nothing there. I am asking my people to give gold, whatever they have. They will give it.

**Frost:** They will give gold and thus you will have gold reserves.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** That's the only alternative I have now. Perhaps tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, I will appeal to the nation. Whatever you have, give something from your ornaments. Deposit it in the Government banks so that I can make some reserves. But they have nothing. The shops have been looted, the gold shops. I can't tell you anything more.

**Frost:** But, I mean, where will the people be able to give you gold from?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Whatever small things they have.

**Frost:** Will you ever see any of the reserves that are in West Pakistan again?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** You know, they have a commitment to the world. They have taken about 2,000 crores loan, only a small portion of which they were spending on Bangla Desh. Now Pakistan is there. We are not a Pakistani Bangla Desh. I have no responsibility. Let them pay all the loans they have taken. See their economy. I will survive. It is difficult for them to survive. To pay 2,000 crores loan and to have no market for their industries, what are they? Serious unemployment will be there.

**Frost:** They say, you know, you have the great power of leading Bangla Desh. There is that old quote: "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." How will you stop power corrupting you?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** You know that if a man like Yahya Khan comes to power by accident, he can be corrupt; but if a man comes through a process, struggling, suffering, fighting, whatever power you give him he will not become corrupt. So far as my Party and I are concerned, all my leaders have suffered jail, all my leaders have lost their houses, many of them lost their family members. They have got power after 24 years. If they get absolute power, there is no chance of corruption, because they have come through a process unlike Yahya Khan and others who, because of brute force and guns, have come to power. My people have not come to power through guns but through a process, a struggle and not only that, they have achieved independence after making sacrifices and because they have love for their people and their country. I have confidence in my leaders and in my Party workers.

**Frost:** You mentioned leaders. What is a leader? If you had to define the word leadership, for instance, what is true leadership?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** True leadership comes through a process. A man can't be a leader by an accident in one day. It must come through a process, a struggle. He must prove himself and be above personal interest. He must be prepared to sacrifice himself for the cause of humanity. He must have a principle, an idealism. If a leader has those qualities, he is a leader.

**Frost:** Who are the leaders in the history of the world whom you admire?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I recognise many leaders. I wouldn't like to mention who are the leaders today.

**Frost:** Let's look back into history. Who are the people who inspired you?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I admired Abraham Lincoln, Mao Tse Tung, Lenin, Churchill. I used to like Mr. Kennedy, the ex-President.

**Frost:** Did you meet the ex-President?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I have not met him but I have read his books. I like him.

**Frost:** What about Mahatma Gandhi?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I have great respect for Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Suhrawardy, Fazl-ul Haq and Kemal Ataturk. I used to admire Dr. Sukarno who fought against colonialism for the emancipation of his people. I have great admiration for him. These people who have come through the process of fighting.

**Frost:** At this moment in time as you look back, what would you say was your gladdest moment in the past year? What was the moment which provided the greatest happiness for you?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** The day that I heard that my people had been liberated, my people were independent and I have got Bangla Desh as an independent sovereign country. That was the happiest day of my life.

**Frost:** Of your whole life?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Whole life.

**Frost:** How long had you been dreaming of a day like that?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Long time.

**Frost:** When did you first go to prison in your fight for freedom? Was it many years ago?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I think I started going to jail in so-called Pakistan from 1948. I was arrested in 1949. I was in jail up to 1952. Then again I became a Minister in 1954. Again I was arrested in 1954 and confined till 1955. Again I was arrested in 1958

by Ayub Khan. I was in prison for five years and two years in internment and faced trials of many cases including the Agartala Conspiracy case. Again I was arrested in 1966 and was in jail for about three years . Again I was arrested by Yahya Khan and I've come out. Long struggle, long suffering. Not only I, but many of my colleagues.

**Frost:** And when you heard of what had happened to some of your colleagues in the fight for freedom in the past nine months.....

**Sheikh Mujibur:** It was the worst time of my life when I heard that they had killed about 3,000,000 people of mine.

**Frost:** (Producing photographs) These pictures are pictures that we will never forget. They are pictures you know that moved the world. When you saw those pictures for the first time.....

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I wish you hadn't shown me for I become emotional (weeps).

**Frost:** You must be. What did you say when you first saw those pictures?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** What could I say? I had no words to say. I became emotional. I started weeping. Tears come to my eyes even now. Innocent boys, innocent girls, innocent people were killed mercilessly by the Pakistan army. They burned the houses, raped my people, raped my sisters and my mothers. That was the worst time of my life and I am a strong man. Perhaps nobody has seen tears in my eyes but now tears are coming and I can't stop them.

**Frost:** How many times have you wept for your people in the past months?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Many times I've wept for them.

**Frost:** When you heard what had been done?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Yes. Everytime I remember it, tears come to my eyes and still they are coming. I can't talk now that you have shown me those photos. How a human being can kill an innocent child of live months or one year or two years. How they can kill the women and the poor peasants who have no food even. I cannot think of this, my friend. Really, it is an unfortunate position. The world could have seen and this world of our arranged the Nuremberg trials against the war criminals of fascist Germany. I think there should be another trial by the United Nations against these people. I have no objection to giving them the chance to see and give them a trial, an inquiry. Not trial, but inquiry and show to the world. I always believe in forgive and forget, but it is impossible on my part to forgive and forget because these are cold blooded murders in a planned way, genocide to kill my people. Do you think any human being can tolerate these things? These people must be punished. There is no question about it. I

can't talk now. Why did you show me these photos? I can't think of it. Believe me, I become emotional on this particular point.

**Frost:** I think that's how I became, and I think that's how many human beings would be.

**Sheikh Mujibur:** Shocked! When you still see hundreds and thousands of dead bodies in many places. They have made a ditch and thousands of people have been killed and thrown there. Some of them weren't even dead. Still they were thrown into the ditch and they died there suffering (Raises his voice). Have you heard in the history of mankind a bigger human disaster? I don't expect that any power should do politics with my people any more. For the sake of humanity, I appeal to them to help my unfortunate people, people who are still suffering. I have no ambition, I don't want to be the Prime Minister. I could not accept it. What can a Prime Minister get that I have not got from my people. I went to the hospital yesterday and I saw injured people who had lost their hands and legs, but they told me, "We have lost everything, we don't mind, but you have come back. That is our satisfaction. We are happy." Can you kill love and affection? Prime Ministership and Presidentship mean nothing to me. I have got the love and affection of my people. I want to die with that, nothing more I expect.

I'm happy. My people are today independent. They can develop themselves. They can live in an independent country. I'm grateful, really I'm grateful to the Indian people and Mrs. Gandhi. The way they have helped my ten million people who migrated to India and the people of India gave them food and shelter and accommodation. In 80 countries of the world, the population is less than ten million, but my ten million people had to migrate from their houses and you know what was the suffering. I want to rehabilitate them and I want help from everybody who has human feelings. I want the world to come forward. I have no malice against anybody. I already declared my foreign policy - Friendship to all, malice to none. I want to save my country. I want to save my people, I want to give them food, I want to give them cloth, I want to give them house, I want to give them education, I want to give them employment, I want to make a society free of exploitation- nothing else.

**Frost:** Prime Minister, could you offer a prayer in which the world could join?

**Sheikh Mujibur:** I always pray that the world should come forward to help my people. I always expect that they should come forward for the sake of humanity and my unfortunate people of Bangla Desh. No country in the world has suffered so much for their liberation as my people of Bangla Desh have suffered. I am very grateful to you, you are a friend of mine. I invited you to come and see for yourself. You have seen. See some more, go and move around. There is absolute law and order in my land. The question now does arise that if anybody asks you anything, do whatever you can do and give my good wishes as a prayer to the world. I wish everybody good luck and I



expect that everybody will come forward to help my hungry millions. Thank you my friend. God Help you. Joi Bangla.

**Frost:** Joi Bangla. I'm sure the world will come forward and I'm sure that if it doesn't, God will never forgive us.

Source : Bangla Desh Documents-- Volume II