

## Bengali Greetings

*The Bangladesh Information Center is offering cards with artwork by Bengali artist Qamrul Hasan. Inside is poetry in English and Bengali by Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore. The cards are available from the center, 423 5th St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.*

# Name-Dropping

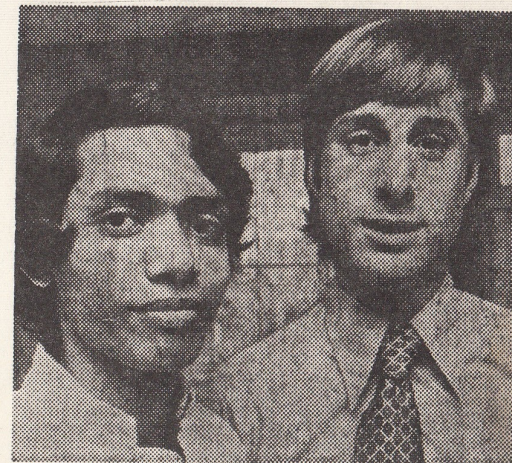
By **DONNIE RADCLIFFE**  
and **JOY BILLINGTON**  
*Star Staff Writers*

A Bengali refugee with the pseudonym "Mannon" and an ex-Peace Corps worker, David Weisbrod, are heading the unpublicized Bangla Desh Information Office on Capitol Hill. Many of the volunteers at the 5th St. SE office are American doctors from Johns Hopkins University who have worked on anti-cholera programs in East Pakistan.

Their \$4,000-a-month shoe-string operation, funded by groups of "Friends of Bangla Desh" in 40 cities across the country, is lobbying on the Hill "trying to urge Congress to urge the administration to adopt a genuinely neutral position" towards India and Pakistan, in Weisbrod's words.

The office opened in August, and Weisbrod feels their main achievement lies in behind-the-scenes activities leading to the Saxbe-Church amendment to the Foreign Aid Bill precluding military and economic aid to Pakistan.

Another office, the Bangla Desh Mission at 1223 Connecticut Ave., is the official representation here of the breaka-



"MANNON" (left) and DAVID WEISBROD

way Bengalis. Staffed by 14 former Pakistan Embassy officers, all Bengali, it set up lobbying for Bangla Desh after their Aug. 4 walkout and that of the Deputy U.N. Ambassador for Pakistan and the vice consul in New York.

The former deputy chief of mission at the Pakistan Embassy here, M. R. Siddiqi, is now the BD chief of mission here. His 14 were joined by six other Bengalis who had been dismissed earlier from the Pakistan Embassy for anti-Pakistan activities.

Since administration doors were closed to them, they turned to the Hill, where, in

the words of S. A. Kibria, former political counselor at the Pakistan Embassy, they have had access to "everyone we asked to see."

They communicate with their mobile capital (called "Mujibnagar" after their leader Sheik Mujib Ur Rahman) by ordinary mail and courier. They believe the sheik to be jailed by the Pakistan government. The Bangla Desh has enough resources, Kibria says, to maintain small missions in Washington, London, New Delhi (where they have gained recognition), New York, Calcutta, Manila, Hong Kong, Bern and Stockholm.