CONFLICT, INTERDEPENDENCE AND PEACE :
A THEORETICAL STUDY WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO SOUTH ASIA

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "CONFLICT, INTERDEPENDENCE AND PEACE : A THEORETICAL STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH ASIA", submitted by RUPA PAUL CHOUDHURY, in partial fulfilment of nine credits out of the total requirements of twenty four credits for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M. Phil) of this University, is her original work and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this University or any other Institute.

We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for final evaluation.

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PREFACE

The aim of this study has been to arrive at an understanding of how the theory and practice of interdependence can lead to a peaceful resolution of conflict and ultimately to an enduring peace. It has been sought to give the study a theoretical orientation and at the same time consider its applicability to South Asia.

The attempt in Chapter I has been a theoretical understanding of conflict and its peaceful resolution along with an analysis of the South Asian situation.

Chapter II gives an outline of the theory of interdependence with special emphasis on its potential as a strategy for building peace.

A normative-institutional structure for peace in South Asia has been attempted in Chapter III in the belief that innovation is necessary for achieving peace.

Chapter IV points out that the new opportunities offered by the present situation in international relations must be utilized wisely for achieving effective regional cooperation and peace.

Chapter V concludes the study with an attempt at taking stock of the values and resources of South Asia in order to try to foresee its prospects in the near future.

I wish to thank, first of all, my supervisor Prof. M.L. Sondhi for his constant encouragement. I could not have hoped for better guidance.

I am thankful to the University Grants Commission for awarding me the Junior Research Fellowship to pursue my work. My thanks also go to the staff of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, Teen Murti Library and American Centre Library. I would also like to thank the officials of the Bangladesh High Commission, and especially Mr. Abdullah Al-Hasan, for their help.

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(Rupa Paul Choudhury)

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INTRODUCTION

Peace is a goal which needs no justification. The relevant question to ask about peace is not 'why' but 'how'. The history of human conflict has shown with great decisiveness the dysfunctionality of violent conflict. The question, therefore, is how to achieve peace. Since conflict is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon, the deconflictualization of the world order and the achievement of peace has to proceed via a multi-pronged approach. Of the many paths to peace, interdependence is one of the more practical, being gradual and incremental in nature. This study, therefore, attempts to understand the potential of interdependence as a practical path to peace, in a theoretical framework, with special reference to South Asia.

South Asia, inspite of its resources, has not been able to fully realise its potential due to the environment of conflict and mistrust that predominates. Peace is essential for development, and the significance of this study lies in that it attempts to point out the path to such a peace. Peace alone will enable South Asia to claim its rightful place in the community of nation-states and actively work for a peaceful global order.

In earlier times there was a tendency to think of peace as a somewhat automatic process - peace would emerge automatically as humankind saw the futility of violent

conflict. More recently there is a definite reliance on theory to explain conflict and hence to identify the factors that can lead to peace. The theory of interdependence is one among the various theories advanced to point out the way to peace.

The deconflictualization of the present world order and the creation of a durable peace calls for greater interaction and interdependence among governments and peoples. This interaction and interdependence could be fostered through the proliferation of technical international organizations. The increasingly international and pressing nature of the socio-economic challenges to human welfare are now the principle determinants of collective action at the international level. As the positive experiences of cooperation in one area are applied to other new areas, the scope of cooperation will expand. This "spill-over" process will be facilitated where controversy and politicization in cooperative efforts are minimized. The less controversial the collective activity, the greater the potential for growth in cooperation and the more irreversible it will be. In order to minimize politicization, cooperation should be initiated in areas which do not involve power questions and security policy, and functionally specific institutions should be established. The technical organizations, being dominated by technical experts, would promote the world interest rather than narrow national interest. Sovereignty need not be surrendered for peace, it need only be shared. This is the

functional path to peace as propounded by David Mitrany in his 'A Working Peace System'.

A slight variant of this approach to peace was propounded by E.B. Haas in his theory of neofunctionalism. Neofunctionalism believes that for technical organizations to be effective they must be intergovernmental rather than nongovernmental. Functional institutions expand the scope of their technical operations only when they receive a high degree of support from political leaders which would be forthcoming only if these bodies fulfil national objectives.

Another path to foster greater interaction would be people-to-people contacts. Governmental interactions would be supplemented by relations among private individuals, groups and societies. Though international relations still exist, they are embedded in a background of non-national as well as national entities, with nation-states now emerging as adaptive entities in a complex global system. This is the trans-nationalization theory of J.N. Rosenau.

Another theoretical study by Keohane and Nye focuses on what is called "complex interdependence". In the modern world there are multiple chains of contact and communication connecting societies, there is an absence of a clear hierarchy of significance amongst the issues of international policy that concern government, and military force is of diminished effectiveness in those areas of

international relations where complex interdependence prevails. The development of complex interdependence is marked by a decline in the use and utility of force between the parties involved.

The progress of peace also calls for greater economic cooperation. Peace requires reasonable levels of equity among nation-states in the sharing of the fruits of development. Regional economic cooperation can increase international equity and thereby defuse conflicts arising out of perceived and real socio-economic injustice.

CONFLICT IN SOUTH ASIA

The South Asian region is passing through a difficult phase. Conflicts within and between countries of the region are showing a frustratingly stubborn character. However, the point that needs to be realized is that there is no clash of real national interest among the countries of South Asia. The animosities generated are more a creature of the mind fostered by interested quarters in all these countries. The dominant pattern of thinking in the region is a zero-sum type of thinking in which the 'You-win-I-lose' psychology asserts itself.

Conflict in South Asia also arises due to a perceived status differential among the nations of the region. It is a truism to say that in international relations it is perception that matters more than reality.

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The perception among South Asian nations of India as a hegemonically inclined nation has much to do with the environment of mistrust and conflict. Perceived status disparity and subsequent threat perception thus complicate the issue of peace in the region.

These intra-regional differences are exploited by external powers which import their own divisions in this region. Recently, however the factor of extra-regional interference has diminished and this is one opportunity which South Asia cannot afford to miss.

The South Asian region offers immense scope for the application of the interdependence principle in the building of peace. This is because of the fact that in this area economic development is the primary concern. The developmental imperative must surely outweigh considerations of high politics, and herein lies the promise of interdependence. The objective circumstances in South Asia call for regional cooperation. This cooperation can be initiated in non-controversial, yet important, areas like health and agriculture. Cooperation in such areas can help in liberating the thinking of this area from the psychological rut of a win-lose situation. Health for all, for example, is a transcendental goal in the sense that the health of one does not entail the ill-health of another. A preliminary structure for such cooperation exists in the form of SAARC. But SAARC must develop institutional mechanisms of cooperation in specific functional areas.

Besides the psychological reorientation suggested above, such cooperation would also have the effect of "spill-over" to greater and greater areas of cooperation by means of a positive demonstration effect. Such cooperation must not only be on the governmental level but also at the peoples level. People-to-people contact has great peace-building potential due to the fact that the ordinary masses always have more to lose and less to gain from war than the political leader. A wide network of such contacts would thus, in course of time, create a sufficiently strong interest group of peacemakers. Such cooperative efforts would lead to an integrated development of the region as a whole and the lessening of disparities within and between nations thus diminishing one of the major sources of conflict — the disparity/"Indian hegemony" factor. A simultaneous effort would have to be made to reduce the incidence of what is called "structural violence" within each one of the these countries. Peace cannot be achieved without social justice.

An interwoven web of complex patterns of interdependence would create a situation in which the costs of war would be unacceptably high. A rational cost-benefit analysis would then preclude war.

CHAPTER I

CONFLICT AND ITS RESOLUTION

In our thinking today on the issues of war and peace there is a dominance of "game mentality"[1]-an ideology that pictures life as a set of overlapping games which everyone plays and tries or ought to try to "win". This game - theoretic mode of reasoning has fostered the "intellectualization of war"[2] in the strategic community. The implication is deduced from game theory that mathematically rigorous thinking focused on the search for optimal strategies in conflict situations is possible.

However, the study of war and conflict more than the study of any other issue, needs to have an activist content. The fetish of scientific methodology in the narrow sense of quantitative, mathematical formulae needs to be discarded in favour of a humane and value-oriented approach. As Gunnar Myrdal says, "We need viewpoints, and they presume valuations. A 'disinterested social science' is from this viewpoint, pure nonsense. It never existed, and it will never exist"[3]

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1. This concept has been elaborated by Anatol Rapoport in his book 'Fights, Games and Debates', University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1960.

2. This concept also has been developed by Anatol Rapoport in his book 'The Origins of Violence: Approaches to the Study of Conflict', Paragon House, New York, 1989.

3. Quoted in Alex Inkeles, What is Sociology, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1981, p.102.

THEORIES OF CONFLICT

A first step in this study is a definition of the phenomenon of conflict. Conflict phenomena are the overt, coercive interactions of contending, collectivities[4]. Conflict has four distinguishing properties :

1. Two or more parties are involved.

2. They engage in mutually opposing actions.

3. They use coercive behaviours "designed to destroy injure, thwart or otherwise control" their opponent(s).

4. These contentious interactions are overt, hence their occurrence can easily be detected and agreed upon by independent observers.

A conflict exists when two people wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent. They may both want to do the same thing, or they may want to do different things where the different things are mutually incompatible. A conflict is resolved when some mutually consistent set of actions is worked out. The definition of conflict can be extended from single people to groups (such as nations), and more than two parties can be involved in the conflict. The principle remains the same. If parties get into positions of goal incompatibility, it is not due to some inherent factor in the nature of groups or in the nature of human beings, but it is rather due to the circumstances in which they find

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4. T.R. Gurr, 'Introduction' in T.R. Gurr ed. Handbook of Political Conflict, The Free Press, New York, 1980, p.1.

themselves. The interests of different persons may collide, but it is not inevitable that they should collide. Better information or less misperception or more rational behaviour may have prevented the collision. Conflict may occur through a scarcity of and competition for resources, or through maldistribution of ample resources, but it may not be a necessary condition of human societies that these conditions pertain. Goal incompatibility is almost inevitable in any complex highly differentiated society, but a difference of opinion is not the same as a violent conflict. Peace researchers in general are not concerned with the eradication of conflict, but rather with the eradication of violent expressions of conflict.[5] One of the most violent expressions of conflict, i.e. war comes not from the nature of the nation-state and its external relations but from the way in which the environment acts upon the individual. Individuals have needs which they strive to fulfil, and it is the frustration of these needs, either personally or collectively, that leads to violent conflict. Thus, collective political violence is a form of aggression; aggression results from anger, which is produced by frustration; the fundamental cause of feeling frustration is an imbalance between what one gets and what one considers one's due - discrepancy between men's value expectations and

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5.   Keith Webb, Conflict: Inherent and Contingent Theories in World Encyclopedia of Peace, Vol.I., Pergamon Press, England, 1986, p.170.

their value capabilities.[6] The propensity to feel frustrated is aroused by special extrinsic forces strong enough to overcome the tendency towards pacific acquiescence.

However, aggression is not yet rebellion. It must be politicized if it is to appear as collective political violence, and latency must become actuality. Here, mediating (secondary) variables that do not themselves involve the frustration-anger-aggression nexus come into play. They include :

1.   "Normative justifications" for political violence or the lack of them, from Sorelian glorifications of violence to Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence.

2.   "Utilitarian justifications" which are chiefly of tactical consideration.

3.   The balance of coercion between regimes and dissidents. Strife will be greatest if there is an even balance of coercion.

4.   Environmental conditions that facilitate strife : transportation networks, geographic traits, the external support given to dissidents, and so on.

But conflict is not inherent because the values which would satisfy human needs are not in short supply. Hence the needs for identity, participation or security, for

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6.   This is the Theory of Relative Deprivation of T.R. Gurr developed in his book 'Why Men Rebel', Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970.

example, can be gained without loss to other parties. Thus if the social environment were changed, and in particular the manner in which parties view each other, then violent conflict would cease.

From another point of view, conflict is a manifestation of the human tendency to divide the world into "us" and "them". Man tends to regard with a certain degree of intolerance ways of life different from that of his own community. This human tendency expresses itself in the form of class, language, religion and nation dichotomies.

Nationalism in its negative role of war-monger implies hostility or disdain for the people, culture and institutions different from one's own. One of the major causes of World War I is held to be nationalism. In recent years negative nationalism was manifested in American-Soviet hostility towards each other. Americans hated and feared Soviets not necessarily because their values or beliefs differed. The reason for the hatred was that "they" were perceived to be the "enemy". It was taken for granted that "they" would miss no opportunity to destroy "us" (i.e. Americans). Similar thought-patterns were induced in the Soviets. Indo-Pak relations today manifest a similar type of psychological brainwashing and are the victim of a psychological wartrap, which seems to offer no scenarios other than that of hostility. "In pure military thought the question why an adversary is an adversary makes no more

sense than the question why Black is the adversary of White in a game of chess ... The adversary is simply given like an axiom in a mathematically formulated theory."[7] The "we-they" dichotomy poses the question of survival - "kill or be killed". This is the psychological blind-alley in which "enemy" nations are trapped.

The category of class divides society into haves and have nots who are engaged in a perpetual strife against each other. This classical Marxist theory of conflict believes that exploitation of the have-nots by the haves is a necessary implication of class division and that a mighty violent revolution will be the mechanism by means of which the non-exploitative communist society will emerge. Leaving aside this classical Marxist doctrine of a class war which today seems to be a remote possibility, it cannot be denied that scarcity can and does lead to violent conflict. Aggressive behaviour or drives towards change, even against the will of others comes about when there is "rank disequilibrium.[8] An individual in society has status in a number of dimensions such as income, education, etc. He is in rank disequilibrium if he is high on some dimensions and low on others. Hence, a person who is wealthy but poorly educated is in rank disequilibrium and aggressive behaviour

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7.   Anatol Rapoport, The Origins of Violence: Approaches to the Study of Conflict, Paragon House, New York, 1989, p.71.

8.   This concept has been developed by Johan Galtung in the 'Structural Theory of Aggression'.

is associated with this condition. The position of the underdog that gives a view to a better life situation and resources with the idea of perceiving aggression as a possible way out of the frustrating situation[9] is often the spark that ignites the fire of revolt.

There is also the tendency which begins with a negative definition of the other party and consequent negative behaviour. The negative behaviour in turn influences the other party's perception and behaviour towards self. When self perceives the negative behaviour of the other party he sees in it a confirmation of his original assessment and justification of his behaviour. After this vicious circle of misperception is in operation for some time, the originally erroneous perceptions will most probably become correct ones and each party will in reality attempt to harm the other.

For example, in the case of India and Pakistan, both parties defined the other in a negative manner and thus behaved accordingly leading to a state of high tension, suspicion and war. Each round of negativism fed the process further leading to an accumulation of bad blood. In such a situation each side's vision becomes so limited and prejudiced that a psychological reordering of perceptions becomes next to impossible. We thus begin to live in separate worlds and are inhibited and prevented from seeing

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9.   Johan Galtung, A Structural Theory of Aggression, Journal of Peace Research, No. 2, 1964, p.96.

other worlds or paradigms by unconscious and conscious resistances. We experience great frustration, anxiety, and hostility when our particular worlds are threatened. We talk "past each other"[10] and fail to communicate effectively. We make the assumption of Cross Cultural Homogeneity[11] (R. Descartes) believing that there is a "real world" out there and that most of us live in, perceive, and respond to the same world. If in any inter-cultural conflict, one or more of the parties are characterized by the Cartesian image of the "one world", then such views will be violated by the phenomenon of the parties talking past each other.[12] Such violations will set off frustration and may sometimes lead to aggression.

The 'hegemony cycle'[13] in the international arena is yet another explanation of conflict. The existing hegemonial power is challenged by a "younger" aspirant - more dynamic, bold, innovative. Eventually, often as a

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10. Quoted by D.J.D. Sandole, Traditional Approaches to Conflict Management : Short-term Gains vs. Long-term Costs, in Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1986, p.122.

11. Quoted by D.J.D. Sandole, Traditional Approaches to Conflict Management : Short-term Gains vs. Long-term Costs, in Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1986, p.121.

12. Quoted by D.J.D. Sandole, Traditional Approaches to Conflict Management : Short-term Gains vs. Long-term Costs, in Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1986, p.122.

13. The Hegemony Theory of D. Senghaas has been referred to by Anatol Rapoport in 'The Origins of Violence : Approaches to the Study of Conflict', Paragon House, New York, 1989, p.171.

result of wars, hegemonial status passes to a challenger. In maturity the hegemonial power enjoys a "golden age" when its prosperity and influence are at their peak. But eventually "aging" sets in, new challengers take over and a new cycle begins.

The US emerged as the most conspicuous victor of World War II. Its economic dominance and cultural influence became pervasive. But the "golden age" did not last long. Both Western Europe and Japan recovered rapidly thus eroding the relative economic position of the US. US military dominance was challenged by the Soviet Union. The theory of hegemony de-emphasizes the role of ideology. In Kampuchea for example, the Khmer Rouge was supported by both Thailand and China. Thailand is one of the most "anti-Communist" states in the region while the Khmer Rouge represents Communist fanaticism gone berserk. Support to the Khmer Rouge by both China and Thailand can thus be explained only on the one ground of resistance to the establishment of hegemony by Vietnam on the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

The theory of hegemony serves to explain the power struggles of the Indian subcontinent. India is perceived as aspiring to be a regional hegemonial power and hence all other South Asian nations transcend whatever differences may exist among themselves and combine to oppose the perceived attempt at hegemony. In this context, it is very revealing that a great majority of South Asian conflicts consists of

conflicts of the other nations against India. Indo-Nepal conflict over trade and transit, Indo-Bangla conflict over sharing of river waters, Indo-Lanka conflict over the Tamil issue all contain aspects of anti-hegemony struggles. Sino-Indian conflict and Indo-Pak conflict, to a lesser extent, are hegemony-challenger conflicts. Unlike Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, China and Pakistan seem to be aspiring towards a hegemonial position in the subcontinent and hence the struggle against another perceived hegemon - India.

Conflict can thus be seen and understood from different perspectives. Whatever be the perspective one adopts, conflict, and violence associated with it, has to be seen as a social problem like poverty, drug-addiction, etc. Therefore, it has to be solved in the context of society with social man in mind. Peace initiatives must be taken simply because there is no other alternative. Today there is no alternative to peace, interdependence and global communication. Today no country can stick to its own rigid values and say 'no' to scientific developments all over the world, to the initiatives being taken to globalize the economic and political system of democracy. And in this context we have to see the region of South Asia. Today South Asia and especially India cannot afford to say 'no' to regional peace and cooperation. For South Asia the only path is to disarm and develop or perish with the stockpiles of weapons and armaments.

Disarmament and development stand for peace and cooperation in South Asia and that is the only way the region can survive. It has to prosper collectively as a group of nations or die in poverty, hunger and violence if it continues on its path of militarisation.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Fundamental to popular thinking about interstate relations has been the view that there is a fixed amount of satisfaction to be shared in any given set of interstate relations. Thus the outcome of conflict must be such that any gain in satisfactions by one party to a dispute results in some loss to the other. In this competitive and power framework conflict is clearly 'objective' - meaning that two parties cannot have the same control over resources.

However, clearly there are integrative influences in relations between states in addition to the disintegrative and defensive postures of the power model. At a point of time there are, by definition, incompatible goals, or competition for the occupancy of one of more scarce positions. But no goal is unalterable. Goal changing is a process associated with conflict, especially as costs of attainment increase.[14] Relationships within a situation of conflict can change, and there are, therefore, possible

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14.   John W. Burton, World Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972, p.145.

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forms of resolution from which both parties can gain. There are also subjective influences involved in the different perceptions parties have of each other and of the world environment, and in the consideration they give to the costs of conflict involved in delaying settlements. Conflict can be transformed from violence and coercion into a problem solving exercise with a positively beneficial result once there are opportunities to test perceptions and to assess costs of conflict in relation to values being pursued. What we should be exploring is whether conflict which is perceived as having a gain or loss outcome can be transformed into conflict that appears to have a positive outcome for all parties by re-examination of perceptions, goals and costs.

We must look for means of dealing with conflict so that there can be a self-supporting condition of peace. This means a difference between 'settlement' and 'resolution' of conflict - a distinction between an outcome determined by a third party and forced upon those in conflict, and an outcome acceptable to the parties requiring no enforcement.[15]

Certain propositions (advanced by John W. Burton), therefore, emerge that must be considered in the resolution of any conflict :

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15.   Ibid., p. 150.

1. Conflicts must not be suppressed by threat, and they must not be settled by reference to past norms and practices that are no longer perceived as relevant or just. Conflict must be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties and, for all practical purposes, by the parties.

2. There is, however, a social interest in the resolution of conflict. There is a legitimate interest of representative authorities in the outcome of conflict between two parties.

3. Any one situation of conflict has many components, and in resolution it is necessary to break down the whole into its separate parties and issues.[16]

4. Parties in an international conflict do not act irrationally, however 'irrational' their behaviour may appear to be. They respond to their environment in the way that appears to them to be most appropriate in the light of their perceptions of their environment, their goals and their costing of attainment of these goals.

5. International conflict is essentially a subjective relationship, dependent on sets of values and subjective perceptions of the motivations of the other side, even though it appears to the parties to be a conflict over an objective situation. In practice there is rarely, if ever, a cake of given size to be shared.

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16. Ibid., p. 140.

The outcome of conflict can usually be positive sum - both parties can gain.[17]

6. Coercive or third-party settlements are rarely successful or stable. International conflict needs to be resolved and not just settled and this means the need for processes by which the parties themselves determine the outcome. This is a departure from traditional notions of judicial settlement and third-party judgements. The objective must be to transform the conflict from a confrontation to a problem - solving exercise.[18] The role of the third-party is to inject into the communication knowledge about the nature of conflict generally, the problems of perception, the processes of escalation, the confusion between role behaviour and personality, the error in costing objectives, etc.

7. The effective mediator at all levels should be the trained and experienced professional whose authority, like the authority of a doctor, is based not on his official role or backing, but on his professional skill.

8. The processes of resolution must acknowledge the parties as the principal actors. The interests of the

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17. Ibid., p. 140.

18. Ibid., p. 140.

wider community also must be taken into account by the parties and in practice the insertion of community interests into a factional dispute usually increases, and does not decrease, the opportunities for effective conflict resolution.

9.   There may be no such thing as international conflict which is not, in effect, the spill-over of an internal conflict within a state. The World War II had its origins in stress conditions in Germany. Thus, it follows that the way in which international conflict can be avoided is the effective resolution of internal conflict.[19] The effective resolution of conflict requires continuing change, and outcomes of conflicts freely acceptable to the parties concerned and to the wider community. Conflict is not a phenomenon that can be broken down to various levels of social behaviour, and attempts to resolve it should not be made separately at any particular level. Experience in one theatre can feed back into others.

THE SOUTH ASIAN SCENARIO

Internal Dimension of the South Asian Crisis

With this background we can now consider the situation in South Asia. Four decades after the end of the colonial period, South Asia is in the midst of a crisis that

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19.   Ibid., p. 143.

threatens not only some of the existing state structures but the very fabric of society.[20] There are three interrelated dimensions of the present crisis.

1. The growing polarization of society along ethnic, linguistic or religious lines. Associated with this, the undermining of social values through which diverse communities had lived together in a pluralistic society.

2. The perceived failure of highly centralized structures of state power to give effective political representation to all strata of society, and the growing militarization associated with the use of coercive state power to quell resurgent subnationalism.

3. The collapse of the approach to development adopted in the post-colonial period in South Asia. The growth process associated with this approach has generated endemic poverty, growing interpersonal and inter-regional disparities, erosion of the ecological environment and finally, growing dependence on foreign aid in the case of a number of countries in South Asia.

These three points are discussed below :

1. The Westminster model of parliamentary democracy inherited by the newly independent states of South Asia

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20. P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain, Editorial Overview : The Crisis and Promise of South Asia in P.Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia : Development, Democracy and Regional Cooperation, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 18.

essentially centralized political power in the hands of the elite. This was problematic in a society marked by diverse linguistic, ethnic and religious groups and suffering from endemic poverty. Under these circumstances, a centralized political system effectively denied large sections of society participation in the decisions that affected their economic, cultural and social existence. After three decades of unequal development, and in the absence of a politically viable national alternative, the deprived sections of these societies responded by seeking the proximate sources of mobilizing militancy and political pressure, i.e., the assertion of linguistic, ethnic or regional identities.[21]

Also the spread of information technology - television and videos - imparts a new emotional intensity that is not the same as reading or hearing about one's own community. Kashmir militants show videos of the paramilitary crackdown; Hindu nationalists film police firing on Ram Janambhoomi activists. With today's technology "imagined communities"[22] have come to exist more easily than before and with greater intensity. The post-independence period in all the South Asian countries saw the rapid and widespread growth of the international communication network and that

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21. Ibid., p. 22.

22. Quoted in Ashutosh Varshney, India, Pakistan and Kashmir : Antimonies of Nationalism, Asian Survey (31,11), Nov. 1991, p. 998.

of science and technology. Along with this modernist trend was left the colonial legacy of porous borders with ethnic group affinities cutting across state boundaries. There were also felt deprivations among sections of people in many of these states. These factors combined to light the fuse of the ethnic timebomb in South Asia.

In today's Pakistan there is a feeling of relative deprivation among the Baluchis and Sindhis which has been in evidence for a long time. In recent times the problem in Sindh has assumed grave proportions. In India Punjab, Assam and Kashmir are all victims of ethnic conflict. The Assamese and the Sikhs felt that inspite of the land belonging to them they were being subordinated by the onrush into Assam of Bangladeshis and the efforts of the Congress(I) to dominate Punjab. In both cases religion was also present, Bangladeshis being Muslim immigrants and the Punjab problem assuming dimensions of a Hindu-Sikh conflict. The Kashmir problem is a clash of three forces - religious nationalism represented by Pakistan, secular nationalism represented by India, and ethnic nationalism embodied in what Kashmiris call 'Kashmiriat', with each side accusing the other of duplicity. The most serious manifestation of ethnic conflict in South Asia is seen in Sri Lanka. The serious deterioration of ethnic relations in recent decades which has led to the incessant eruption of anti-Tamil riots in recent years, culminating in July 1983 has threatened the country's body politic as never before.

Faced with these crises, the elites of these countries failed to act within the perspective of strengthening fragile democratic structures by decentralizing political and economic power. They also failed to create an environment wherein religion and culture could be freely practised by diverse communities. Instead these elite responded by strengthening the coercive power of the state to preserve regime interests against resurgent subnationalism.[23]

2. The second dimension of the crisis situation in the region is the growing centralization of economic and political power which has accentuated the economic disparities between regions and social groups. There have been attempts to impose an artificial uniformity and an unrealistic centralization of power.

The Indian political system, for example, can hardly be described as truly representative of all classes of society, much less of the poor and the downtrodden. In addition, it is not moving in the direction of economic or social egalitarianism. Moreover, casteism and communalism are gaining a new legitimacy and popular emotions are being mobilized along these lines. Bangladesh began its existence with a committment to a democratic, secular and socialist

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23. P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain, Editorial Overview : The Crisis and Promise of South Asia, in P.Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia : Development, Democracy and Regional Cooperation, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 23.

constitution but degenerated into an authoritarian, repressive regime, a major reason being the colossal economic backwardness of the region.

3. The third dimension of the South Asian crisis is the economic one. In the four decades of the post-colonial period in South Asia economic growth has increased national income without significantly mitigating poverty levels and agricultural growth has substantially increased food output without significantly affecting the nutritional status of the rural poor.

The ruling regimes, unable to find a fundamental solution to the problem of poverty and inequality, unable to provide a political framework and an intellectual vision within which the diversities of culture, religion and language can enrich rather than undermine society, tend to show a knee-jerk reaction to the crisis consisting of seeking an external bogey and on the basis of this fear seeking to mobilize and unite their own people.

The concern about the chances of collective survival in South Asia makes it imperative that an alternative strategy for development be reformulated which releases the creativity of people, ensures a better use of resources and allows the available knowledge base to be fully exploited.

Coping With the South Asian Crisis

As far as the South Asian region is concerned, what is required if the crisis is to be overcome is the reinforcing of the civilizational consciousness of tolerance and an overarching humanism[24] and the devolution of political and economic power to those sections of society which feel deprived. There must be a restructuring of the ideological, political and economic systems in each of he countries of South Asia. At the level of ideology, the deep-rooted civilizational consciousness of tolerance, humanism and freedom of belief must be tapped. At the level of politics what is needed is a decentralization of power, and the emergence of local institutions through which the individual, whatever his social status, can participate in the decisions that affect his immediate economic, cultural and ecological environment. At the level of economics, a development strategy which combines self-reliance, equity, and a balance between man, nature and growth, is required.

Coping with Ethnic Crisis

For dealing with ethnic conflict a framework is required that reduces the incidence and intensity of such conflicts and promotes interethnic cooperation. Such a framework may be constructed from the suggestions of Donald Horowitz.[25]

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24. Ibid., p. 23.

25. Refer to Donald L. Horowitz, Ethnic Groups in Conflict, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985.

Interethnic conflict may be reduced by dispersing it, for example, by scattering power among institutions at the centre. If the capture of no single body or office will suffice to gain complete power for any ethnic group, then ethnic conflict may lose some of its urgency. Ethnic conflict can be tackled by arrangements that effectively compartmentalize or quarantine it within substate units. Policies that create incentives for interethnic cooperation, like electoral inducements for coalition, are another way of reducing interethnic conflict. An early generous offer of autonomy made before extreme separatist organizations outflank moderate leaders may avert the escalation of the ethnic conflict to demands for secession.

While these are the structural constituents for a peaceful management of ethnic conflict, the cultural dimension is equally important. This consists in a re-establishment of a common humanitarian consciousness among diverse communities that can form the basis of a tolerant and peaceful society.

In a concrete situation like that existing today in Sri Lanka a reduction in the intensity of ethnic conflict could rely on :

A.   Building A Sri Lankan Consciousness

For historical reasons a Lankan national consciousness as distinct from ethnic consciousness, did not

become pervasive among the masses. Post-colonial Sri Lanka suffers from this historical failure to build up a mass base directed towards national independence from which a modern, secular Sri Lankan consciousness may have developed. Both the major communities in Sri Lanka have an ethnic consciousness with minority overtones - the Tamil seeing themselves as a minority within the country and the Sinhalese seeing themselves as a minority with the larger Tamil community of South Asia.[26] This consciousness gives rise to perceptions of identity threat, manifesting itself in mutual prejudices. There is thus need for the development of a counter-ideology leading to the growth of a modern Sri Lankan consciousness that would transcend ethnic identity.

B. Building Confidence

In the present climate of distrust, confidence building measures like dialogues and mutual de-escalation declarations are a pre-requisite for a non-violent solution.

C. Political Reforms

The existing political structures have not been able to accommodate the demands of the Tamil people for full political expression as a ethnic community. Neither have they been able to ensure to the citizens of the country as a whole that degree of participation essential for a

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26. Newton Gunasinghe and Karthigesu Sivathamby, Community Identity and Militarization in Sri Lanka, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain. ed. The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.257.

democracy. A democratic society must ensure the genuine exercise of political power by all citizens on a basis of equality, and the preservation of the territorial integrity and cultural identity of the various ethnic groups in the country. In order to arrive at this goal the state of Sri Lanka may be constituted into a number of regions composed of districts which are linguistically homogeneous. Each region could have a regional legislature thus ensuring that there is a devolution of power. This would answer the needs of various ethnic groups for political expression and control within a genuinely democratic framework.

Given the goodwill of the people of Sri Lanka, if wise, rational and effective steps are taken by the political leadership, Sri Lanka would be able to surmount the present crisis and create the political structures that would ensure a secular, democratic and united nation in which the ethnic and religious communities would find full and harmonious expression of their identities.

Coping with Systemic Crisis

The political systems inherited by most South Asian states suffered from excessive centralization of power. This centralization of power backfired because the deprived masses responded by an aggressive and militant mobilization on linguistic, ethnic or regional lines. What is required to overcome this crisis is to devolve political and economic power to the deprived sections of society

rather than use the coercive force of the state against subnationalism. South Asia as a region must come to terms with the democratization of power worldwide. The starting point of both economics and politics must be that section of society which is most depressed. South Asia must have people-oriented and people-centred politics and economics if it is to overcome the systemic crisis facing it.

Coping with economic crisis

Just as politics needs to become 'participatory democracy' (John Dewey) similarly economic development needs to become 'participatory action'. This means to view development in fundamental humanistic terms as a process of bringing out the creative potential of the people, in particular of the poor and oppressed.[27] This model of development may be called people's praxis and in this model the structural separation between knowledge and action, between experts and people gets dissolved.

International Dimension of the South Asian Crisis

Besides these internal crises suffered by each South Asian nation, we also have the international dimension of the South Asian crisis. South Asia is a region at war with itself. International relations here since the achievement of independence by the nations of the region

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27.   P. Wignaraja, Towards a New Praxis for Sustainable Development in South Asia, in P.Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 56.

have been characterized by mutual suspicion, unfriendly relations and at times open conflict.

While the British Raj acted as a unifying force it also created divisions in the region. The differences between India and Pakistan over the two nation theory and between Sri Lanka and India over the nationality of Tamil plantation workers are only two of the most outstanding examples of the problems bestowed by the legacy of colonialism.

Ethnic and linguistic complexities further complicate the South Asian scenario. The problems arising out of transnational ethnic groups are particularly difficult. Tamils in Sri Lanka, Indians in Nepal, Nepalis in India are the subject of much inter-nation tensions. Indo-Sri Lankan relations suffered due to discrimination and maltreatment of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Overlapping of religion frequently exerts a negative impact on bilateral relations between South Asian countries. For example, the ruling elite in Pakistan shows great interest in the fate of their co-religionists in India and often there is manipulation of such issues by politicians on either side of the border.

Almost inevitably, South Asian nations have pursued diametrically opposed foreign policies. Extra regional powers like the USA and erstwhile USSR have played their role in aggravating already existing dissonances.

Geography bestows unique complications in the region. It is an oft noticed fact of the South Asian geography that India stands above, in terms of size, resources, and population from all the other nations. Another curiosity is that while India shares common borders with all other South Asian countries, none of the others are linked together by common frontiers. Consequently, tension erupts due to border skirmishes. Added to this is the acute problem of migration, which has led to the Assam problem, for instance. The geographical dimension of the South Asian problem is thus manifested in the fear of Indian hegemony on the part of the neighbours and the suspicions of 'ganging up' against India by the neighbours on the part of India.

It is an obvious fact that the fulcrum of the South Asian situation is the not too friendly relations between India and Pakistan. While there is a popular feeling that what divides India and Pakistan is Kashmir, the fact is that the differences go much deeper. As Allan Campbell Johnson said, "if the conflict did not arise over Kashmir, it might well have arisen over Calcutta".[28] The fundamental problem of India-Pak relations arise out of a set of conflicts - a conflict over status, a conflict of images, and finally, a problem generated by the conflict of identity

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28.   Quoted by Sisir Gupta, Indo-Pakistan Relations, in M.S. Rajan and Shivaji Ganguly ed. India and the International System, Vikas, New Delhi, 1981, p.286.

of the two new states as two new nations.[29] The status conflict presents itself in the following form - Pakistan is an important nation in terms of size, population and geopolitical significance. Yet being smaller than India, Pakistan may have difficulties reconciling itself with this situation of non-parity between itself and India.

A second and the most important conflict is the conflict of images with Pakistan visualizing itself as a strong united nation bound together by the bond of Islam while India would face problems of integrity given its diversity. These images were not confirmed thus leading to frustration. Another problem here is the negative images the two hold about each other taking it for granted that they are 'enemies'.

The third problem is the crisis of identity faced particularly by post-partition Pakistan which has been sought to be resolved by the elite by posing the bogey of the external threat of India.

The above mentioned interpretation of the Indo-Pak conflict, which has three factors, 'Status, Image and Identity' as a set, can be regarded as an understanding of the conflict from the Indian point of view. A point of view of Pakistan can be somewhat different from this understanding. What is needed is a clear communication of

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29. Sisir Gupta, Indo-Pakistan Relations, in M.S. Rajan and Shivaji Ganguly ed. India and the International System, Vikas, New Delhi, 1981, p.226.

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each other's understanding of the problem and then evolving a common framework for its solution.

Another relationship which has assumed considerable conflictual overtones in recent times is the Indo-Sri Lankan relationship. Sri Lanka today provides a clear and tragic example of an aggravating interplay between domestic cleavages within a country and its relations with a neighbouring country. Sri Lanka was alarmed that India might take advantage of the domestic ethnic situation by active intervention which had often been demanded by Tamil groups. A. Amrithlingam of the TULF had said that just as India had helped in the struggle of Bangladesh, if should come forward to help the Tamils of Sri Lanka in their freedom struggle. Intervention of a sort did occur in June 1987 when India dropped food and medicine packets as "humanitarian aid". Soon thereafter was signed the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and the IPKF was sent to overlook the disarming of Tamil militants. It was the IPKF, which was sent as a peace-keeping force, which later became one of the most important causes for bad blood between India and Sri Lanka. Whereas the cornerstone of the post-independence foreign policy structure of Sri Lanka was an Indo-Sri Lankan relationship based on a high degree of mutual understanding, respect and accommodation, the unresolved ethnic issue and its many-sided consequences have had a dangerously disruptive effect on this crucially important relationship.

Another systemic crisis of the region is the militarization of South Asia. This is both a cause and an effect of the atmosphere of fear and mistrust. India and Pakistan are especially to be censured in this respect. The effect of the Indian forces rout by the Chinese in 1962 was one of extreme shock and it prompted a revised strategic outlook which advocated the establishment of Indian pre-eminence in the region. India's Pokhran explosion in 1974 and unsafeguarded nuclear facilities yielding weapons grade plutonium are seen as proof of India's militaristic ambitions.

Pakistan developed the typical features of the small state syndrome and in its anxiety continued to depend on the west for arms. Pakistan's unsafeguarded enrichment programme at Kahuta has given rise to serious doubt about its declaratory policy of nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes.

In this atmosphere of fear and mistrust concrete steps must be taken for demilitarization and denuclearization of South Asia. Two concrete proposals put forward have been a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia and mutual inspection of nuclear facilities.[30] The Tlatelolco Treaty could be used as a model to deal with the problem of denuclearization. India and Pakistan can mutually

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30.   Refer to Niranjan M. Khilnani, The Denuclearization of South Asia, The Round Table (1986), 299, pp. 280-86.

agree to set up an 'Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in South Asia'. The uses of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes could be ensured by a treaty.

The question arises whether the two countries might already have some nuclear weapons clandestinely. If so, then they are cheating both each other and the world with their declaratory policy of peaceful use of nuclear energy. If India has nothing to hide why not accept mutual inspection? This might even facilitate the sharing of nuclear technology. India and Pakistan have some very experienced and well-known scientists who jointly could effectively tackle any problems relating to mutual inspection, provided there is the will to accept mutual inspection as a useful step in creating better understanding between the two countries. It would also be prudent to avoid unnecessary preconditions to a mutual inspection plan, especially if Pakistan has any reservations about them.

However, confidence building measures can be negotiated successfully only under conducive conditions. It is, therefore, essential to stop all propaganda activities against each other, so that a cordial atmosphere may be created before negotiations.

In the era of democratic society the utility of war has greatly diminished. In spite of this, nations are continuously and competitively building up their arms in the name of national security, and the merchants of death are

still supplying high-tech weapons to the Third World nations. To make a living by selling weapons of mass destruction is inhumane, pre-modern, and aggressive. We must institute an effective international control over the manufacturing and possession of nuclear and bio-chemical weapons. Do we have to repeat continuously our trials and errors? We have enough historical lessons through which we have learned much, and must continue to learn.

Peace in South Asia is an elusive but not necessarily unattainable goal. We must see various problems of human society holistically and organically from the viewpoint of humanistic and global considerations and based on all directional new thinking.[31] As long as we have biased or partial views, we cannot solve these problems. With the close of the cold war era, the world is ushering in the era of conciliation and cooperation, and we in South Asia can no longer afford to behave in a pre-modern and stereotyped way. We have to discard the narrow and old thinking, cast away exclusive nationalism and hegemonism, and cultivate a sense of human community. Hegemonic nationalism must be replaced by cooperative regionalism and ultimately internationalism for coexistence and coprosperity.

As the Charter of the UNESCO states, the seeds of war are in the minds of men. Without a widespread perception that wars are bad and aggression is not justifiable under

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31.   Young Seek Choue, White Paper on World Peace, Kyung
       Hee University Press, Seoul, 1991, p. 23.

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any circumstances, war cannot be prevented and peace cannot be achieved. Only when we come to hate the act of war as a crime, will we be able to create a deep and universal atmosphere of peace. The pen or idea is mightier than the sword. We must cultivate the idea of a regional family as a step towards the idea of a global family.

CHAPTER II

SOUTH ASIAN INTERDEPENDENCE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF

PEACE RESEARCH

The traditional realist thinking has been dominant
in South Asia, and Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri
Lankan, Nepalese and other decision-makers in the region
have based their foreign policies on the basis of
established notions of power and security without a
comprehensive analysis of interdependence and transnational
relations in the subcontinent. After the decolonisation in
the late forties, it was natural that the "new states"
should be impressed by the political purposes and
ideological justifications which theories like those of Hans
J. Morgenthau provided for "high politics" of struggle and
competition, and paid scant attention to the approaches and
emphases of peace research on the imperative need to
ameliorate the conflict-prone structures which dominated
regional relations. India as a key participant in the
nonaligned movement paid close attention to the centre
periphery patterns of the international system, but her
policy makers and foreign policy specialists did not reflect
sufficiently upon the regional structural conditions in
South Asia where New Delhi was perceived as a hegemonic
actor. The other states of South Asia also concentrated on
their security dilemmas and did not recognize the
collaborative aspects of their relationships. As member

states of the United Nations, the NAM, or the Commonwealth, South Asian states have all been eloquent about ecological and planetary concepts, but they have been very reluctant to go beyond the traditional state-centric view in regional affairs. The application of realist theory to the evolution of South Asian affairs has been counter-productive and has led to both the proliferation of conflict and militarisation. The focus of peace research provides a conceptually richer approach because while it is also concerned with strengthening security mechanisms, but by challenging the theoretical foundations of militarisation, arms culture, and ideological cleavages, it introduces proposals for interdependence and institution building based on positive economic, political and social linkages.

This study is therefore an inquiry into the nature of security and development of stable peace in South Asia which departs from the discourse of the realist school with its three fundamental assumptions:

A.   A mechanistic model of international relations in which nation-states are exclusive actors determining the dynamics of political and economic change.

B.   A sharp dichotomy between domestic and international politics.

C.   A perpetual struggle for power as the main content of international relations.

The purpose of this study is to illustrate how and to what extent the basic realist assumptions have to be

reassessed in the light of "interdependence" as a major modifying element in regional politics. In the search for feasible solutions to the pressing problems of South Asia new ways of thinking about regional relations have to be developed. There are a few major areas one can identify which will underline the evolution of a new discourse towards fruitful political strategies for regional cooperation:

1. The Changed Context of South Asian Conflict

The images of conflict which the countries of the region inherited at the time of decolonisation are no longer relevant. Again, regional nuclearisation introduces an entirely new dimension which links the rivalries in South Asia to global attitudes towards nuclear weapons. In many other areas the emergence of international norms affects the political dimensions of conflict management and conflict resolution in South Asia. The strategic perception of subcontinental defence cannot follow the prescriptions of British imperial rule. Instead the task of policy making is to recognize emerging opportunities for South Asian states to contribute to regional peace and stability through political initiatives which facilitate transition to a more peaceful region.

2. Interdependence and South Asian Nationalisms

South Asian elites are all determined to uphold their national identities at "all costs" and can therefore

be expected to make strident demands when fundamental principles of nationalism are involved. The processes of interdependence have, however, proceeded to create a momentum of their own. Although at symbolic levels the nationalist rhetoric prevails, yet South Asia has not been immune to processes of a pragmatic character which have generated realistic consensus in many areas which are not affected by the narrow definitions of nationalism. Soon after the partition of India in 1947, the problem of the utilization of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries by Pakistan and India turned into a confrontation between the two countries. This conflict was finally resolved after more than ten years through the mediation of the World Bank resulting in the Indo-Pakistan Indus Water Treaty of 1960. Statesmanship of the part of Jawaharlal Nehru and Ayub Khan and the well-intentioned persistence of the World Bank helped to resolve the disputes to the advantage of both India and Pakistan.

This is one of the more outstanding instances in which pragmatic considerations and an atmosphere of mutual give-and-take have shown the way out of difficult and conflictual situations. Unfortunately, however, this is more of an exception than a rule. The climate of nationalism in each country leads to political relations assuming the character of zero-sum games and sentiments are easily inflamed. But there are important factors contributing to the erosion of mutual hostility which help to stabilize

interstate relations. Given political vision, some of these symbiotic relationships can ultimately lead to a network of treaties, understandings and institutions covering the entire region. An assessment of the contending pulls of nationalism and interdependence is essential to an understanding of the new political and economic agenda in South Asia. Even during periods of crises, South Asian elites have developed means of signalling their political resolve to continue efforts to minimise risks and escalatory syndromes.

3. Interaction between Domestic and Foreign Policies

The realist assumption of complete separation of domestic and international politics is quite inapplicable to South Asia. Peace researchers have tried to understand systemic processes which can reinforce principles of cooperation. South Asian governments have begun to realise that the general setting of South Asian regional politics has pervasive effect on domestic politics. At the same time domestic constituencies cannot be ignored in formulating foreign policy initiatives. The linkage between domestic and foreign policy can of course produce both instability or patterns of instability. The key question for decision-makers is to manage domestic demands generated by interest group politics, to coordinate foreign policies instead of exacerbating problems till they get out of control. The political solution of an ethnic crisis, for example, can consolidate the social and political fabric of the entire

region, while a short-sighted perception of the policy environment can generate a precipitous decline in regional confidence. A major challenge for peace research in South Asia then is to make clear the dimensions of peace as a "social need" in both the domestic and foreign policy frameworks.

4. Economic Cooperation in a Common Framework

In place of geopolitical concerns of traditional statecraft, economic interdependence has assumed central importance in advanced capitalist economies. But in South Asia, although the states have not made a mark on the world capitalist economy, it is possible to discern changes in the overall economic environment which point to tentative steps towards greater economic interdependence. Agreements on macroeconomic policies will not be difficult if the minimum of international political trust can be generated. There are several instances in which processes of negotiation to satisfy mutual economic interests have succeeded even when political and military relations were bedeviled by sharp confrontations. Most economic conflicts in South Asia are perceived by policy makers as a drain on the societal and economic resources of the subcontinent and could easily be resolved in an environment of policy coordination. If the agenda of economic change is set in a common regional framework, the developments in communications technology will conceivably lead to an open and market-oriented economy

for the entire region in which a more positive economic leadership role for South Asia will emerge.

During the visit of the Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia (May 26-28, 1992) she emphasized that "peace and stability in South Asia are essential prerequisites for the success of the liberalisation programmes being pursued by each of us...It is equally important that this policy of economic reforms and liberalisation should foster an improved climate for our own bilateral economic cooperation. This can change the lot of our two close and friendly neighbours and can bring the two peoples still closer"[1]. The awareness of the benefits of economic cooperation is certainly not lacking, what is required is a determination to chalk out and implement concrete programmes.

5. Long Term Relationships and Common Perceptions

The history of South Asian relations is marked by traumatic relationships and deepened skepticism about the intentions of different actors when viewed in the short term perspectives. Many of the problems will continue to simmer if short term thinking prevails but the political landscape could change rapidly for the better if long term relationships propel the regional actors into consensus seeking activities. Peace research has stressed the value of

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1.   Nikhil Chakravarti, A Landmark Visit, Mainstream, Vol. XXX, No. 32, May 30, 1992, p. 2.

"long sightedness" for wider understanding and appreciation of peace-building strategies. There are at least three avenues open to South Asian countries for developing common perceptions: first, the search for peace, stability and security in South Asia is directly linked to the utilisation on a mass scale of science and technology in the region for overcoming economic stagnation. Second, a stable structure of regional order alone can enable the constellation of social forces to generate political support for the various regimes in the subcontinent. Third, the South Asian educated and political elites do not wish to be passive recipients of cultural uniformity imposed by the western world. It is feasible and desirable that common cultural perceptions of South Asia should make an autonomous contribution to a consensual global culture.

6.   Constraints on Arms Escalation

The globalisation of the East West conflict produced far-reaching effects on the South Asian scenario and resulted in particular in a security psychosis in the case of both India and Pakistan. Both these countries competed to acquire new weapons systems and their moves and counter-moves tended to destabilise the regional situation. In the process Pakistan's political system became highly militarized. Since 1977, with the steady inflow into Pakistan of Afghan refugees and use of Pakistan as a conduit for arms for the Afghan war...a large proportion of weapons

meant for Afghan guerrillas have filtered into the illegal arms market.[2]

The Indian economy came under enormous strain which would have eased if there were a generalised movement towards regional detente. As arms control and disarmament options came to the fore in East-West relations, it became reasonable to ask if new security structures could be evolved on a regional basis. In this context it is essential to realize that a friendly Pakistan is central to India's larger interests in the context of the strategic indivisibility of the subcontinent.[3]

In the changing geopolitial and geostrategic environment, the international community stressed cooperative norms and expectations which implied greater attention to constraints on arms escalation. There are obvious deficiencies in the proposals to regulate regional confrontations and often a false impression is created of the success of efforts to reduce arms competition at the regional level. At the same time the peaceful change in the East-West security system has brought a new readiness to eliminate the causes of arms races at the regional level.

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2.   Akmal Hussain, The Crisis of State Power in Pakistan, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 231.

3.   S.M.M. Razvi, Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia, Round Table (1986), 299, p. 269.

7. The Dynamics of Ecological Issues

The realist tradition has ignored ecological issues, but the appearance of environmental issues on the agenda of South Asian countries like elsewhere in the world has made it necessary to search for forums for resolving common environmental problems. India played a catalytic role in the United Nations Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) and the other South Asian countries share with it normative goals of environmental diplomacy. The meeting of the SAARC Environment Ministers in Delhi in early April 1992 and the G-77 conference in Kuala Lampur later in the month were seen as strategic meetings to unite potential allies from the south for the main battle at Rio this June (1992).[4] The problem of course is that the South Asian governments have generated more dialogue and cooperation on ecological issues on an international basis than on a regional basis. There are few effective coalitions of environmental activists in the subcontinent which cut across state boundaries; but as the coming period brings an exacerbation of ecological problems, a positive turn for regional cooperation for implementing common environmental strategies is inevitable. The significance of the Greenhouse Effect for Bangladesh and Maldives is just an example of the high stakes South Asia has in monitoring the situation and the measures to be adopted at regional and international

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4.   Vibodh Parthasarathi, Central Theme : Not Ecology, Control of Global Resources, Mainstream, Vol. XXX, No. 32, May 30, 1992, p. 5.

levels. The ecological interdependence of South Asian states may bring about a dramatic shift in public opinion if the metaphor of a common South Asian home comes to be adopted through constructive dialogue.

8. **Mutual Vulnerability**

The internal and inter-ethnic disputes in almost all the South Asian countries have led to erosion of values and institutions and revealed vulnerabilities in national integration. It is possible for each country to fuel ethnic and communal strife in another country without direct involvement of its armed forces. It is unfortunate that South Asian states have been slow in recognising the dangers of terrorism and drug trafficking and have not reflected adequately on the imperative of a unified stand against the abuse of human rights. South Asia has many lessons to learn from the confidence-building Helsinki process in order to pre-empt the emergence of new conflict situations. The mutual vulnerabilities can only be reduced if indigenous peace movements bring pressure on the regional negotiating processes, and traditional views concerning inevitability of war and violence are transcended. The increasing tensions which have accompanied efforts to resolve ethnic conflicts within the nation-state framework may have more benign outcomes if a general process of regionalisation matures.

9. **Peace Values in International and Regional Relations**

The replacement of political, social and military confrontation requires above all the building of trust at

both international and regional levels. The realisation of peace values is not just idealism. Concepts related to "alternative security" can be worked out for overcoming confrontations even at the level of military blocs. In South Asia no serious effort has been made to work out political measures which can dismantle "the institutionalised concept of war". South Asian foreign policy and strategic communities have to catch up with the new generation of studies which have analysed development of East-West relations for evolving new security orders. Strategic goal setting in South Asia appears to have reinforced roles and meanings derived from dominant normative orientations in which the Third World is the arena of prime competition between the great powers. This leads to worst case analysis for military decision-making. In order to look at South Asian problems as "peace" and "common security" problems, the level of analysis should encourage us to fill the research lacuna by taking into account the consideration that we are now experiencing metamorphic change which is making our society increasingly interdependent on each other. In the coming international society we will have to establish a great common order not only by integrating norms of individual nation-states but also by setting up new norms for a larger international society. Thus, we must try to find a way to construct a human society where goodwill, cooperation, and the spirit of service would prevail. Such a society can be achieved if we have a will to achieve a

better life, a better relations, and a better society. This sort of will should be the basis for a new order and a new value system.

INTERDEPENDENCE: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Mankind is overly accustomed to a world of sovereign states in which the best interests of humankind are entrusted to the calculation and wisdom of national governments. However, people are now convinced that most governments today are, in the main, not disposed to act as the guardians of human wellbeing. A world system composed of sovereign states cannot deal effectively or equitably with all the problems facing humankind. Some form of regional and then global integration is needed to facilitate the shaping of policy and the sharing of resources. Without such integration, the difficulties of today seem destined to become the nightmares of tomorrow. We most urgently require that which is most lacking, viz., the capacity and willingness of national governments to be enlightened to think and act regionally and globally rather than nationally.

Fortunately for us today the world situation is conducive to such a broadening of visions. The world is undergoing a democratic revolution and events which were unthinkable even five years ago are actually taking place. We are beginning to realize how much our quality of life depends on the resources, ideas and cooperation of other

nations. The fact of interdependence and the need for mutual help and cooperation are being acknowledged today everywhere in the world, except perhaps in South Asia. In the situation as it exists today interdependence can be one of the major peace mechanisms of our times.

In simple words interdependence means <u>mutual</u> dependence. In relations among nations or among actors in different nations if there are <u>reciprocal</u> <u>effects</u> such situations would point towards interdependent relations. However, simple interconnectedness does not mean interdependence. Where transactions among nations entail reciprocal costly effects[5] there interdependence exists. In short, relationship would be characterized as interdependent only if they involve costs.

Though interdependence signifies mutual dependence, it does not signify evenly balanced mutual dependence. Asymmetric relations also qualify as interdependent relations.

Two very useful dimensions of interdependence that serve as a guide to a country's situation in an interdependent relationship with another country are <u>sensitivity</u> and <u>vulnerability</u>[6]. Sensitivity involves degrees

5.   R.O. Keohane and J.S. Nye, Power and Interdependence :
      World Politics in Transition, Little, Brown and
      Company, Boston, 1977, p.9.

6.   These two dimensions have been developed by R. O.
      Keohane and J.S. Nye in 'Power and Interdependence :
      World Politics in Transition', Little, Brown and
      Company, Boston, 1977, pp. 12-19.

of responsiveness within a policy framework. Sensitivity assumes that the policy framework remains unchanged.)

The situation however changes when we consider the possibility of policy changes. Two countries each importing 35% of their petroleum needs may seem equally sensitive to price rises, but if one could shift to domestic sources of petroleum or its alternatives at moderate cost while the other had no such option, the second state would be more vulnerable than the first. Vulnerability thus depends on the relative availability and costliness of the alternatives that various actors face. Since it takes a considerable period of time to bring about policy changes, the immediate effects of changes in the external environment generally reflect sensitivity dependence. Vulnerability dependence can be measured only by the costliness of making effective adjustments to a changed environment over a period of time. Vulnerability interdependence is a more reliable guide to the power resources of a nation than sensitivity interdependence. If an actor can reduce its costs by altering its policy it would be in a more powerful position relative to an actor which cannot do so.

Following a trend set by eminent sociologist Max Weber, R.O. Keohane and J.S. Nye have developed an <u>ideal type</u> <u>model</u> of interdependence which they term <u>complex interdependence</u>[7]. An ideal type is a model constructed as an

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7.   This concept is discussed in detail by R. O. Keohane and J.S. Nye in 'Power and Interdependence : World Politics in Transition', Little , Brown and Company, Boston, 1977, pp. 23-37.

analytical tool by distilling the most essential components of the phenomenon under study. It defines an extreme set of conditions which does not exist in reality. A very common example which would serve to clarify the meaning of the term 'ideal type' is the model of perfect competition in Economics.

In a situation of complex interdependence:

a)   Multiple channels connect societies, including informal ties between governmental elites as well as formal foreign office arrangements; informal ties among non governmental elites; and transnational organisations (such as multinational corporations) - interstate, transgovernmental and transnational relations.

b)   There is an absence of hierarchy among issues, meaning, among other things, that military security does not consistently dominate the agenda.

c)   Military force is not used by governments towards other governments within the region, or on the issues, when complex interdependence prevails.

Under complex interdependence congruence (between the overall structure of power and the pattern of outcomes on any one issue area) is less likely to occur.[8] In other words, militarily and economically strong states, by using their overall dominance, cannot prevail on their weak

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8.   R.O. Keohane and J.S. Nye, Power and Interdependence :
     World Politics in Transition, Little, Brown and
     Company, Boston, 1977, p. 30.

issues. As military force is devalued, military powers will find it difficult to use their overall power to control outcomes on issues in which they are weak. As linkage becomes difficult, there will be a tendency to reduction in international hierarchy.

This ideal type of complex interdependence does not exist in reality. Yet it is a pointer to the peace potential of the phenomenon of interdependence as it acquires ever higher levels of scope and complexity. An interwoven network of communication channels and the downgrading of the utility of military force are essential ingredients to a non-violent and peaceful world.

PEACE THROUGH INTERDEPENDENCE

The crucial role of cooperative interdependence in conflict resolution was impressively demonstrated in a field experiment by Muzaref Sherif (1961). The details of this experiment are given by Anatol Rapoport in his 'On Violence.'[9] The experiment involved two groups of pre-teen boys. These two groups were kept apart in two summer camps until strong feelings of identification were developed in both. Then an "accidental" meeting was arranged on a hike. From then on, strong feelings of intergroup hostility were developed. Many attempts at conciliation were made such as

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9. Refer to A. Rapoport, The Origins of Violence : Approaches to the Study of Conflict, Paragon House, New York, 1989, p. 506.

meetings between the leaders, contact between rank and file members, providing favourable information about one group to the other. None of these reduced the hostility. Cognitive dissonance was a formidable opponent to a change of attitude.

Only one intervention produced a favourable change. The water supply broke down (deliberately arranged by experimenters) and the only way it could be repaired was by a joint effort of the two groups. Thereupon the false images rapidly crumbled and each group was open to reconciliation.[10] This experiment suggests that such cooperative interdependence can also work among nations and is an excellent point of departure for understanding David Mitrany's argument in his book 'A Working Peace System.'

According to Mitrany, what we need now is a new sense of peace, not a peace that would keep the nations quietly apart but a peace that would bring them actively together, not the old static and strategic view but a social view of peace.[11] Peace must grow from the satisfaction of common needs shared by members of different nations. International agencies, serving people all over the world regardless of national boundaries, could create by the very fact of their existence and performance, a community of

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10. Quoted by A. Rapoport, The Origins of Violence : Approaches to the Study of Conflict, Paragon House, New York, 1989, p. 506.

11. David Mitrany, A Working Peace System, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1966, p. 92.

interests, valuations, and actions. Ultimately if such
agencies were numerous enough and served the most important
wants of most peoples, the loyalties to these institutions
and to the whole community of which they would be the
agencies would supersede the loyalties to the separate
national societies and their institutions. Functional
cooperation would be a means of persuading national
governments to make the sacrifices in national sovereignty
which the preservation of peace demands. By entrusting an
authority with a certain task, along with the necessary
powers and means, a part of sovereignty is transferred to
this new authority and such partial transfers will gradually
bring about a shift in the true seat of authority. Peaceful
change means to make changes of frontiers unnecessary by
making frontiers meaningless through the continuous
development of common activities and interests across them.
(The functional approach) would help the expansion of such
positive and constructive common work, of common habits and
interests, making frontier lines meaningless by overlaying
them with a natural growth of common activities and common
administrative agencies.[12] Social activities like poverty
alleviation, literacy drives and such others are common
activities. But today such social activities are cut off
arbitrarily at the limit of the state. The functional
approach advocates that such artificial compartmentalization
must be done away with, and whenever useful or necessary the

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12.   Ibid., pp. 62-63.

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several activities should function as one unit. National problems would then be treated as the local segments of general problems. Cooperation for the common good is the task, both for the sake of peace and of a better life, and for that it is essential that certain interests and activities should be taken out of the mood of competition and worked together. Every activity organized in that way would be a layer of peaceful life; and a sufficient addition of them would create increasingly deep and wide strata of peace-not the forbidding peace of an alliance, but one that would suffuse the world with a fertile mingling of common endeavor and achievement.[13]

The functional approach to peace, therefore, believes in a 'working' peace through doing things together in workshop and marketplace than by signing pacts in chancelleries.[14] It is peace through action rather than peace through word and commitments.

On the level of attitudinal changes the beneficial effects of transnational participation on the process of peace building is manifested in the fostering of cooperative attitudes.

In 'Peace on the March', Robert Cooley Angell argues that transnational participation - role playing in structures involving persons from more than one country-is

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13.   Ibid., p. 98.

14.   Ibid., p. 25.

increasing and that its effect is to produce more accommodative attitudes. The most important group of participants is that composed of individuals such as party leaders, journalists, spokesmen for pressure groups and intellectuals-the "influential". Attitude changes in these individuals are particularly significant because of the influence they weild over the political leadership of their countries. Angell has envisaged a "political pyramid", with the policy-makers at the apex, the elite in close touch with them, and arrows of influence coming up from other levels in the pyramid, strongly from the high levels, more weakly from those lower down. The line of causality is thus straightforward: contact between peoples from different countries have significant effects on the attitudes of influentials, and these effects are, on balance, in the direction of greater accommodation and international understanding. Because of their position in the elite structure of their own societies influentials have disproportionate access to foreign policy decision-makers and, in fact, attempt to influence them in the direction of their own attitudes. Finally, the decision-makers respond to such influence by working harder to reduce ideological cleavages and international conflict. Narrow nationalism will be broadened and ideological cleavages lessened, then by processes that produce more accommodative attitudes and orientations among the elite by whom policymakers are influenced. Such changes will relax somewhat the constraints hitherto felt by the shapers of foreign policy

simply because the most important segment of their constituencies has begun to move in a new direction."[15]

Transnational participation is of three broad kinds. The first two are bilateral, that is, they involve people from two countries. Citizens of one country cross a border, take part in a role in the other country, and interact with citizens playing roles in the social structure of the country. In this variety, foreigners fill roles in the institutions of the host country. In the second variety they fill roles in institutions that have been imported into the host country from abroad. The first variety is simple bilateral participation; the second is complex. The third type is multilateral. Here persons play roles in international organizations.

Angell's hypothesis is that policymakers are being subjected increasingly to a stream of influence from elites toward accommodation among nations, a stream that derives in part from the growing amount of transnational participation, with positive effects on these elites.[16] The general hypothesis asserts that transnational participation will gradually carry the world over the threshold of peace.[17]

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15.   R.C. Angell, Peace on the March : Transnational Participation [New Perspectives in Political Science, No. 19], Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York, 1969 p. 21.

16.   Ibid., p. 26.

17.   Ibid., p. 28.

The basic hypothesis of the study is quite similar to the theory of international functionalism in political science, popularized by David Mitrany in his 'A Working Peace System'. Mitrany believed that political rapprochement among nations would follow if practical problems were solved by jointly employing technical expertise, either in treaty negotiations or in setting up intergovernmental agencies with technical functions. The hypothesis here is that the longer route, through the positive participation of hundreds of thousands of individuals from different countries who may then influence their governments to accommodative policies, is more likely to succeed."[18]

In view of this hypothesis one of the most basic policies that might be pursued by national governments is to further types of transnational participation with positive effects and dampen those with negative effects. Policies that thicken the web of transnational participation and bring isolated nations into it will tend to make for greater tolerance of differences between nations. The appreciation of foreigners that comes from intimacy and reciprocity, even when it does not bring agreement, may bring agreement to disagree. The edge is taken off conflicts of value when the proponents learn to respect one another.[19]

According to Angell, World peace will not arrive at the blast of a trumpet. Neither will it be produced by

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18. Ibid., p. 32.

19. Ibid., p. 191.

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some technological marvel newly unveiled. It will be created by a creeping vine which, if properly nourished, will slowly enfold the globe.[20]

The prospects for the realization of such a peace are brighter today than they have been since the end of World War II. The East-West ideological wall has come down and a new era of detente and cooperation has begun for the construction of regional cooperation societies, which have great potential. For example, a regional cooperation society is a system for security cooperation. If collective security system is arranged regionally, the member nations can not only refrain from war against each other but also achieve individual national security with the least military expenditures.

A regional cooperation society also facilitates socio-cultural exchanges and cooperation among nations of the region. When nations feel secure, their external policies are more prone to cooperation than confrontation and they can engage in extensive exchanges and cooperation among themselves. Only through exchanges and cooperation can a feeling of heterogeneity be overcome and mutual understanding enhanced.

In this era of internationalism, ideological convergence and enhanced communications, interdependence is one of the surest and most pragmatic paths to peace. No

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20. Ibid., p. 197.

nation, big or small, can today afford to live in isolation. In the age of global integration, the theory and practice of interdependence, if utilized wisely, can be a potent factor for world peace.

Peaceful conflict resolution, therefore, requires theoretical frameworks through which we structure the reality and select our social aims and the strategies to reach them. Since human behaviour depends on theoretical frameworks and concepts, (we must) bring up new ways to think about old questions[21].

For example, one of the oldest pursuits of mankind, i.e. warfare, is not inevitable. Whatever functions war is supposed to fulfil are capable of being fulfilled in alternative ways. This may be illustrated as follows:

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21.   Jyrki Kakonen, Preface, in Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1986, p. 97.

FUNCTIONS OF WAR AND THEIR ALTERNATIVES

Function	Promised value	Behaviour alternative	Value alternative
1. Individual	Honour Perfection	Sport Religious worship	Transformation
2. Social	Cohesion Order	Superordinate goals, law	Spontaneous life
3. Cultural	Cultural progress	Education	Transformation
4. Statist	State Perfection	Trade, Sport	Spontaneous life
5. Instrumental	a. Acquisition b. Satisfaction c. Defence d. Peace e. Conflict resolution	Trade Arbitration Peace through... Non-violent alternatives negation ⟶	Transformation Concession Non resistance Positive peace Conflict
6. Systemic	Regulation	Institutional regulations	Spontaneous life

Source : Vilho Harle, On the Alternatives to War and its Functions, Current Research on Peace and Violence, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1986, p.138.

Sport can be an alternative means of obtaining personal honour. Various forms of religious worship have always promised personal salvation. There have, therefore, been several non violent forms of behaviour available in the fulfilment of individual functions of war. Law with its sanctions has been regarded as an alternative means to produce social order.

There are also some general alternatives to the promised values. General transformation of values, spontaneous life and ideas of positive peace are such alternatives.

We in South Asia must also find alternatives to war and its supposed functions. The Bangladeshi proposal for institutional regional cooperation was one such alternative. As such its worth as a mechanism for peaceful conflict resolution and for the achievement of positive peace in the region needs to be realized. It has made an attempt to provide a new context of thinking and sought to bring about a transformation of outdated values like that of narrow nationalism. It has attempted to jolt the consciousness of the peoples and leaders of South Asia in favour of conciliation and cooperation.

During the visit of the Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia to India (May 26-28, 1992) the present scholar had the opportunity to interact with officials of the Bangladesh High Commission and the following note obtained from official channels is a brief resume of the Bangladeshi understanding regarding the SAARC. It also exhibits sound academic reasoning on peace issues of the subcontinent.

SAARC: A BANGLADESHI PERSPECTIVE[22]

The proposal for institutionalisation of regional cooperation among the seven countries of South Asian Region namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka was first mooted by Late President Ziaur

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22. This note was obtained from the Bangladesh High Commission, New Delhi on 30.6.1992.

Rahman of Bangladesh in March 1980 with the objective of promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia, improve their quality of life and strengthen their collective self reliance. Bangladesh maintained that while other regions had evolved institutional arrangements for periodic consultations on matters of mutual interest and for cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields on a regional basis, South Asia, inhabited by about one billion people comprising one-fifth of the world population, is the only region which did not have any such arrangements. The response of the different South Asian Governments to the proposal was positive.

2. The idea of regional cooperation in South Asia is not a new concept. Countries of the region have cooperated with one another both bilaterally and regionally under the umbrella of different international agencies and institutions. These efforts, however, did not fully exploit the vast potentials that existed for regional cooperation. Consequently there has always been an undeniable demonstration of will in the region for strengthening such cooperation. At the same time, there has also been differing perceptions a to its scope and direction. Some have visualised modes of integration ranging all the way from common markets through customs unions to free trade areas and more simple devices including joint ventures, commodity agreements or even currency linkages. Others have gone beyond the

exclusively economic plane, justifying the need for exploring possibilities of cooperation in the political, security and other related fields as well.

3. In its historical perspective, the obstacles towards regional cooperation in South Asia have been formidable. Most of our countries emerged into independence only after the Second World War. Many are still grappling in the transition, with the nature and orientation of their political and economic institutions. Colonial legacies by way of undemarcated boundaries, displaced ethnic and religious minorities, mass poverty and overall asymmetry in power structures and stages of economic development have contributed towards aggravation of tension and conflict among various states of the region. They have left their toll in deep-rooted psychological inhibitions.

4. On the external plane, all our countries have been assailed by global challenges that have undermined our efforts to pursue the course of stability and development. The welfare of our peoples today stand imperiled by the impact of adverse international economic forces beyond our control. The stability of our region has been eroded by the induction of external pressures. This has constituted both a constraint and an impetus to cooperate regionally.

5. Countervailing these negative forces are positive elements emphasizing the commonalities that bind us together. These are rooted in our geography, shared history, traditions and above all our intrinsic humanity. No less important have been the cultural cross currents and socio-economic interactions which for centuries have shaped our views and values and accentuated our common affinities. They constitute a vast reservoir of mutually identifiable interests. The move towards regional cooperation is, therefore, the only logical response to the common problems we face as developing and non-aligned countries, to the continuing pressure of rising expectations among our peoples and our own cognizance of our vital interdependence.

6. It is in the backdrop of this broad ferment of ideas, hopes and aspirations and the practical realities of the situation that, some fourteen years ago, Bangladesh initiated the current endeavour for regional cooperation in South Asia. It is not difficult to see how regional cooperation would benefit our countries. Other regions have attempted cooperation in selected fields on a regional basis and the results have been found to be extremely beneficial. Economically and industrially advanced countries in Western Europe have introduced, despite highly competitive economies a wide ranging and well developed system of cooperation. The emergence of Western Europe in recent years as one of

the strongest economic forces in the world is an eloquent testimony to the success of the policy of cooperation which developed alongside the European economic resurgence. In other parts of the world, where the countries have been economically less developed, attempts at regional cooperation have also been made with varying degrees of success. The orientation and thrust of these different initiatives have not been identical. Some have attempted customs union, others have sought technical and cultural cooperation. Yet others have endeavoured to attract investments from sources outside the region.

7. Bangladesh originally indicated economic, technical, scientific, social and cultural fields as possible areas for regional cooperation. Such cooperation was not, however, intended to take the form of any new bloc or alliance. The institutional arrangements set up for such cooperation would strictly conform to the principles of Non-alignment to which all the countries in the region are firmly committed.

8. Economic and technical cooperation on a regional basis is now accepted by all developing countries as a desirable and necessary strategy within the framework of ECDC and TCDC. In South Asia, as in other regions of the world, we have countries at different levels of development. Some are relatively less developed than others. Any proposal for economic cooperation must

consequently be formulated with the greatest care in order to ensure that the strong do not dominate. The areas selected should only be those in which cooperation will mutually benefit all the countries irrespective of existing economic disparities so as to make regional cooperation meaningful, strengthen the spirit of mutual trust and understanding, and bridge the development gaps existing among the countries of the region. In the meantime, the uneven levels of development should, if anything, inspire on the one hand the less developed to catch up with their more fortunate neighbours, while on the other hand encourage the more developed to help to narrow the existing disparity between them. The process will be one of gradual evolution that will assist the relatively less developed to overcome their existing problems so that in the long run a system of preference becomes unnecessary.

9. A final argument in favour of such cooperation is that it is only through regional cohesion that South Asia can hope to have an effective voice in international forums. The UN system has today 178 states. It is only groups of countries be they big or small that can aspire to make a decisive impact on the decision-making process in these forums. Indeed, one may go so far as to say that it is only by establishing an institutional arrangement for consultation and coordination that the

people of South Asia, constituting nearly one-fifth of the world population, can play a role commensurate with their intrinsic global importance.

10. Shared perceptions and values are an important factor for the success of any venture for regional cooperation. The countries of South Asia share many common values that are rooted in their social, ethnic, cultural and historical traditions. Perceptions about certain specific events or political situations of the world may differ but such differences do not seem to create a gulf between them that cannot be bridged. In fact, the beginning of cooperation on a regional basis may be a positive force in generating a climate of harmony conducive to a better perception of what the countries in the region have in common and the value of this shared heritage.

11. The experience of regional cooperation elsewhere in the world indicated the possibility of such cooperation, inspite of bilateral problems existing among the countries of the region. Even where bilateral disputes crop up this should not stand in the way of regional cooperation in the economic, social, technical and cultural spheres. This too is evident from the fact that countries whose bilateral relations may be strained are still prepared to cooperate with one another within a regional framework. As regional

cooperation grows, it also tends to generate a climate of mutual understanding reducing the scope for such disputes.

12.   In taking stock of the progress we have so far made for regional cooperation in South Asia, certain elements need to be highlighted.

<u>First</u>: Notwithstanding disparities and differences in perception, a larger common interest seems to have dictated the move for regional cohesion. The overriding objective was to ameliorate the welfare of our peoples in an environment of peace and harmony. A cardinal means to this end was to eschew past inhibitions and prejudices and strengthen our common resolve to create a climate of trust and goodwill. In essence, the option to cooperate regionally was as much an exercise in the practical economic plane as it was an effort towards confidence building.

<u>Second</u>: What has distinguished the current endeavour from the past was the thrust to anchor regional cooperation on a firm institutional basis. The nature and structure of this operational framework was left open to evolve according to felt needs.

<u>Third</u>: Despite susceptibility and vulnerability of all our countries to external pressures, the impetus for regional cooperation came from within the region, not without. It was not an imposition but a choice for association voluntarily arrived at.

<u>Fourth</u>: From the very inception, the countries of the region established certain ground rules which became the basic parameters for a process based essentially on pragmatism and evolution. Prime amongst them was the determination that they would move together or not at all.

<u>Fifth</u>: It followed that bilateral and contentious issues were to be excluded from the deliberations in a conscious effort to pursue cooperation that was truly regional in character. It was impressed that regional cooperation was not intended or expected to be a substitute for bilateral and multilateral cooperation but should complement both.

<u>Sixth</u>: A crucial motivating factor was that regional cooperation was to be based on, and in turn, contribute to mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic appreciation of the national aspirations of the countries of the region. The attempt was to create an order based on the principles of co-existence and mutual benefit. It underscored the need for taking into specific cognizance asymmetries among countries of the region and for equitable sharing of expected economic benefits of all member states, irrespective of their state of development.

<u>Seventh</u>: A key issue was the assigning of priorities in determining the scope and pace in which regional cooperation could manifest itself both quantitatively and qualitatively. There was implicit understanding that regional cooperation was an evolutionary

process in which any movement forward was to be at a deliberate and measured pace so as to enable the consolidation of the gains of each stage before proceeding to the next. At the same time there was recognition that it was a flexible process which would permit elaboration of cooperative arrangements in as many areas as were mutually agreed upon.

13. Bangladesh, in recognition of the need for well planned preparation of a meaningful summit of the Heads of States and Governments of the seven South Asian Countries, suggested three-tiered approach of meetings, at the official (Secretary) level, political (Minister) level, and Summit meetings. This was found acceptable and has now become an established practice. The SAARC has come a full circle since the first summit in Dhaka in December, 1985. Bangladesh now has been given the honour and privilege to host, at the beginning of the second cycle, the seventh SAARC summit in Dhaka in December, 1992.

The long range view of Bangladesh's role in SAARC was clearly expressed by Begum Zia when she said that, "together we shall transform the SAARC from a forum of cooperation into a platform to launch a new age of South Asian consciousness. South Asia must not only learn from the world, but must lead the way."[23]

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23. Nikhil Chakravarti, A Landmark Visit, Mainstream, Vol. XXX No. 32, May 30, 1992, p. 2.

CHAPTER III

PEACE STRUCTURES AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATIONS :

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The overall objective of this part of our study is
to discuss and to suggest prospects and options regarding
collaboration in building new structures once the importance
of "interdependence" achieves salience relative to the
fundamentalist attitude to national interest (which fixes
parameters in relation to problem areas exclusively in terms
of "security, prestige and territoriality".)   Volker
Ritterberger has pointed out that it is necessary to see the
process of European integration as an example of building
"peace structure" in one world region which, historically,
stood out for its tradition of warfare.   He urges that
"peace researchers should take a careful look at the
literature on "international regimes" which has grown
substantially over the last five-ten years and which
represents an interesting new research focus among political
scientists and economists: it claims to offer a new approach
promising to enlarge our knowledge about institutionalised
cooperative responses to new collective situations impinging
upon the security and welfare of states and their
societies.[1]

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1.   Volker   Ritterberger,   Peace   Structures   through
      International Organisations and Regimes : Symposium on
      Peace Research, Retrospect and Prospect, Uppsala 15 -
      17 November 1985, p.2.

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It is ironic and even disquieting that while in Western Europe the process of integration can be perceived as the building of "peace structure", in Eastern Europe, the ideological advocacy of social order failed to evolve peace structures and disintegrative tendencies reigned supreme in the early nineties. If South Asia is to overcome its apparently insoluble political and economic problems, it has to decide urgently on building normative-institutional frameworks which will remove the constraints inherent in situations of prisoners' dilemma which prevail at various levels. Partha S. Ghosh explains the broader implications of the paradoxes manifest in the South Asian situation and warns that the errors which have played havoc with the authoritarian regimes in East Europe could be reproduced in South Asia : "The purpose of referring to all these historical realities is to suggest that in South Asia both the tendencies -- an integrative tendency and a disintegrative tendency -- are equally forceful. It all depends as to how a state manages its developmental problems. So far there has been only one evidence of failure and that is on the part of Pakistan which was disintegrated in 1971. But this does not mean that the record of other states are perfect. Each South Asian state is a potential case for disintegration and unless this is realised by all in time they might be condemned to commit the same errors as the centralised authoritarian regimes of

East Europe have done.[2]

The principal purpose of this exploratory study is to arrive at general hypotheses with reference to formulation of policies at national level which can enhance the peace-building potential in the subcontinent through recognisable interdependence. Our analytical framework will relate to three areas of interest :

a)   The role of no-use-of force regimes;

b)   The need to enhance meta-communication resources;

c)   The need for confidence building and consensus building for achievement of both "negative" and "positive" peace in South Asia.

These three themes of analysis have been selected because reviewing the history of regional relations since 1947 they seem to be the major elements involved in the process of containing the confrontational and violent elements in South Asian conflictual situations. Our study shows that these are the conditions which have to be met if peace structures have to be successfully built in South Asia and the military strategic aspects of security have to be superseded by the evolution of regional cooperation. Institutionalised cooperative responses like SAARC cannot claim serious attention as long as the role of no-use-of force concepts are not explicitly accepted.   Even

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2.   Partha S. Ghosh, Problem of Integration in South Asia : Some Political and Anthropological Perspectives, International Seminar on South Asia's Security in the 1990s, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Dhaka, Jan 5-7, 1992, pp.7-8.

sophisticated policy coordination in South Asia can come to total failure if populations in different countries remain sensitised to war and violence on an endemic scale. The second theme of "enhanced meta-communication resources" is based on the rationale that countries like India and Pakistan have manouvered themselves into rigid situations from which they cannot budge on account of the prisoners' dilemma principle. It is therefore necessary to secure highly functional cooperative behaviour by providing information for cooperative strategies on the widest scale possible. The third theme of "confidence-building" and "consensus building" is included as clearly vital to the achievement of both "negative" and "positive" peace. As member states of the United Nations, all the South Asian states are pledged to refrain from the various types of war-like behaviour. Thus they already have an obligation to enhance "negative peace" in the region. The task of enhancing "positive peace" requires that South Asian states should create equitable regional regimes which can help the subcontinent to break the poverty-cycle and emerge as part of the world order where the prerequisites of welfare and progress are made available to the impoverished masses.

The implications of these three themes will be analysed and developed below :

No-use-of force

There are grounds of optimism and hope that the world has entered a new era of peace, but in South Asia

armed conflicts of incalculable proportions loom in the future. India and Pakistan have attributes of nuclear powerhood and there are legitimate fears in both countries that a new armed conflict may approach the level of nuclear exchanges.

The declaratory policy of India and Pakistan remains the same, namely, that their nuclear programmes are only for peaceful purposes. Yet, on the one hand India's Pokharan explosion in 1974 and unsafeguarded nuclear facilities yielding plutonium, especially the weapon grade plutonium coming from the two research reactors, CIRUS and DHRUVA, and on the other, Pakistan's unsafeguarded enrichment programme at Kahuta, have given rise to some widespread and serious misgivings about their bonafides.[3]

In the area of domestic conflicts the promotion and maintenance of internal peace is increasingly threatened by ethnic conflicts and the tragic plight of refugees and migrants in various borderlands. It is of little satisfaction that there is a definite trend towards democratisation as witnessed by recent developments in Nepal and Bangladesh because even mass-based political change does not seem to help either in solving security dilemmas or in ending protracted internal conflicts which threaten democratic process and civil liberties.

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3.   Niranjan M. Khilnani, The Denuclearization of South Asia, The Round Table (1986), 299, p.280.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that with the end of the Cold War, and the end of superpower competition in South Asia or in areas close to it like Afghanistan, confrontationist strategies may gather momentum at the regional and local levels unless traditional rivals learn to make concessions to each other and there is general reassurance through a higher degree of constraint and avoidance of unilateral action. The messianic attempts of Pakistan to sell its Islamic ideology or of India to assume the role of the regional hegemon come in the way of the efforts of the SAARC to provide for collective actions of equal and sovereign (but interdependent) countries. The use of force in internal conflicts e.g. Sri Lanka, has created further social tension and further problems in bilateral relations. Unless the use of force is considerably reduced or given up Sri Lanka could deteriorate irretrievably into chaos and anarchy of the 'Lebanon' model, which is a model of societal collapse.[4]

There are at least five factors which should be considered in evolving a no-use-of force policy at the present juncture:

1. The use of force has only strengthened authoritarian bureacuracies and has ultimately weakened or even eliminated leadership.

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4. Newton Gunasinghe and Karthigesu Sivathamby, Community Identity and Militarization in Sri Lanka, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia: Development, Democracy and Regional Cooperation, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.239.

2.   The provision of total security through force has resulted in imitation of imperial ideology and practice and serious violation of the norms of implementation of basic principles developed during the decolonisation struggle.

3.   The use of force is ultimately subversive of the principle of economic management and healthy entrepreneurship and is incompatible with democratic and pluralist regimes which can take maximum advantage of the market economy in the region and in the global context.

4.   The use of force retards international dialogue which is essential in the information age for multilateral decision-making. Although intended to protect national interests, the use-of-force hinders the development of sophisticated strategies of political and economic management. The use of force even if temporarily successful ultimately yields a harvest of political confusion and insecurity.

5.   From a systemic perspective "norms against the use of force, imperialism and interventionism" have proved effective. It is, therefore, necessary for regional leaders to understand the character of the international system and adapt their decision-making process to a defensive instead of offensive stance. The sooner regional elites engage themselves in bargaining relationships and move away from coercive

to consensus based rules, the more they will find themselves immune from international pressures of which they complain so often.

Recent analytical studies have suggested that there is no simple linear relationship between the increased use of force and conflict and crisis management. This issue should be of particular concern to South Asian decision-makers who have placed exclusive reliance on military or para-military force and have risked periodic wars. Careful empirical investigation would show that new avenues to the formation of an "amalgamated security community" in South Asia do not lie in this old direction.

Meta-communication resources

Highly functional cooperative behaviour among states in a region cannot be formulated or implemented in a vacuum; the effectiveness of regional interdependence is dependent on resources which are allocated to meta-communication. An imperial system seeks to suppress democratic urges and retains its dominance by checking information flows and perpetuating the status-quo. A democratic system cannot but emphasise the importance and effectiveness of informational systems and seeks to avoid threats of dismemberment and separatism by giving both government planners and the general public access to the widest variety of information about social, economic and political trends. By keeping in close touch with the

national legislature the leadership formulates policies compatible with prevailing ideas. ·Similarly a regional legislature can promote reciprocal influences and extend the cultural limits on each member state's objectives and make it easier to attain common interests.

Many writers including Johan Galtung have warned against "communication imperialism" which is created by centre dominated feudal networks. While paying heed to this warning, it is still possible to devote resources for establishing patterns of equality through innovative informational activity which modifies the "knowledge-structure" of the region in the direction of an equitable and just constellation of power and interest.

Confidence building and consensus building for "negative" and "positive" peace

Confidence building and consensus building is used in our study in the broadest sense to include everything which removes the straitjacket of the perspectival dynamics of arms race, armaments build-up and trends towards repression and terrorism. Negative peace and positive peace--both are essential to the survival and growth of humankind whether viewed at the global or regional level. Since public opinion is now generally accepted as an essential component of public policy making, South Asian leaderships can modify the whole atmosphere of policy-making system in the subcontinent only by changing their existing

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mind-sets which are not compatible with a pluralistic social system at the regional level. SAARC cannot lead to institutionalised cooperation in a meaningful sense unless the question of coordination of policy is seen from a dual perspective of both "outcome" and "process". James L. Sundquist has given the following schema which would be appropriate to the contemporary South Asian situation :

Coordination as outcome = harmony, balance, consistency and absence of conflicts and overlappings.

Coordination as process = horizontal and vertical channels of consultations; sharing of information; negotiations; and agreements.[5]

Although there is latent fear of Indian hegemony among India's neighbours, there has been widespread admiration for India's pluralistic political system, and countries in South Asia which have come under one-party system or under military rule, have opted for an Indian-type democracy whenever offered opportunities for participation in policy decisions. It is therefore legitimate to expect that if self-serving and crude assumptions of leaders with vested interests are replaced by concepts which support regularised coordination of policies in South Asia, the characteristics of the "real world" in which resources have to be managed through coalition building would foster greater cooperation and lead to a variable-sum game pattern in regional interactions.

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5.   James L. Sundquist, Making Federalism Work, Brookings Institution, Washington, 1969, pp.17-19.

The need of the time is to create a viable mechanism of conflict management and resolution with the collective efforts of regional countries so that they could learn to live with one another in peace and cooperate confidently with a view to resolving the tasks of their socio-economic and politico-cultural development.[6]

PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA

The realization of peace in South Asia needs to be approached from two aspects: normative and institutional. On the normative front peace-building has to be viewed as a "collective conscience"[7] building process and if we are able to build this peace conscience then anything violent is by definition anti-social. On the institutional front, peace building has to be seen on the pragmatic level of designing new and broad-based institutional structures aimed at the realization of normative values.

A. NORMATIVE STRUCTURE

Peace in South Asia hinges on the socialization of the peoples of South Asia into four core values –

1) **Minimization of Large-scale Collective Violence**[8]

The idea of peace entails less reliance upon

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6. A.K.M. Abdus Sabur, Foreign Policy of Bangladesh : Challenges in the 1990s, in Biis Journal, Dhaka, Vol.12, No.4, Oct. 1991, p.480.

7. The concept of "collective conscience" was systematically developed by E. Durkheim.

8. Richard A. Falk, A Study of Future Worlds, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1975, pp.11-17.

violence and war as a basis for national security and the resolution of conflict. Reduced reliance on the war system implies the development of a credible set of _substitute mechanisms._ There must be a shifting away from a military concept of security, and the development of workable adjudicative and conciliatory mechanisms with means to assure their implementation. Structural reforms of this type would have to be accompanied by an upsurge in the ethics of nonviolence and a belief that nonviolent approaches could be successfully used on a far wider range of conflict situations than is presently the case. The cost of arms competition is leading to the failure to meet other needs of civilian society and aggravates such problems as inflation. Military expenditures are unproductive investments. The resources and energies required for the arms race make it difficult to promote other social goals - the simultaneous pursuit of "guns and butter" is impossible for the nations of South Asia. Thus, the reliance upon the military capabilities of governments for national security is too dangerous and too expensive. The first and central priority of the movement for a new South Asia is to make progress towards diminishing the role of the war system in international life and towards dismantling the military-based national security apparatus of the nations of the region.

2)   **Maximization of Social and Economic Well-being**[9]

Starvation, disease, short life-expectancy, poor

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9.   Ibid., pp.17-20.

housing, poor education, illiteracy, and generalized deprivation are the chronic lot of most people living in South Asia. Such misery contrasts with the affluence of Europe and North America where waste is abundant and in order to sustain superfluous consumption, advertising must stimulate continuous demand for new products and styles. Increasingly, deprivation is being experienced and interpreted as a species of exploitation if not of actual violence.[10] This awareness of deprivation has demonstrable link to the incidence of civil strife and to various forms of counter-governmental violence. Progress towards the goal of maximizing wellbeing can be appraised from (a) progress towards the satisfaction of elemental human needs and the elimination of poverty; (b) general improvement of the quality of life; (c) reduction of disparities in per capita income between and within national societies; (d) the reduction of economic patterns of exploitation; (e) the reduction of waste and the allocation of increasing proportions of resources for beneficial purposes.

3)   **Realization of Fundamental Human Rights and Conditions of Political Justice**[11]

The main objective of this value is to assure

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10.   Johan Galtung for example talks of 'structural violence' which implies that to deprive individuals of the instruments needed for self realization is to practice violence against them.

11.   Richard A. Falk, A Study of Future Worlds, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1975, pp.22-27.

conditions for the realization of individual and group dignity within national societies. The importance of this value lies in that the "resolution of conflicts, observance of human rights and the promotion of development together weave the fabric of peace; if one of these strands is removed, the tissue will unravel."[12] Some of the principal dimensions of this value are :

a)   **The prevention of genocide**: A minimum obligation of national governments is to avoid taking steps to destroy any distinct national, ethnic, or religious group that lives within its midst.

b)   **The elimination of all forms of torture and cruelty**: Progress towards this value would involve the reduction of the frequency, intensity, and geographic dispersion of official torture and cruelty. The effective renunciation of torture and cruelty, as a matter of behaviour as well as rhetoric, would also contribute to the dynamics of self-determination and would seem to put the governing process on a more humane foundation.

c)   **Related progress towards equality of treatment for different sexes, ages, religions, tribes, political groups**: Specific forms of discrimination against ethnic and religious groups and against women exist in South Asia, and

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12.   Quoted in Jan Martenson, Keynote Address, World Congress on Human Rights, Final Report, 10-15 December 1990, New Delhi, p. 39.

the elimination of these explicit types of discrimination represents a step towards this value of equality. The idea of equality is associated mainly with the elimination of specific burdens, handicaps and inequalities that seem to arise from such arbitrary factors as tribe, sex, or religion.

d)   **The rights of self-expression and meaningful political participation**: A further aspect of this value concerns the conditions of political life in a domestic society: first, the rights of free expression; second, protection against arbitrary behaviour by the government; third, the existence of political choices based on the possibilities of organizing a political opposition; fourth, the existence of procedures that encourage some kind of citizen participation in the formation of basic social and political policy. However, there are different ways to facilitate political participation and it would be undesirable to identify progress exclusively with movement towards the model of liberal democracy that has flourished in Western Europe and North America.

4)   **Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Ecological Quality**[13]

Ecological quality as a value embraces both the containment of pollution and the conservation of resource stocks. A series of problem areas can be identified, each of which requires distinct forms of planning, judgement and

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13.   Richard A. Falk, A Study of Future Worlds, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1975, pp.27-29.

action--ecological disasters of a sudden dramatic character, gradual deterioration of environmental quality by cumulative processes, failures to conserve scarce resource stocks, use of scarce resources for unproductive, wasteful and destructive purposes, and many others. Many preliminary steps can be taken to promote ecological stability:

- Early-warning systems and quick-reaction facilities.

- Strengthening of norms, procedures and institutional arrangements with respect to environmental harm.

- Long-range forecasts of resource shortages, and allocation and use policy with respect to such shortages.

B. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

On the institutional front, peace-building demands innovations that are oriented towards the realization of the central values of the system. An institutional profile is presented below. The intention is not to give hard and fast prescriptions, nor is it expected that the suggestions will be followed in detail or immediately. The idea is simply to begin a process of thinking that tries to remove itself from the narrow power politics mode of thinking, in the hope that at some time in the future South Asia too may move towards regional integration and cooperation as Europe is doing now. Though it is realized that such a scheme is not workable today, it is suggested as one of the many possible paths to peace in South Asia.

1. South Asian Political System

The major components of the South Asian political systems could be as follows.

South Asian Assembly (SAA)

This could be the principal policy-making organ in the South Asian system, with particular responsibility for the promotion of the central values of the system. 'Collective conscience building' is an ongoing process and the SAA is the political entity of the 'collective conscience' where the latter gets institutionalized. It is the political component of the process of peace-building in South Asia. It would be an educational institution in itself where members would internalize the concept of a South Asian region as well as educate the masses about the same. The major constituents of this Assembly could be an Assembly of Governments of South Asia, an Assembly of Peoples and an Assembly of Organizations and Associations.

Central Implementing Structure

Distinct organizations could be entrusted with the separate tasks of implementing the directives of the political organs. Such activities could be coordinated by a small administrative group. This group would be the basic link among the separate implementing organizations.

2. South Asian Security System

The organizational entities grouped here would focus on minimizing large-scale violence. The constituents

of this security system could be South Asian Security
Forces, South Asian Disarmament Service and South Asian
Grievance System. There could be a Central Committee of
the Security System which would coordinate activities
directly related to war prevention.

3. South Asian Economic System

The purpose of the South Asian economic system
would be to facilitate economic development consistent with
considerations of well-being (i.e. alleviating human
misery), equalizing goals (i.e. promoting inter-group and
intra-group equality of economic status), and ecological
balance (i.e. assuring an equilibrium between human activity
and ecological capacities). One goal is to maximize
mobility of people and ideas, as well as goods and services.
The institutional framework for the economic system could
consist of a South Asian Economic Planning and Equity
Council, a South Asian Trade System based on redistributive
and equalizing objectives, a South Asian Technology Board
to stimulate beneficial applications of technology and to
improve the quality and distribution of output which is far
more important than mere quantititative increase, and a
South Asian Development Office guided by the concept of
beneficial development which means that development would be
dominated by the idea of work for human development rather
than for industrial output, and production for needs rather
than for wants. This office could initiate seminars and
discussions to elicit widespread participation in

formulating development priorities and boundaries.

4. South Asian System For Human Development

The future South Asia must have a commitment to the process of improving the quality of human life. For this purpose there could be a Forum of Planning for Human Development and a Court of Human Rights.

5. South Asian System For Ecological Balance

The work of the South Asian system for ecological balance would be much more fundamental than maintaining environmental quality and conserving resources. Its work would be to avoid eco-catastrophe and to safeguard the life-prospects of subsequent generations by sustaining ecological balance.

6. South Asian System For Educational Development

Education in South Asia must be reoriented towards the concepts of peace and regional cooperation and for this purpose is proposed the establishment of a South Asian University. This University could be the first step towards laying the intellectual foundation-stones for a peaceful cooperative South Asia. It could lay down the basic theoretical framework and plan of action for regional cooperation. It would thus serve as the catalyst for the peace-building process. This University should not be understood in a narrow sense of an educational institution. While it would of course be an educational institution it

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would be more of a pressure group acting to influence national governments in favour of complementary foreign policies. It would provide the institutional basis for building rapport on a mass scale among the peoples of South Asia.

Besides pursuing studies and programmes of a conventional character, the University would strive to act as a focal centre for the emergence and propagation of ideas and practical schemes in various areas of regional cooperation. For example, the creative resolution of conflicts in the political arena could be pursued on the following lines :

a) **Fractionation of Conflict**[14]

This involves the breaking up of disputes into elements that can be settled separately. The purpose of fractionation is to settle the less intractable portions of a dispute first in order to build the right setting for tackling the difficult portions later. In India's problem with Pakistan on the issue of terrorism, for example, the element of drugsmuggling can be separated and then dealt with in a joint and cooperative manner, leaving aside the actual terrorist problem for the present moment.

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14. Richard Wendell Fogg, Dealing with Conflict : A Repertoire of Creative, Peaceful Approaches, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 29, No.2, June 1985, p.339.

b) Functionalism[15]

Fractionation can be followed up by joint institutional efforts to tackle isolated elements of conflicts. For example, India and Pakistan can cooperate in tackling the drug problem, thus beginning a trend towards the establishment of an institutional network of interdependence.

c) Creative Re-evaluation of Images

The previous steps provide a foundation for attempting a re-imaging of each other. An intelligent use of the positive outflows of joint institutional efforts through the media of mass communications and propaganda can serve as the bedrock of this strategy. The breaking of stereotypical 'enemy' images would focus on the complementary manner of functioning on specific issues like health, for example. This step involves specific measures like a common school curriculum for South Asian countries, common and joint radio and T.V. programmes, open door policy for cultural shows, yearly student excursion programmes on a regular basis, and so on. An especially important step on the political level could be a South Asian Assembly where the members could socialize not only themselves but also their constituents in the new image of the 'opponent'. The focus would be on a reorientation of values built on the basis of the positive experiences of functional cooperation.

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15. Functionalism as a peace mechanism was developed, among others, by David Mitrany in 'A Working Peace System', Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1966.

d) Controlled Communication[16]

Social scientists and diplomats should meet with adversaries to discuss problems associated with conflict resolution. In such sessions, blaming would be discouraged, misperception social psychology experiments described, the conflict treated abstractly and similar historical conflicts described. These are something like psychological conditioning camps to aid in the fostering of a favourable mindset among the concerned participants. Along with controlled communication, problem-solving workshops can be held to increase the trust needed for creative problem-solving.

e) International Encounter Group

Encounter groups among statesmen or academicians from disputing nations can be formed to build trust and then seek an agreeable solution to a dispute.

f) Discovering Opponent's Domain of Validity[17]

After each side is in a positive frame of mind, the basic issues of conflict which had been deliberately left out earlier could be tackled. Each side should try to delineate the range of facts in which the opponent's view is

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16. The concept of 'controlled communication' was developed by John W. Burton in his book 'Conflict and Communication', Macmillan, London, 1969.

17. This concept was developed by A. Rapoport in 'Fights, Games and Debates', Ann Arbor, Michigan Press, 1960.

valid. The entire argument of the opponent is unlikely to be invalid. Similarly the entire argument of your own side is unlikely to be valid. Each has elements of validity and invalidity. One should try to isolate the valid facts of the opponent and thus open the way for a genuine debate.

g) Unilateral Initiative

Within the range of facts identified as valid, one side (India, e.g.) can take a unilateral initiative. This side can initiate a small de-escalation and invite the opponent to follow suit.

For example, India can announce a one year suspension of its missile technology programme and invite Pakistan to follow suit within the said period. Every unilateral initiative which leads to a positive response will further stimulate the process. Eventually these can accumulate to the point where a proper climate for formal negotiations is fostered. If the response is not positive it indicates some lacuna in the process of building up of new perceptions of each other and hence a reinforcement and remodelling of step (c) is called for.

Political disputes can be tackled in this way. Once the process of a genuine and result-oriented debate on outstanding political issues is started, the strategy of interdependence finds a favourable atmosphere in which to fulfil its potentialities as a peace mechanism.

Peace-building is, thus, a process of creating new institutions and dismantling old institutions which have always encouraged violence. It is a process of breaking the clever diplomatic and conflict-oriented state system and making a start towards building more cooperative and interdependent nations. It is a process of state-breaking and nation-making.

These are the main elements of structural reorganization that seem desirable to realize the core values of the new order. This does not mean that structure is the most important aspect of global reform. Changes in attitude and behavioural tendencies are likely to be more important features of a transformed region than its bureaucratic profile. Nevertheless, this structural framework provides an expression of present preferences and includes both the evolution of central guidance mechanisms and various checks on their operation to guard against their misuse.

C. THE TRANSITION PROCESS[18]

The problem in the transition process is that those who benefit from existing arrangements of power and interest are unlikely to be swayed by appeals based on argument or values. Power can be transformed only by

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18. For details of the 'transition process' see Richard A. Falk, A Study of Future Worlds, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1975.

countervailing power, although not necessarily by violence and its threat. The transition process thus calls for -

1. Identifying actors and social forces receptive to radical change.

2. Mobilizing receptive actors and social forces to support transition.

3. Creating a public climate of support for global reform.

4. Identifying potential areas of transnational cooperation on a regional scale which will build experience with more cooperative approaches to international problems.

Therefore, the highest priority for transition efforts will involve orienting national elites or parts of national elites to regard drastic reform as necessary, desirable and feasible, and in this reorientation process the South Asian University can play a leading role.

In terms of political action, the transition process would involve three major activities -

a) To raise public consciousness to the point where there is a positive orientation towards the core values of the new order.

b) To translate the new consensus on regional problems into a politically effective movement.

c) To achieve transformation of institutions and organizations.

This transition path is the answer to questions of this feasibility and desirability associated with the structural proposals. This entire scheme can thus be described as the components of a relevant and realizable utopia incorporating transition proposals and strategies to bring it into being.

CHAPTER IV

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTIONS OF PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA

The South Asian system is undoubtedly in transition on account of both internal and external developments. The two Communist mega-powers which were playing a distinctive historical role since the late forties, (i.e. Soviet Union and China) on account of their close proximity to the South Asian region have both undergone far-reaching changes. The Soviet Union has experienced a terminal crisis 'and the Chinese have adopted a reform strategy and ideological flexibility which has resulted in pragmatic postures towards international policy issues in South Asia. The United States, no longer worried about the extension of Soviet power into Afghanistan, South Asia and the Gulf has fresh concerns in readjusting its special relationship with Pakistan while it seeks to improve relations with India. Its major worry now is the nuclear potential of India and Pakistan in the context of its efforts to move to a less nuclearised security order.

The South Asian states have been highly reluctant to respond to the new international developments and have not been able to contribute to the reduction of the level of international tension or to break the current stalemate in regional relations. The South Asian countries appear to operate with conceptions that from the point of view of peace building tend to look somewhat outdated, while around

the region, both in the Middle East (West Asia) and in South-east Asia, countries have expressed realistic peace-building preferences which can help them to utilise the opportunities the new international situation provides.

The South Asian countries face predominantly the following issue areas to which their responses vary significantly.

1. Democratisation

It can be confidently asserted that all the states of South Asia reflect the need of their societies and governments to respond "democratically" to social and political events. In terms of specific background factors, including monarchical systems of Nepal and Bhutan, the Islamic personality and political philosophy of Pakistan, the secular framework of India, the democratic cosmologies and concepts are of course reflected in a variety of perspectives. If a degree of stability should eventually be reached with regard to democratisation which could not be reversed, a balance between political security and change would become easier on a region-wide basis. The institutionalisation of democracy in all the SAARC countries would help in adopting a wide range of alternatives in conflict resolution as is now the case in Western Europe where negotiation, compromise, and mediation have helped in the transition from confrontation to orderly procedures for dealing with inter-state problems.

2. Economic Adjustment

South Asian countries have not succeeded in solving key problems which have accompanied their efforts at economic development. Conventional ideas on population, food, energy, environment and technology have held sway over the minds of decision makers and many of them have been blind to the realities of the international economic situation. The analogy of the maladjustment of the Soviet economy is obvious. While it is clear that ideas of economic adjustment are now gaining ground, the old verbiage still opposes tendencies towards rational economic adjustment. The state-centric economic functions generate national arguments about different ways of using economic policy to achieve legitimate ends. The market could be the arbiter of economic conflicts on a region-wide basis in a harmonious and prosperous economic community of South Asia. At present, however, the different conceptions of economic adjustment produce contradictory stresses as inflation and unemployment soar high and political and economic actors in South Asia provide divergent prescriptions for harmonising global, national and local socio-economic processes.

3. Regional Strategic Dilemma

The talk of an inevitable fourth round of war between India and Pakistan is an expression of the chief symbolic element in the regional strategic dilemma. The failure of South Asian diplomacy to defuse the situation in

Afghanistan highlighted the failure to recognise "the imperative of the indivisibility of subcontinental security framework as the basis for a stable peace". India and Pakistan continue to provide a classic case of the Prisoners' dilemma and in the absence of an Indo-Pak rapproachment, the structures and processes of militarisation in South Asia cannot be moderated. The regional strategic dilemma is also aggravated by the objectives of Chinese policy although its original concern of checking the expansion of the Soviet Union's influence in South Asia no longer obtains. By turning to China and to the Muslim countries, Pakistan only accentuates historic antagonisms in the region. The legacy of bitterness of the communal riots that accompanied the transfer of power and partition of the subcontinent in 1947 could have been overcome if "swords had been converted into ploughshares" and arms conversion had become part of South Asian policy.

4. Regional Nuclearisation

It is difficult to generalise on regional nuclearisation in South Asia, since there are too few facts which have been verified. The conditions which General Zia of Pakistan faced in the perceived threats from Afghanistan and India, encouraged him to take a decisive step forward in Pakistan's nuclear programme. As the Zia regime militarized the state structure, its isolation from the people was matched by its acute external dependence. In the absence of domestic political popularity it sought political economic

and military support from the United States. This pushed Pakistan into becoming a frontline state in America's Afghan War which was an important factor further undermining civil society.[1]

India has continued to regard the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone under external security guarantees as an infringement of her national sovereignty. There are clear signs now that both India and Pakistan and the South Asian region may be entering on a time of troubles, and extensive destructiveness on the pattern of the Iraq-Iran war or worse may be on the cards unless a higher frame of reference to control the nuclear danger (including nuclear terrorism) is evolved. The sequence of nuclearisation has a certain logic which can only escalate political competition, espionage, violence and "cold war" propaganda. If India's policy makers decide to go nuclear either to preempt a Pakistani nuclear weapons programme or as a consequence of Pakistan going nuclear, India will find herself at once on a dual track nuclear arms race, one with Pakistan and the other with China.[2]

If the military strategic view of national security is not balanced by a peace-building approach to "common security", regional nuclearisation is fraught with

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1. Akmal Hussain, The Crisis of State Power in Pakistan, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed. The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.231.

2. Niranjan Khilnani, The Denuclearization of South Asia, The Round Table, (1986), 299, p.284.

the gravest hazards. The ratification of a Pakistan-India accord not to attack each other's nuclear installations is therefore an important confidence building measure. But this is only a first step. The no attack agreement needs to be followed up by other confidence and security building measures if a ruinously expensive arms race is to be forestalled.[3]

5. Internal National Problems Aggravated by Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and Tribal Factors

The ambitious projects of nation building were conceived in terms of a generalised belief that overcoming secessionist and divisive forces would be fairly simple if certain postulates of social action were followed. The contemporary analysis of politics has subjected many of the earlier optimistic beliefs to critical self-examination and the need to develop different forms of stability simultaneously rather than aggressive state policies is gaining wide acceptance. In South Asia, ethnic, religious, linguistic and tribal threats of violence have emerged as major sources of internal insecurity. The fact must be faced that the development philosophies asserted by most South Asian governments have failed to make optimum contribution to the solution of internal national problems. What has been called "development" by successive regimes has

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3. Agha Shahi, Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Pakistan, Strategic Studies, Vol. xiv, Spring 1991, No. 3, Islamabad, p.9.

unleashed processes that have accentuated economic
disparities between regions and social groups; have
generated mass urban conglomerations which are short of even
the minimum conditions of civic life; undermined cultural
norms and atomised society without providing alternate
values of communal life; and have induced such an acute
dependence on foreign aid that it has seriously eroded the
economic sovereignty of these countries.[4]   South Asia has
yet to find an answer to the political problem of the
legitimacy of social systems and there is no unified
response to "social conflict which arises out of the
interplay between policy, contenders and challengers".

6.   **The Asymmetry of India in Relation to Other South Asian
     Countries**

     This discussion rests upon an assumption that the
South Asian system carries the burden of Indian
determination to impose its security frame-work on the
region.   One Bangladeshi view, for example, believes that
"during post-1971 period, Indian strategic thinking on South
Asia underwent a radical transformation..... Taking into
account its historical heritage, geo-strategic position,
economic and military potentials as well as international
standing, Indian strategists developed a series of well-
connected foreign policy and security perceptions with
regard to its role in determining the destiny of South Asia

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4.   P. Wignaraja and A.Hussain ed., The Challenge in South
       Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.27.

which are widely known as India Doctrine. To a significant extent it is the South Asian version of the Monroe Doctrine wherein India views the entire region as a single strategic unit and herself as the sole custodian of security and stability in the region.[5] India's efforts to exclude extra-regional influences are not perceived as characterised by the spirit of regional self-sufficiency but for ends which militate against adaptation of policies to a functioning regional order. During the entire post independent period, most of the smaller South Asian countries either directly or indirectly welcomed great power involvement in the region with a view to counterbalancing otherwise unchallenged might of India. On the other hand India's policy was to keep the great powers - friends and adversaries alike - out of intra-regional affairs, so that it could exert its power and influence to bear upon the countries of the region ... Indian policy towards the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka and the stationing of IPKF in that country under a controversial treaty, its intervention in the Maldives to suppress an attempted coup and the deadlock in its relations with Nepal are only the most illustrated manifestations of this policy.[6]

India's regional predominance is thus seen as an obstacle to the direct application of text-book methods of

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5.   A.K.M. Abdus Sabur, Foreign Policy of Bangladesh : Challenges in the 1990s, Biis Journal, Dhaka, Vol. 12, No. 4, Oct. 1991, pp.469-70.

6.   Ibid., pp.470-71.

community building which have been used successfully elsewhere. On the other hand Indian policy makers contend that the long term processes underlying patterns of regional cooperation would work in favour of concerted action if there was cross-fertilization of ideas in the region without the ambivalences and frustrations introduced by extra-regional sources.

The primary hurdle to regional cooperation thus arises from the asymmetrical relations between India and its neighours or to be more precise, the perceptions or misperceptions of this asymmetry on the part of India's neighours, and India's inability so far, or insufficient effort so far, to correct the misperceptions.[7] The asymmetry of India in relation to other South Asian countries cannot be wished away but it is necessary to explore both the theoretical and empirical dimensions of the manifestations of hegemonism and it needs to be emphasised that state-centric theory is increasingly inadequate to explain foreign policy behaviour. The social priorities and cultural attitudes and ideals will determine to what extent Indian policy serves narrow Indian interests and to what extent the negotiating process can achieve regional problem-solving by inducing India to behave in a non-hegemonial manner

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7.	Pran Chopra, SAARC and the Asymmetry Issue, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed., The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, pp.330-331.

7. Social Priorities

Unrestrained realpolitik does not offer a major contribution to the identification of feasible measures which can fulfil social priorities which ultimately determine the legitimacy of the state in the contemporary age. Social priorities are discovered by a complex of attitudes relating to human rights, justice, interests, welfare and equality. It is difficult for any one country to claim to decide the setting of social priorities for the entire region like that of South Asia. Different groups, cultures and subcultures are the basis for regionally supportive action. India's predominance as a military, economic and demographic power makes the analysis of social priorities even more critically important in order to discover a regional consensus based on pluralism and social diversity. A framework of complementarity in South Asia would perceive a set of processes rather than a stratified order with a regional hegemon. The present situation reveals a need to consider functional alternatives to hegemonial interactions.

8. South Asian Cultural Values

The interest of peace research in cultural studies is increasing and it would appear to be of great value in studying the greater intensification of cooperation or hostility in a region like South Asia. Hitherto pessimistic conclusions have been formed on account of a predisposition

to use implicit or explicit threats as part of political or cultural diplomacy. The SAARC has begun in a modest way to develop processes of cultural interaction which give preference to modes of dealing with each other which do not idealise aggressiveness There is the realization that "we have to make up fast for the neglect in the past of the cultural dimension in SAARC activities. Cultural cooperation can animate our regional activities and may help in overcoming forces of indifference, alienation and social discord".[8] The skillful application of cultural values can mediate conditions produced by political alienation and can reduce the need for scapegoats to give expression to ambivalent attitudes. The task is, however, not easy because it is very difficult to determine what constitutes a balanced expression of cultural values. Some existing forms of cultural expression can only aggravate tensions and enmity in South Asia.

9. Optimum Interdependence and Peace

The central thesis of this study is the conviction that interdependence, if optimised, can transform the South Asian system into a system which generates stable peace.

It is essential however, to view this transformation from a number of different theoretical

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8. K.K. Bhargava, Report by the Secretary General on the Activities of the Association and the Secretariat - November 1990, in The SAARC Record : Retrospect and Prospect, SAARC Secretariat Publication, Kathmandu, 1991, p.4.

perspectives which provide an interesting insight into ways
in which South Asian political units could overcome
conditions which produce conflict. The structures,
processes and alternatives of peace can be considered in
terms of six models:

i)   Political value change (from dictatorship to democracy)
      and peace ;
ii)   Politics of power and security and peace ;
iii) Peace through collaboration ;
iv)   Territorial conflict resolution and peace ;
v)   Environmental protection and peace ;
vi)   Resistance to dependency and peace.

This discussion rests on the assumption that
theoretical frameworks are not directly applicable but can
help policy makers to develop new ways to think about social
and political aims and strategies.

i)   **Political Value Change (from dictatorship to democracy)**
      and Peace

The Indian project for peace in South Asia has
been a broader activity than the prevention of hostilities.
Indian policy makers and academic analysts have directed
much attention and energy to the causes and correlates of
authoritarian or militaristic developments in other
countries of South Asia. India presents itself as upholding
a high standard of political morality by adhering to
democracy and its democratic triumphalism expresses itself

by idealisation of political value changes which would enable other neighbouring countries to ensure more pacified societies and in turn produce stability and cohesion in the region. The detrimental effects of dictatorial regimes on human dignity are self-evident and these regimes cannot provide the evolutionary process towards greater fulfilment of societal needs - including stable peace - in South Asia. There are other conceptions of peace with which India is identified at official or non-official level; conflict transformation through political value change remains the preferred peace strategy.

ii) Politics of Power and Security and Peace

The intensification of Pakistani vulnerabilities vis-a-vis India have increased the importance of the interrelationship between military security and regional cooperation. Military writings from Pakistan have given prominence to concerns shaped by the events of 1971. Peace proposals emanating from Pakistan appear to place excessive emphasis on military element of security chiefly as a result of the traumatic experience of the separation of East Pakistan. In the context of recent developments in the nuclear field in both countries, similar schools of thought which would emphasise a "fortress mentality" have also emerged in India. The politics of power and security if carried to extreme limits can only block progress in the most important peace issues. This project can ultimately be nourished by rigid state sovereignty and autarky and cannot

provide the innovativeness which leads to meaningful interdependence.

The mutual recognition of certain basic interests in their national security policies by India and Pakistan could initiate a learning process which could free both elites from analysing the logic of their relationship from the perspective of "mirror images" and attune them to the survival and wellbeing of the South Asian community. It is important to the security of South Asia that the rifts which divide India from its neighbours should be closed. Security depends upon it not only in the narrow sense of defence but also in its full sense of maximizing opportunity for the peoples of the region through full development of their countries's resources.[9]

iii)   Peace Through Collaboration

Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have for a number of reasons distanced themselves from both the Indian and Pakistani models and have anchored themselves in norms of collaboration in order to build mutual confidence. The Bangladesh proposal for setting up a South Asian regional organisation was based primarily on the development of rules and norms which would ultimately reorient the conduct in foreign affairs of all the member states. The stress of this proposal was not on the possibility of far-reaching

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9.   S.M.M. Razvi, Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia, The Round Table (1986), 299, p.269.

democratisation nor on a comprehensive redefinition of défence and security tasks. At the fourth meeting of Foreign Secretaries in 1983 at Dhaka, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Shamsud Doha described the SAARC as a vital recognition of interdependence and a channel for meeting world pressures and registered the firm commitment of its members to secure lasting peace and solidarity in the region.[10] Keeping in view the inadequacies and inconsistencies of the situation in South Asia, this conception of peace building does not deal directly with political disputes for fear that the entire edifice may collapse. The participating states seek harmonisation in areas of "low politics" and utilise summit meetings for exchange of opinions. Peace through collaboration is essentially a model of good neighbourly relations aimed at creating political space for community building. It is intended to convey reassurance regarding intentions but does not challenge dominant political arrangements directly.

iv) Territorial Conflict Resolution and Peace

The projects for peace in South Asia include suggestions for territorial changes although it is difficult to see how sovereign political units can implement these proposals without bitter resistance. The emergence of Bangladesh was facilitated by its geographical distance

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10. Quoted in Pran Chopra, SAARC and the Asymmetry Issue, in P.Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed., The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.327.

between Pakistan's western and eastern wings. The redrawing of the map of South Asia at the present stage constitutes a programme of multilateral action which can be carried out without the risk of war. This is not to imply that a time may come when territorial changes may be delinked from determinants of international prestige and in that context peace proposals based on territorial change may overcome domestic and international structural constraints. Pragmatism and mutual responsiveness which are essential for this model to be considered a serious proposition are missing. The solution to the regional crisis will not come from a dismantling of any one state or a generalised movement towards redrawing state borders.

v)   Environmental Protection and Peace

Advances in the understanding of the ecological crisis facing mankind have led to the emergence of new criteria, priorities and methods of restructuring political relationships. In the case of South Asia proposals range from reformulation of symbols of cooperation to urgent plans for collective action cutting across national boundaries to produce answers to ecology threatening events. There is a recognition of the vulnerability of the region as a whole and shared interest in the matter... (It is realized that South Asia) will be compelled to give this matter a hard look in the interest of (its) survival and in recognition of

sustainable development as a viable approach in the SAARC region.[11] Ecological initiatives can represent an important step forward in saving the Himalayas, the forest cover and controlling the spread of the desert. However, such proposals may produce high levels of anxiety if they threaten to pull at the political fabric of nation states. At the present stage it would be unrealistic to go beyond ecological acculturation in South Asia i.e. mutual borrowing of technologies and synthesis of values relating to ecology. The next stage may be marked by attitudes and predispositions (which may be fostered by grave ecological events) which develop this acculturation into explicit and powerful value commitments that can directly link environmental protection to peace-building. Ecological consciousness does have positive functions in fostering interdependence but it cannot by itself institutionalise the normative framework of the regional community.

vi) Resistance to Dependency and Peace

Several formulations and reformulations of Marxist thought have generated proposals which link survivability of South Asia and its peace building potential to the capacity to oppose the dependency on the expanding western-oriented global system. This approach is esssentially based on defensive or protective mechanisms which can under proper

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11. K.K. Bhargava, Report by the Secretary General on the Activities of the Association and the Secretariat - November 1990, in The SAARC Record : Retrospect and Prospect, SAARC Secretariat Publication, Kathmandu, 1991, p.11.

conditions (and ideological guidance) be created by South Asian countries to meet the challenge of multinational corporations and other forms of capitalist enterprise. South Asian peace would, according to this model, result from concentrating on economic grievances of the South and mobilising popular forces to oppose the structures of international economic domination emananting from the North.

There is no doubt that this is an important competing perspective which has considerable appeal to South Asian elites. It is quickly appparent however, that there is a pervasive influence of expectations and pressures of social movements (even arising within the Marxist tradition) to reject autarky and isolationism. The dynamics of the current situation reflect demands from nearly all third world states for greater integration of their economies into the world economy.

REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

The predominant tendency of today's world society is transnational and cross cultural and is towards a global or regional cooperation community. As economic strength is replacing military strength as a political and diplomatic means of realizing national interests, a neo-nationalism motivated by economic aspiration will replace old nationalism which depended on militarism and confrontation.[12] Nations will realize that individual

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12. Young Seek Choue, White Paper on World Peace, Kyung Hee University Press, Seoul, 1991, p. 389.

nations as units in terms of the scale of economy are too small to achieve their individual economic aspirations in the competitive world. Thus they will have to integrate among themselves regionally or functionally into larger units.

In consonance with world trends, there are compelling imperatives for regional cooperation in South Asia which arise from the following considerations:

a)   The common civilizational heritage which embodies a profoundly humane valuational framework.

b)   The available renewable resource base, e.g., the Himalayan system, river, ocean and solar resources.

c)   The mobilization of available stocks of knowledge which would permit enlarging the range of technological options. The attempt to deal with endemic poverty in a fundamental way would involve the creative use of available renewable resources and the knowledge system. This can be done only by reactivating the dormant valuational framework that is inherent to the common civilizational consciousness of South Asian peoples.

d)   The need to prevent destabilization resulting from external intervention and great power rivalry.

These may, respectively, be called the _cultural,_ _economic_ and _security_ imperatives for regional cooperation.

Cultural

Since the Vedic period, the region of South Asia has been a crucible in which diverse civilizations and ideologies have cross-fertilized. Over the centuries the continuous interaction between diverse peoples and cultures has inculcated two apparently contradictory sets of personality traits. First, there is a deep-rooted posture of tolerance, a highly evolved humanism and an ethos in which any particular linguistic, religious or ethnic group can tolerate and appreciate the creative elements of another. Second, there is a tendency to displace this humanist perspective and come under the sway of fear, intolerance and aggression.[13]

The first set of traits is manifested in the folk literature and art through which South Asian communities express their fundamental traditions. However, inspite of the deep-rooted cultural propensity for tolerance and an overarching humanism within which a pluralist society could flower, South Asian history has been marked by violent explosions of communal conflict. During these moments violence has gripped large sections of society and an enlightened human perspective has narrowed to an obscurantist religious/ethnic identity where mere difference in religion or ethnicity has induced individuals to kill.

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13. P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain, Editorial Overview : The Crisis and Promise of in South Asia, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain, The Challenge of South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.18.

Such outbursts of communal violence are associated with a suspension of the link with the civilizational identity of individuals and their coming under the sway of more proximate impulses of fear, insecurity and aggression. Such impulses are unleashed when a linguistic religious or ethnic group perceives a real or imagined threat to its existence as a community - to the cultural forms through which individuals express and apprehend themselves.

The South Asian region has the potential to achieve unity in diversity. This potential lies in the common civilizational consciousness among diverse communities that can form the basis of a humane and tolerant society. At the same time, such a potential is threatened by the tendency to lose the civilizational perspective and succumb to fear, insecurity and obscurantism. The attempt at achieving regional cooperation, which has begun with the SAARC, must come to grips with this dialectic. The challenge lies in creating a polity and economy which allows the deep-rooted but dormant civilizational consciousness to constitute a contemporary valuational framework; a framework within which diverse communities can develop in creative interaction and different states can come together in regional cooperation.[14]

Economic

From the point of view of economics the South Asian region is a unit.

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14.   Ibid., p.21.

1)   Natural Resources Base

A careful consideration of the natural resources base in the South Asian region suggests that if these resources are collectively exploited at a regional level, each of the independent states within the region would benefit from such an enterprise. For example, India and Pakistan can complement each other's capabilities in the field of cement manufacture. Pakistan has an abundance of limestone and gypsum while India has the necessary technology. At the moment Pakistan is importing cement not from India but from, among others, South Korea.

2)   Infrastructural Linkages

There is an urgent need for interconnected sub-regional rail network and an integrated river transport network. India and Bangladesh should cooperate to frame a detailed conservancy programme for the river routes between the two countries. Similarly communication linkages need to be developed.

3)   Transfer of Technology and Industrial Collaboration

All South Asian countries are in a state of technological dependence on the west. The transfer and adaptation of appropriate technology and the indiscriminate import of technology can be better safeguarded when exchanges take place between economies which are not far removed in terms of resource endowment and geographic and

climatic conditions. In many areas the resources of the region can be collectively pooled to develop regional capabilities for producing certain technology items. They can undertake collaborative research on selected areas of technology.

4) Environmental Protection

It has become absolutely essential to protect the environment adopting an integrated approach to the whole problem of land use. Water resources development requires cooperation on the bilateral or regional basis. Pooling of resources to develop an integrated power grid for the entire region would be more rational because each country on its own may not be able to mobilise the needed resources.

5) Cooperation in Trade and Payment Arrangements

Intra-South Asian trade is not only small in relation to world trade but has, in fact, been declining. For example, the percentage share of Bangladesh's imports from India and Pakistan in Bangladesh's total imports from all sources is very low and irregular. The following table illustrates this:-

Percentage of Bangladesh's Imports from India and Pakistan in Bangladesh's Total Imports: 1972-1986

Years	Imports from India (in percent)	Imports from Pakistan (in percent)
1972	26.3	-
1973	13.1	-
1974	7.5	-
1975	6.5	1.7
1976	7.3	1.0
1977	2.1	1.0
1978	2.9	1.4
1979	2.1	1.1
1980	2.1	1.3
1981	2.4	1.8
1982	1.9	1.1
1983	1.7	0.8
1984	2.2	0.7
1985	2.6	0.7
1986	2.3	1.1

Source: Prakash Chandra Adhikary and Md. Sirazuddin Biswas, 'Potential Gains to Bangladesh for Imports of Selected Commodities from India and Pakistan: An Analytic Investigation', India Quarterly, Vol XLVII, No. 4, October - December 1991, ICWA, New Delhi, p. 65.

This is only one example of the potential for cooperation that exists within the South Asian region.

Developing countries can cooperate in trade at different levels. These are (i) formation of customs union

(ii) establishing a free trade area   (iii) preferential

trading and (iv) bilateral trade agreements.[15]   ·

6)   Cooperation in Relation to the Rest of the World

The South Asian countries are substantial world

producers of primary products such as jute and tea. If they

agree to coordinate their policies with respect to supplies,

market-sharing and product development through joint

research, they are likely to extract much more unit value

realisation from their products as compared to the present

situation arising from competitive bidding in the world

market. The possibility of getting resources from financial

institutions becomes easier and the terms more favourable

in case of joint, regional projects. Regional cooperation

will enable South Asian countries to act as a bloc in

various international forums and thus operate as a pressure

lobby to voice their common grievances.[16]

Security

Security cooperation is an imperative because

South Asia has to choose between guns and butter. The

choice is between collective survival and prosperity on the

one hand and collective destruction on the other. A short-

sighted policy of militarization can only lead to death and

destruction. Wrong perceptions of national interest lead

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15.   Technology in the New Strategy - Regional Development
       Strategy for the 1980s, ESCAP - UN Document, p.207.

16.   Ibid., p.208.

nations to enter into military alliances and spiralling arms races. Military alliances with extra-regional powers entail base facilities to such powers, sale and purchase of deadly arms, and unwarranted leverage of outside powers in the affairs of the region.

The perceptional problem in the South Asian security scenario consists of two parts: a fear of Indian aggression among India's neighbours and a counter-mistrust on India's part about the designs of the neighbours to involve external powers in the region. This two dimensional threat perception must be tackled holistically rather than in a segmental fashion. If India demands a base-free South Asia India also takes upon itself the obligation to reduce and eliminate the fear of Indian aggression entertained by its neighbours. Similarly, if Pakistan suggests a no war pact with India, it takes upon itself the duty to discontinue all military arrangements with external powers. Only such a sensitivity towards each other's positions can pave the way for a secure and peaceful South Asia.

There are three important possible areas of strategic cooperation in South Asia. These areas can be (i) coordination of diverse national positions on global security and strategic issues into one South Asian consensus position. (ii) cooperative arrangements for mutual security among the countries of the region and (iii) settlement of bilateral disputes particularly those having potential for generating strategic discord.

Inspite of the obvious potential for regional cooperation, South Asia has not yet been able to arrive at a meaningful level of such cooperation. The only existing institutional structure for this purpose is the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which while definitely being a step in the right direction has not gone beyond a formalistic approach to regional cooperation.

The obstacles to regional cooperation in South Asia consist of two sets of problems. One set consists of interstate relations which are more often than not based on misperceptions by one state regarding another. A second set of problems emerges out of the particular form in which state power is exercised. Problems in interstate relations are symptomatic of the fundamental nature of the way these states are organized and the political and social imperatives operating upon these states.

These problems can be classified as follows:

1) **The state structures and socio-economic basis of regimes.**

Due to the imperatives located in the state structures themselves,[17] most South Asian states seek external alliances for security even though their sovereignty may be undermined in the process and even though

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17. Akmal Hussain, Issues in Nation Building and Regional Cooperation in South Asia, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed., The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p.12.

powerful geopolitical and natural resource factors exist for cooperation among the states of South Asia themselves. For example, if particular regimes in South Asia did not have the support of their own people and therefore had to rely for their political survival on the support of countries outside the region then there would be a powerful imperative to seek such external alliances. In the same way, if the economic structure of these states were such that there would be an acute shortage of investible resources which would impel these countries to seek credits from countries or institutions outside the region this would generate a particular kind of dependence on such states and agencies.

As in the case of external alliances, so in the case of regional economic cooperation the difficulties are inherent in the economic structure of some South Asian states and in the resultant propensity for integration with the economies of the advanced capitalist countries. Even in the post-colonial period, the integration of most South Asian states with the advanced capitalist countries remains because of the dependent industrialization conducted by these countries and the reliance on foreign capital.

2)   Attitudinal and perceptional problems

The asymmetry of the geographic and economic composition of the region, manifested in the fact that India has a predominant proportion of the region's population and total income, has created a situation where the smaller

states around India tend to perceive India as a hegemonic power, thus generating fear and mistrust which would inhibit regional cooperation. The question of ideology also fed into the issue of attitudinal and perceptional problems inhibiting regional cooperation. The ruling ideologies and the states of South Asia may well be such that the fact of India's asymmetry would be perceived in a negative rather than a positive fashion.[18] In other words, there could be two possible kinds of responses to the fact of asymmetry. The first, a kind of insecurity and resultant mistrust. Secondly, to see India and its resources as part of the resources of the region and, therefore, rather than see India as a threat, to see it as a useful friend whose resources and technology could be used for improving the material welfare of people throughout the region. The fact that it was the first response which emerged out of the fact of asymmetry is due to the ideologies operating in many of the states of South Asia. Conversely, the dominant ideology in India which is associated with a certain section of the ruling elite may well be to perceive India's role in the region as one of a powerful, dominant state which would subordinate the interests of the other states to the imperial interests of India.[19] To the extent that such a perception operates in the ruling elite of India, regional cooperation is inhibited.

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18.   Ibid., p.13.

19.   Ibid., p.13.

3) Geopolitical environment and regional cooperation

If the status quo of mistrust and hostility among the states of South Asia continues, there would be a tendency for each of the individual states to be drawn into the vortex of big power rivalry. On the other hand, if the states of South Asia were to come together into a framework of regional cooperation, this could provide the rival leverage on the basis of which each of the states of South Asia could achieve a distance from big power rivalry.[20] Here again what could be seen as an imperative of sovereignty on the one hand and geopolitical environment on the other, i.e., the imperative to seek regional cooperation, is in actual fact not being fulfiled because of the tendency of some of the states to seek extra-regional alliances. The imperative of short-term political survival of particular regimes in South Asia (external alliances) is in sharp contrast to the imperative of sovereignty and maintenance of long-term security of these countries (regional cooperation).[21]

How to Deal with these Problems

Corresponding to the two sets of problems there are two approaches to dealing with them. Regarding the misperceptions in inter-state relations among South Asian nations, the approach towards tackling them should focus on

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20.   Ibid., p.15.

21.   Ibid., p.15.

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policy steps such as confidence-building measures especially by India which is the relatively more powerful state in the region. Conversely, the smaller states should refrain from actions that could be perceived by India as a hostile collaboration to isolate it. In the short-term when the existing state structures would be assumed to be given, an attempt should be made to reduce mistrust among the regimes and existing ruling elites of South Asia and to create perceptions which would encourage regional cooperation.[22]

As regards the lacunae in the existing state structures in the states of South Asia, them must be structural changes in these so as to make than more responsive to the aspirations of the people. Long-term structural changes would also be required in the economies of South Asian states such that they can embark upon an independent industrialization effort as part of the search for alternative forms of resource use, social organization of production and choice of technology for sustainable development.

We in South Asia must correctly see the spirt of the new age, shake off the mental structures of confrontation built on the exclusive nationalism and ideologies of the old age, acquire a global and humanistic thinking suitable to the new reality, and work together for the construction of a new society with community

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22.   Ibid., p.16.

consciousness and better behavioural norms. We can no longer live on the old concept that different peoples or different nations are enemies to each other. We are all members of one human family who are interdependent and should cooperate with one another. In order to achieve a peaceful society in which we live together coprosperously we must establish a common value system, a common goal, a common standard of norms, and a common task to resolve conflicts and foster peaceful cooperation. In such a common value system we must place mankind before nation and peace before war. This is the historic mission before us today and we must prove equal to this mission.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: AN INVENTORY OF VALUES AND RESOURCES

OF PEACE AND INTERDEPENDENCE AND THE

PROSPECTS FOR SOUTH ASIA IN THE 1990s

Conflict has become endemic in South Asia and it has proved difficult to achieve and maintain either internal or external peace in the countries of the subcontinent. The political dimensions of South Asian cooperation have been restricted by activities of intelligence organisations which combine knowledge, power and surveillance to produce outcomes which only heighten mistrust and may indeed bring on a catastrophe by producing instability and breakdown of normal relations in the region. Christopher Dandekar has called attention to the relevance of Foucault's analysis about the rise of bureaucratic surveillance in the state and the economy : "Foucault argues that power is not a thing possessed by an individual or group, but a strategy the effects of which are realised through a network of relations and tactics. This network is in a constant state of tension, owing to the resistance of those subjected to it, and so power is always in the process of being achieved. Power involves a constant process of struggle reaching into the depths of the social structure. Foucault also rejects the separation of power from knowledge. He advocates that we "abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where power relations are suspended, and that knowledge can develop only outside its

injunctions, its demands, its interests ... we should admit
rather that power produces knowledge ... that power and
knowledge directly imply one another ; and that there is no
power relation without the correlative constitution of a
field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not
presuppose and constitute at the same time power
relations".[1]

Kenneth Boulding's concern for stable peace also
led him by a different route to raise the question of
"surveillance:" "The final question, perhaps the most
important of all, is the extent to which peace research
either has effected national policies in the past or is
likely to effect them in the future. The effect in the
past, it must be confessed, has been fairly small.
Governments still rely on spies and diplomats for their main
information with regard to the international system, inspite
of the fact that this system is notoriously corrupt and is
much more likely to produce misinformation than truth".[2]

Boulding's reference to the extraordinary
inadequacy of the so called intelligence community in
producing reliable information to guide government policies
appears to be corroborated by South Asian experience. The
present study is essentially an examination of the need for

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1.   Christopher Dandekar, Surveillance, Power and
      Modernity, Polity Press, Cambridge (UK), 1990, p. 23.

2.   Kenneth Boulding, Research for Peace, in Collected
      Papers, Boulder, Colorado Associated University,
      1971, p. 142.

conceptual revision and its prescriptions necessarily lie in the growth of an open interdependent community of states and not in the further growth of surveillance linked to geopolitical and military struggles. In line with Boulding's recommendation, similar studies could help to create an official link between the peace and conflict research community and the government decision-makers in South Asia. The advent of SAARC should also be seen as the beginning of institutional changes which can "introduce a bias and an asymmetry into the course of events which increase the chance that things will go from bad to better rather than from bad to worse."[3]

None of the countries in South Asia, not even Bangladesh which initiated the proposal for SAARC, has made "interdependence" a central area of its foreign policy. At the commencement of the 1990s it has, however, started taking the form of a "residual category" and has gained some minimum credibility. The pendulum, however, swings between idealisation and rejection of the SAARC experiment. Norms of interdependence can only be incorporated in the substantive policies of South Asian states if the role, status and expectations of each state are clarified by an indepth analysis of South Asian history. Our task has been a more modest one, i.e. to indicate at a theoretical level how interdependence could function as a peace-building

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3.   Ibid., p. 142.

strategy. Realist theory cannot help in the study of possibilities for reorienting the conduct of South Asian countries in foreign affairs towards interdependent positions. On the other hand peace and conflict theory not only stresses the need to fully utilise existing cooperative mechanisms for conflict and crisis management, it also helps in evolving normative structures which diminish militarised systemic conflicts and provide a fundamentally new interpretation of the common peace with social justice which will be characterised by "sustainability, invulnerability and legitimacy".

1.   The resolution of internal conflicts.

Internal conflicts in South Asian states have got aggravated and the possibility is that unless radical changes in opinions and policies occur, the facade of national unity may crack open in many cases. Soviet nationalism attempted to contain the aspirations of the various nationalities but in face of national self-assertion, the Soviet Union collapsed. Does "interdependence" provide a way for overcoming dynamic sources of domestic fragmentation in South Asia ? This study points to the unusual opportunities for elites in the subcontinent to display leadership initiatives which could produce conciliation diplomacies at the regional level and provide an atmosphere conducive to equitable political participation at the national level. Once an atmosphere of

"legitimacy" pervades the region, political reforms become more easily realisable.[4]

The problem of course is that domestic policy initiatives depend upon narrow political constituencies and we live under the shadow of traditional statist doctrines, which are counterproductive for the solution of internal conflicts. Our analysis strengthens the case for pluralism which will support a regional community which will foster both equity and stability. It would appear that South Asian interdependence can better prepare coming generations to cope with ethnic tensions and conflicts rather than a subcontinent which maintains the adversarial character of individual states.

2. The resolution of regional conflicts.

It is worth emphasizing that the major conflicts in the region have been accentuated by the general failure to promote mutual trust. There are four major sources of mistrust. The first is the recent and earlier history of this region. Second, the great disparity between the size and the power potential of India on the one hand and its neighbours on the other. Third, the exploitation of this fear for their own purposes by the extra-regional powers. The fourth is insufficient inner coherence in some South Asian countries.[5] The impact of great power military

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4.   Joseph Rothschild, Ethnopolitics : A Conceptual Framework, Columbia University, New York, 1981, pp. 28-29.

5.   Pran Chopra, SAARC and the Asymmetry Issue, in P. Wignaraja and A. Hussain ed., The Challenge in South Asia, Sage, New Delhi, 1989, p. 330.

competition in South Asia not only produced arms transfers and undermined the civil element in some countries, it also affected national values, interests and intentions in a direction in which the confidence in peaceful coexistence declined. The effectiveness of interdependence will lie in introducing the relevant category of norms and provide incentives to decision-makers to evaluate costs and benefits and avoid conflicts where the prognosis is for serious setbacks to the satisfaction of human needs. Compromise solutions can appear more easily on a regional agenda when there is moral and institutional resistance to the pursuit of power at all costs, and reciprocal self-restraint is practised on a continuing basis. There is an important message to South Asian leaders in recent research on the psychological basis for peace, which suggests that mutual trust will be fostered when "each state has a stake in the other's doing well rather than poorly". A workable system of rules to regulate regional relations will provide overarching common objectives which will in turn help in reaching a modus vivendi in the case of most regional conflicts.

3. From military to civilian powers

At the heart of most divisive issues in South Asia today is the serious deformation which has produced an accentuation of the military or para-military factor. According to American experts on India, the "revised

strategic outlook since 1962 and particularly since 1971 --
embraces a new and broadened concept of Indian interest in
and responsibility for the defence of the subcontinent and
the Indian Ocean... India should develop a nuclear weapons
capability to offset that of the Peoples Republic of China
and to establish Indian pre-eminence in the South Asian
region, and thus to deter intrusion or control by other
powers."[6] The issue of militarisation has created a serious
dilemma for the leadership of nearly every South Asian
country. The media of the subcontinent is saturated with
accounts of nuclear weapons, missiles, tanks, and AK 47s and
the necessity of surveillance to contain the negative
orientations of the "enemy" across or within the state
borders. Although it is generally recognised that the
alternative to peace is catastrophe the necessity of
developing attitudes which emphasise mutual trust has not
been prevailed. The debate on "interdependence" can produce
socially acceptable rationalisation of a framework of
civilian power to replace military power. The genuine
accomplishments of Japan after World War II , for example,
are centred on its role as a civilian power and on a
rejection of the militaristic pursuit which led to its
lining up with the axis powers. South Asia as a region may
be prepared to act in accordance with a concept of powerhood
which rejects war as the ultima ratio regum.

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6.   Quoted in A.A. Khan, Military Balance in South Asia,
      Asia Pacific Community, (25), Summer 1989, p. 101.

4. Regional security : defence and disarmament.

The chief impediment to arms control in South Asia has been the lack of a public commitment at a regional level, although at international forums like the United Nations several important initiatives in the quest of disarmament and international security have been taken at the behest of one or other South Asian country. A political ethos conducive to regional security also can produce an enduring link between defence and disarmament and also lead to real political dividends for decision-makers who work for conflict transformation. South Asia urgently needs a more stable and more cost-effective security environment if it has to take advantage of long term structural trends in the global economy. A destructive security environment can only yield a peace of mutual terror which will progressively divorce the area from the operational considerations which have brought prosperity to East Asian NIEs. There is hardly any doubt about the negative impact of arms spending on the South Asian economy and the continuing attempts to refine weapons systems place a burden which can no longer be dismissed lightly. Cognitive closures and misperceptions which have undermined regional security can only be removed by adhering to a balanced approach to interdependence.

5. Regional participation in the global economy.

The profound complexity of the global economy has made it imperative that South Asian countries should provide

themselves with openings to the outside world. To erase the gap that now exists between South Asia and the areas which have achieved economic miracles, the adoption of new and more flexible economic principles on a region-wide basis is absolutely essential. Economic relations with the outside world can only gather momentum if South Asia is not hampered by doctrinal imperatives of the past. Intellectual and business elites of the subcontinent will continue to experience irrelevance to the international political economy if they do not endorse regionally valid prescriptions for economic reforms which are needed, political and ideological difference notwithstanding. Technological change, economic growth and productivity require that policy making circles should comprehend the importance of interdependence and transnational relations. The new policy instrument on both national and regional level has to be an economic-centred diplomacy by which South Asia will be able to perform a constructive world role.

6. Ecological security.

Ecological issues now demand the most serious attention to improve the human condition and outlook in South Asia. The inadequacies or malfunctioning of environmental monitoring lead to severe economic and social costs. Ecological security, therefore, implies intellectual team-work of very high quality and permanent cooperation for solving environmental problems. At the same time dilemmas of environmental policy revolve around choices between

"free-market" solutions and the policies resulting from the
nature and limits of governmental interventions. As has
been pointed out by John Dryzek, there are a variety of
institutional arrangements through which collective
decisions on ecology can be made, and the means employed to
make collective choices will have far-reaching ramifications
on the type of world which will develop.[7] Optimal planning
and action for interdependence in South Asia will
necessarily have far-reaching effects on "markets,
bureaucracies, polyarchies and other institutional
arrangements." The importance of general consensual norms
is self-evident in the emerging trends towards ecological
security.

7. Human rights

The necessity of achieving consensus on the
principles and mechanisms of regional cooperation also
points to the need to clarify attitudes, ideas, policies and
programmes relating to human rights. If SAARC develops
economic, ecological and cultural projects an important
component of significant progress in these fields will
necessarily be the area of human rights. In the long run
the humanisation of regional relations cannot be avoided if
the violation of human rights is not to lead to explosive
situations. This study does not indicate that there is any

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7.   John Dryzek, Rational Ecology : The Political Economy
        of Environmental Choice, Basil Blackwell, Oxford,
        1987, pp. 25-30.

qualitative difference between the European context of the CSCE process and the direction of enhanced cooperation in South Asia. The "humanitarian breakthrough" in the Helsinki process was based on the requirement that expansion of connections in Europe required consolidation of humanitarian cooperation at all levels. It is quite evident that a serious effort to settle intricate problems of the subcontinent will also require commonly agreed approaches to the fulfilment of human rights and freedoms.

8.   **Inter-faith fellowship and communal peace and non-discrimination against minorities**

A relevant model of interdependence for South Asia has to draw sustenance from pragmatic and evolutionary change which can foster communal peace and ensure non-discrimination against minorities. The increasing self-assertiveness of fundamentalism has to be confronted by inter-faith fellowship. While religious conflicts in South Asia have had a negative impact on regional cooperation, the history of religious peace initiatives also has an important dimension. Mahatma Gandhi, although he was fated to fall a victim to fanaticism, provides the example of a man of religion who can provide a potentially revolutionary consensus for inter-faith fellowship and win over broad masses of the population to peace-building, not in opposition but in fulfilment of religious values.

The communal framework of politics in the

conventional sense is productive of conflicting vested interests; but a constructive relationship of inter-religious harmony may be the route to the social rebirth of a vital civilisation in South Asia.

9. Non-violent solutions and Peace Education

While considering the theoretical and practical options for interdependence we can test current decisions in the context of possible non-violent solutions. A propitious combination of circumstances enabled Gandhi to use non-violence both in South Africa and in British India. There is a generally favourable condition for the application of non-violent solutions when "there is a close interdependence of the various groups of social needs in the process of satisfying them, and by the same token, interdependence of the various substantiations of the value of peace".[8]

The Gandhian experiment in non-violence remains a fundamental point of departure not only for India, but for all the South Asian countries since the non-violent struggle for Indian freedom influenced modes of thinking in the entire region. Gandhian ideas can also serve as the nucleaus of Peace Education as a coherent and persuasive movement, for raising the consciousness of South Asian publics, for exorcising the nuclear nightmare with which they are now threatened, and for focussing on methods of peaceful change.

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8.   Wojciech Kostecki, Peace as a Social Need, in Vilho Harle ed., Studies in the History of European Peace Ideas, Tampere, Finland, 1989, p. 112.

Coming to the world situation today, the democratic revolution that has been sweeping the world since the launching of Gorbachev's 'Glasnost' and 'Perestroika' has been leaving its impact throughout the world. A series of reforms based on the spirit of the times and the breakdown of the ideological wall by the Malta spirit has enabled nations the world over to replace hegemonic nationalism by cooperative regionalism and internationalism for coexistence and coprosperity.[9]

As in the case of the European Community, some regional communities are rapidly integrating their member-states into real communities. The EC, established in 1957 by the Rome Treaties, was at the beginning an organization for economic cooperation. But by developing its Council of Ministers in 1967 into a strong common executive centre of power and by strengthening its European Parliament after 1978 by choosing its representatives by direct election, the EC has been developing into economic as well as social and political institutions of Western Europe. At the recent Maastricht Summit of the EC nations, many far-reaching decisions were taken which make it clear that some time in the future West Europe will become synonymous to a nation-state with very close integration and coordination of policy and action.

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9. Young Seek Choue, White Paper on World Peace, Kyung Hee University Press, Seoul, 1991, p. 8.

Another example of progress in regionalism, which is regarded as a silent but great revolution is the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which adopted the Paris Charter in 1990 to strengthen it as a security community and to pledge not to invade each other. Along with this Paris Charter the CSCE nations also signed the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement to reduce about 40% of conventional forces by four years. With the Charter and the agreement, the European nations (including the USA and the erstwhile USSR) ended officially the Cold War, military and ideological confrontation, arms race, and issued a mutual non-aggression declaration.[10]

Nearer home the South East Asian region has gone a long way towards effective and mutually beneficial regional cooperation. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is making great strides in regional cooperation and is an example which can be referred to in our efforts to promote cooperation in South Asia.

The Bangkok Declaration 1967 by which the ASEAN was created does not refer to cooperation for political or military purposes. Yet, in the words of Charles E. Morrison, there is a "collective political defence" among these countries which has proved to be very effective in cementing their political relationships in the past few years.[11]

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10. Ibid., p. 31.

11. Quoted by Selo Soemardjan, Introduction, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing ed. ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, University of the Philippines Law Centre and East-West Centre Culture Learning Institute, Philippines, 1981, p. xx.

In the field of economic cooperation an interesting project is the ASEAN Industrial Projects or AIP. Under this project a large industrial plant serving the entire ASEAN region's needs would be set up in each country. Each plant would be jointly owned by all five member countries with 60% of the shares subscribed to by the host country Each ASEAN country would have one large industrial project producing a different product for the regional market. An ASEAN Urea Project in Indonesia, an ASEAN Urea Plant in Malaysia and an ASEAN Rock Salt-Soda Ash Project in Thailand have been definitely accepted under this scheme.[12]

Not to be overlooked are the dialogues between the ASEAN and the EEC, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the US. Several projects have been approved - ASEAN-EEC Trade and Development Forum and ASEAN-EEC Development Fund, the ASEAN-Japan Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism, and the ASEAN-US Business Council.

In the field of education, the establishment of the ASEAN Network of Development Education Centres has been approved.[13] This programme is similar to the proposed South Asian University project with its network of national study centres.

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12. Dr. A.A. Castro, Economic Cooperation and the Development of an ASEAN Culture, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing ed., ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, p. 234.

13. Jose D. Ingles, Problems and Prospects in Regional Interaction, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing ed., ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, p. 223.

ASEAN economic cooperation follows a decentralised path, whereby each ASEAN member-country would host one committee, that is, designate the chairman, provide the secretariat, and so on. Thus, the Committee on Trade and Tourism (COTT) is hosted by Singapore, the Committee on Industry, Minerals and Energy (COIME) by the Philippines, the Committee on Food, Agriculture and Forestry (COFAF) by Indonesia, the Committee on Finance and Banking (COFAB) by Thailand and the Committee on Transportation and Communications (COTAC) by Malaysia. The Committees have their subsidiary bodies : sub-committees, working groups, and so on.

That no community can long continue to exist without a conflict amelioration mechanism is axiomatic. Promulgated in 1976, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation contains the basic law on the pacific settlement of disputes for the treaty region. The treaty provides for the creation of a formal mechanism to settle disputes through the regional process and directs the high contracting parties to "constitute, as a continuing body, a High Council comprising a representative at ministerial level from each of the high contracting parties."[14]

In the effort to adopt a unified approach towards third countries and organizations,ASEAN has adopted a very

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14. Quoted by P.V. Quisumbing, Problems and Prospects of ASEAN Law : Toward a Legal Framework for Regional Dispute Settlement, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing ed., ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, p. 310.

innovative approach which could well be followed in South Asia. To facilitate the coordination of its relations with third parties, ASEAN has designated a country coordinator for each of its major dialogues, as follows:

Indonesia	-	Japan and European Communities
Malaysia	-	Australia and West Asian Countries.
Philippines	-	U.S.A. and Canada
Singapore	-	New Zealand.
Thailand	-	UNDAP/ESCAP.[15]

ASEAN has also established a number of non-governmental/private organizations in various fields. A few of these are the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIO), ASEAN Consumers Protection Agency, ASEAN Federation of Jurists, and ASEAN Bankers' Association.[16]

South East Asia, therefore, is moving on the path of peace through regional cooperation.

The situation in South Asia, however, is sadly out of tune with the times. While the world is incessantly trying to think of new and innovative paths to peace, we in South Asia are yet to free ourselves from outdated modes of

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15. Algerico O. Lacanlale, Community Formation in ASEAN's External Relations, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing ed., ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, p. 385.

16. E.D. Solidrum, The Role of Certain Sectors in Shaping and Articulating the ASEAN Way, in R.P. Anand and P.V. Quisumbing, ASEAN : Identity, Development and Culture, p. 146.

thinking. We seem to be trapped in a time warp and refuse
to give up cliched images and notions. There are very few
efforts for peace and understanding in the region which go
to the root of things and try to pursue an idea or scheme to
its logical culmination. We seem to be interested in
cosmetic changes only.

It is true that the proposals suggested for
bringing peace in South Asia are rather unorthodox and may
well be unrealizable in the near future. However, if there
has ever been a time and situation for radical thinking and
action it is today. The world situation has rarely been
more propitious for wholesale changes, and we in South Asia
must not miss the chance to move with the world. We cannot
afford to lag behind.

The proposals outlined in this dissertation are
not meant to be a prescription for the future. They simply
constitute an outline and suggest a new way of looking at
things. They cannot be realized at once and in full. But
at least a beginning can be made somewhere, as for example,
in the proposals made for economic development , human
development, ecological balance, and educational
development.

It is also not the case that such proposals have
not been made or implemented elsewhere in the world. The
European Community is rapidly moving on the way to becoming
a very well-knit and strong regional community. After the

formation of the EEC, the former war-like relations between, for example, France and Germany have been transformed into cooperative relations. Instead of distrust, hatred and war, these nations have been cooperating as good neighbours. Ranging from economic, political, diplomatic and social cooperation the Western European nations have presented to the world a new model of cooperation. The European Parliament, a common market and currency, and eventually a political union are all examples of what can be achieved in regional cooperation. In Asia itself, ASEAN is a very robust and strong mechanism for regional cooperation with many innovative ways to pursue cooperation, which have been mentioned earlier.

Thus, even if South Asia cannot attain the level of the EEC or ASEAN it can at least begin the process of genuine regional cooperation rather than indulge in rhetoric.

The attempt in this dissertation has simply been to break out of outdated approaches to regional needs. Our consideration of future prospects and trends indicate that interdependence alone can prevent the exacerbation of regional power struggles in South Asia, and can help all the subcontinental actors to gain leverage in diplomacy and negotiations with extra-regional powers.

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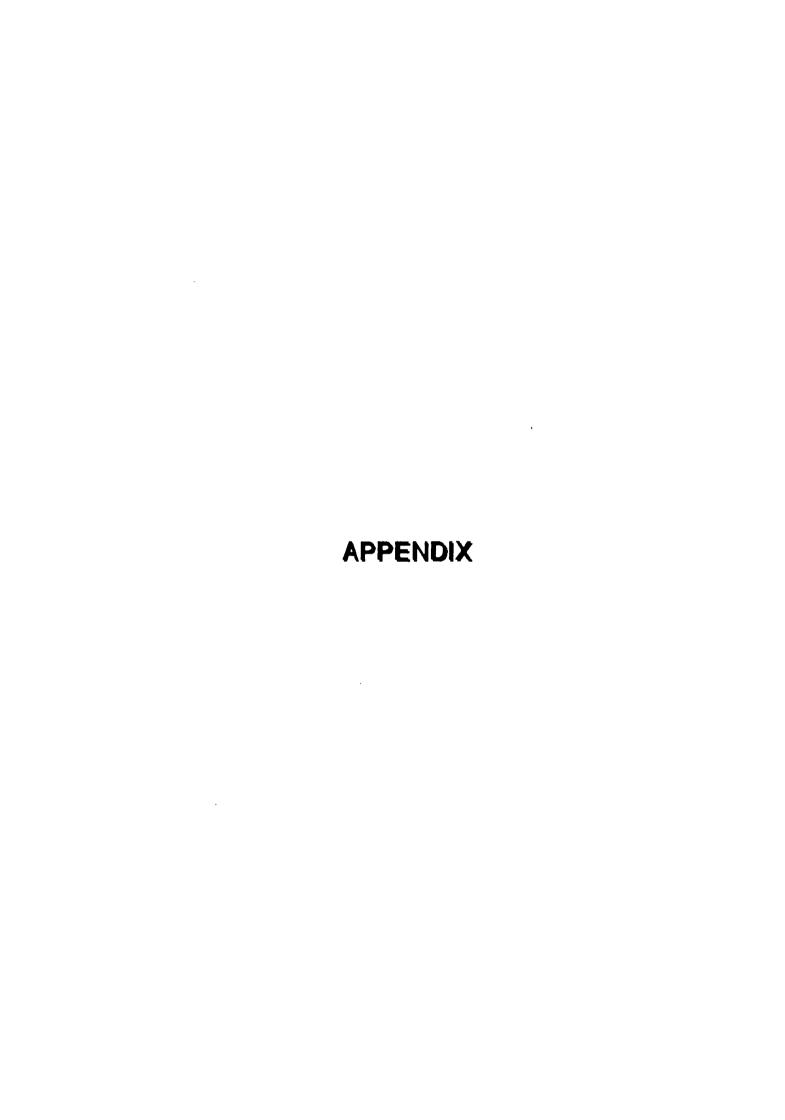
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APPENDIX

SAARC CHRONOLOGY

November 1980	–	Late President Zia-ur-Rahman's initiative, and release of Bangladesh Working Paper.
April 1981 to July 1983	–	Foreign Secretary level meetings at Colombo, Kathmandu, Islamabad and Dhaka respectively.
1-2 August 1983	–	First South Asian Foreign Ministers meeting, New Delhi.
10-11 July 1984	–	Second South Asian Foreign Ministers meeting, Male.
13-14 May 1985	–	Third South Asian Foreign Ministers meeting, Thimpu.
7-8 December 1985	–	First Summit Meeting, Dhaka.
8 December 1985	–	Formal launching of SAARC.
16-17 November 1986	–	Second SAARC Summit, Bangalore.
2-4 November 1987	–	Third SAARC Summit, Kathmandu.
29-31 December 1988	–	Fourth SAARC Summit, Islamabad.
21-23 November 1990	–	Fifth SAARC Summit, Male.
7-10 November 1991	–	Scheduled Sixth SAARC Summit, Colombo, Postponed indefinitely.
21 December 1991	–	One-day Sixth SAARC Summit, Colombo.

EXTRACTS OF THE BANGLADESH WORKING PAPER OF NOVEMBER 1980
Possible Areas of Co-operation

It has been stated earlier in the paper that co-operation in the economic sphere could be the starting point which could be expanded to include social and cultural co-operation. Science and technology also seem to offer great possibilities. Within these very broad parameters one can identify certain fields in which co-operation will not only be highly beneficial but also present a maximum convergence of common interest. In selecting these fields one will have to bear in mind the need to avoid duplication and overlapping functions and jurisdictions. After a careful analysis of the activities of the existing forums, both regional and international it appears that a beginning can be made in South Asia in Following fields:

(a) Telecommunications

Telecommunications happens to be an integral part of the economic infrastructure in every society. Economic activities, dissemination of knowledge, vastly expanded social contacts of highly mobile individuals in contemporary societies, and last but not the least, trade and commerce depend upon an efficient telecommunication network. A telecommunication system in a country can attain its optimum level of efficiency and usefulness if it can be linked up with similar systems in neighbouring countries. As at present, it is a fact that in South Asia, it is easier to communicate with Europe and America than with next door neighbours.

(b) Meteorology

In the field of meteorology, co-operation could pay rich dividends to the member countries of the South Asia region. Facilities for scientific weather forecasting and introduction of the latest techniques of and methods for the study of climatic patterns could be organised on a regional basis. Since most of the countries of the region face permanent exposure to the hazards of cyclonic storms and other such natural disasters, active co-operation towards sharing the fund of knowledge, techniques, data, etc., gathered in this area will significantly benefit the member countries. These efforts would naturally be designed to strengthen the present international arrangements that may be operative in the region.

(c) Transport

In order to ensure an effective flow of movement of goods and also to facilitate intra-regional traffic. a well-integrated system of communications especially in the form of road and rail links, would be invaluable for economic development of the region. The national plans for building roads and for establishing railway lines could be harmonised at the frontiers to allow easy access across the national borders, without any substantial additional cost. Co-operation in this area would bring the countries closer through increased surface mobility.

(d) Shipping

The importance of shipping in the external trade of any country, whether coastal or landlocked, can hardly be overemphasized. Its relative advantage over other means of transport as bulk carrier is also well recognised.

The world shipping market at present is overwhelmingly dominated by the developed countries. Thus, conditions imposed by these countries and the liner conference arrangements controlled by them militate against the natural desire of developing countries to increase their tonnage capacity for a greater share in the transportation of sea cargo. The frequent escalation in the freight charges adversely affect the development needs and the balance of payments position of the developing countries. The countries in the South Asian region suffer from the consequent disadvantages in varying

degrees. Thus, in order to bring about a degree of self-sufficiency in this field and to give an additional fillip to economic development of countries of this region, shipping is a natural area for co-operation on a regional basis.

(e) Tourism

Tourism is another area where there exists a vast potential for intra-regional co-operation. The revolutionary growth of air transportation in recent times has made tourism the second largest export industry in the world. It is essential that South Asia gets a greater share of the world market.

The potential of the region to attract tourism is virtually unlimited. The combined efforts of the countries of this region can be geared to develop this potential to their common benefit. This can be done by strengthening the infrastructure at home and by a vigorous marketing effort abroad. The rich and ancient heritage of the sub-continent and the varied scenic beauty of different parts of the region will provide the necessary attraction for foreign visitors. Intra-regional tourism can also be a major force in forging greater understanding between and among the countries and peoples of the region.

If the combined resources of South Asia can be tapped, better facilities can be provided to tourists which would doubtless, increase their number. For instance, joint package tours with reduced group fares could be organised; there could be co-operation among the various travel agencies operating in the region that could enable co-ordinated tour programmes; common tourist policies could be evolved after due consultations among the concerned governments.

(f) Agricultural Rural Sector

South Asian countries, given their dependence on this sector, already have a large number of institutions engaged in research and development in a wide variety of fields. Regional co-operation would usefully augment the growing fund of knowledge and techniques in these fields. A co-ordinated arrangement for sharing information, experiences and results of experiments, etc., could effectively hasten the process of growth and productivity in this vital sector. Similarly, in view of the importance of developing the rural sector in particular,

exchange of ideas and sharing of experience in the sphere of rural institution-building could result in significant advances as well as savings, both in resources and time.

(g) Joint Ventures

An economic co-operation group creates a wider market for commodities requiring large scale production. It also provides a scope for utilisation of hitherto unexploited resources through more efficient organisation and optimum employment of existing resources. By increasing the range of production and ensuring higher returns on capital, it can create a self-sustained basis for further co-operation. Such multilateral economic groups not only can attract capital and technology from outside, but also obtain exemptions from GATT rules on non-discriminatory treatment on trade. Joint ventures provide the most potent field for reaping all these advantages for countries belonging to such a group. It is also one of the most tangible and productive forms of co-operation within the framework of ECDC.

The countries in South Asian region posses, a wide range of natural and mineral resources, technical know-how, trained manpower and a vast market. Inspite of the fact that these countries are at varying stages of development, it is possible to identify potential areas for joint ventures, evolve appropriate institutional framework and policy instruments on the basis of equitable benefit accruing to these countries. Co-operative endeavours in the economic field can be undertaken to expand the product base through joint ventures that will lead to the creation of other favourable factors for further co-operation.

(h) Market Promotion: Selected Commodities

The countries of this region enjoy a significant share of the world market for a number of commodities such as tea, jute and cotton. Most of these countries have separately undertaken marketing and promotional efforts for these commodities. It is well recognised that joint initiatives can reduce promotional cost and have greater impact in the export markets. Moreover, they also enable the countries of South Asia, particularly the less developed among them to take full advantage of the liberal measures available under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) in the markets of

the developed countries. In the face of growing
competition from substitutes as well as
uncertainties due to price fluctuations, such joint
initiatives will provide additional guarantee for
further expansion of markets at remunerative
prices.

(i) Scientific and Technological Co-operation

Countries of the South Asian region have a
special need to develop effective use of science
and technology for alleviating the widespread
poverty that is a common characteristic of the
area. It is recognised that the promotion of
scientific education will not achieve the desired
results unless science can be applied in practical
terms for the development of agriculture,
industry, energy and all other needs of society.
There is indeed ample scope for further
programmes in the field of applied science and
technology to meet the basic requirements of the
people of the region, particularly those in the
rural areas. In many cases, the experience gained
by these countries in this sphere can be shared
with greater advantage than technology
borrowed from the industrialised countries of
the developed world.

Co-operation in this field is particularly
relevant in regard to both conventional and non-
conventional sources of energy. Such co-
operation could explore ways and means of
reducing dependence on foreign sources by the
development of local energy sources; improve-
ment of efficient energy use through develop-
ment of low-energy technology; reservation of
non-renewable energy sources, etc.

Concerned research and action-oriented
programme for eradication and elimination of
such diseases as malaria, cholera, etc., afflicting
the people of this region could also be an
effective and useful area of co-operation.

(j) Educational and Technical Co-operation

Co-operation at international and regional
level with regard to education has now been
well-established and institutionalised in many
regions. In this region also, shared experiences
of the countries could be usefully exchanged in
matters pertaining to this subject.

A primary common concern among these
countries is, for instance, how to provide cost-
effective educational services which could reach
out to millions of school-age children who crowd
the cities and villages. The experiences of

countries of the region ranging from such areas
as book production, manufacture of low-cost
scientific equipment to matters connected with
curriculum formation, examination procedures,
teacher training and in-service training, non-
formal education, just to name a few, could be
usefully shared.

These countries having similar problems
could benefit more from the expertise of
personnel trained in the region than from that of
foreign experts who obtain their training in an
entirely different environment, and who,
consequently, fail to develop the correct
orientation in dealing with regional problems.
Workshops, seminars, conferences and visits of
technical expert organised on a regional basis
could provide useful exchange of knowledge and
experience.

(k) Cultural Co-operation

The South Asian countries are heirs to some
of the richest cultural traditions of the world.
The influence of the major religions—Hinduism,
Buddhism, Christianity and Islam -on the
different countries of the region, in varying
degrees, has contributed to the richness and
diversity in the cultural heritages of these
countries. This is, therefore, a field in which
regional co-operation can be of considerable
benefit in a better understanding of the cultural
heritage of the countries in the region and, as a
result, in promoting mutual goodwill. As a
matter of fact, cultural exchanges are already
taking place between these countries on the basis
of bilateral agreements. A regional approach
would, however, introduce a new dimension in
the cultural exchange programmes.

One can readily see numerous possibilities.
There can be, for example, a South Asian
regional film festival in one of the capitals. Also,
exhibitions of paintings can be organised on a
regional basis. These can become a major source
of encouragement for artistic activities within
the region. Handicrafts of the different countries
of the region can also be enriched by holding
exhibitions on a regional basis from time to time.
Sports is another field which offers great
possibilities. South Asian games and sports
organised on an annual basis can become an
integral part of the cultural life of the area. All
these possibilities clearly indicate that the
cultural field is an area that has a very wide scope
for co-operation in the South Asian region.

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