

The “Arc of Crisis” and India’s Security

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fulfilment of the requirement for the award of
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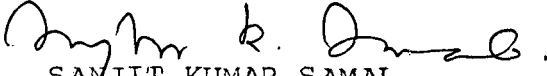
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INTRODUCTION

The decade of the 1980s started disastrously for International security and the global political system. "It seemed that for the first time since the end of World War II we were heading for a crisis that might well end up in a nuclear Armageddon."¹

The new Cold War has clouded the decades. Its origin can be traced to the quick succession of events between May and August 1977: the crisis in the Horn of Africa which was perceived by the US as a show of force by the Soviets, led quickly in the same month to the unilateral cancellation of the ongoing US-Soviet talks on the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean. This was followed in August by the announcement of the planning for the creation of the rapid development force to operate in the region between the Red Sea and the Gulf.

From then on the pattern of confrontationist strategy emerged clearly, with every event becoming a pretext for further hardening of position. A few

1. Bhargava, G.S., South Asian Security after Afghanistan (Lexington, Mass, 1983), p.1.

developments between 1978 and 1983 may be recalled - the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran, the movement of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the pronouncement of the Carter doctrine of "Hands Off the Gulf" and the use of force to defend US vital interests in West Asia, the expansion and upgrading of Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean, resumption of the US arms supplies to Pakistan. And, finally, the formation of US CENT.COM (Central Command), with its jurisdiction extended to South-West Asian Contingencies, became a key factor in the power game that for the first time linked up South Asia and (for our purpose) India not only with South-West Asia, but also with the Gulf and, in terms of the strategic factors, even with the entire West Asian Scene - the arc of crises of Brzezinski's imagination.

The "Arc of Crisis" scenario has marked the beginning of the new Cold war, whose theatre has shifted from Europe to the Gulf - Indian Ocean - South-West Asian region. The focus is now the Indian Ocean littoral. This has brought the cold warriors to the door steps of India, thereby qualitatively changing its security environment. This changed context of India's security constitutes the main theme of this work.

The present work seeks to analyse the crises along the "Arc", drawn by Carter's hawkish National Security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski. The overwhelming objective here is to expose the myth of Soviet threat, in the "arc of crisis", a scenario pictured by the United States. There is also an exposition of America's militarist posture in global context. Thus, the overall effort in this work is to present the New Cold War which has set in after the period of detente.

Our aim in respect of the above themes is limited to a "Security Perspective" only. An attempt has been made to link US posture in the "arc of crisis" to India's security. With India in view, the emphasis has been placed on Pakistan and Indian Ocean.

The subject noted above has been discussed in the following chapters:

Chapter I exposes the concept of "Arc of Crisis" as a strategic demarcation in the lines of Brzezinski, its exponent. The US-invented myth of Soviet responsibility for crises has been subjected to critical analysis.

In Chapter II, an attempt is made to unearth the roots of the crises in Persian Gulf. The implications of the "Carter doctrine" and the Rapid Development

Force (RDF) are also brought out. Further, the incorporation of Pakistan into US gulf strategy and its implications for India have been discussed.

Chapter III is on the US strategic posture in Indian Ocean and Indian security. Here, the points of discussion are the US militarisation of the Ocean, its force deployment vis-a-vis the Soviet Union - an offensive vs. defensive posture, the centrality of Diego Garcia to the US strategy in the Gulf, the interventionist proclivity of the US vis-a-vis the littoral states and finally their implications for India - India's trade, island territories, coast line and sea-bed activities. The danger of nuclear blackmail for India has also been brought out.

Chapter IV deals with the South West Asia. Here, the themes are: Pakistan in the US Plan, Afghan problem, Nuclear Pakistan and implications for India, US attempts at internal subversion and above all, the military encirclement of India because of the emergence of Beijing - Washington-Islamabad axis and the evolution of what the American strategists have called "Strategic Consensus".

Finally, in the conclusion, an attempt is made to bring out the major findings of our work. In the light

of the US powers and postures in the "Arc of Crisis" and their implications for Indian Security, the point arrived at relates to a clash between the global imperialist perspective of National Security of the United States, which is expansionist and offensive in nature, and India's "enlightened" national security perspective which is defensive in nature.

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF "ARC OF CRISIS" - EXPOSITION AND EVALUATION

"As in all post-World War II administrations, the backbone of our policy would be the maintenance of strong American defenses and alliances so that we could manage our relationship with the Soviet Union from a position of equivalent strength."

- Cyrus Vance in
"Hard Choices"

The 1970s ended with a sequence of dramatic events involving the Persian Gulf, the Horn of Africa and the South-West Asia. The close of the decade brought with it a web of intra and inter-state conflicts over religious, ethnic and political interests, which continue to be aggravated by individual power struggles. The inevitable result has been abrupt changes in both the internal and external policies of the states in the region.

For the West, particularly the United States, the crisis consisted in the loss of influence in some of the areas of the third world. "The United States found itself confronted with the challenge of how best to protect its vital interests in the face of regional dynamics as well as, what they called, the more assertive

policies of the Soviet Union."¹

The concept of the "Arc of Crisis" came into being towards the end of 1978 as the New Cold War gathered force. It was put forward as a strategic demarcation by the American Foreign Policy analysts. This image had its roots both in regional developments (a set of revolutionary upsurges) and in factors endemic to the West itself (increasing energy dependence, a growth in Russophobic attitudes). Within this generally alarmist perspective, there are variants of the "Arc" theme: a strong version attributes all threatening developments to Soviet instigation, and weaker one stresses Soviet "exploitation" of these developments, even where Moscow was not behind everything that occurred.

In all fairness, the concept of "Arc of Crisis" announced the beginning of the Second Cold War, making the Gulf-Indian Ocean theatre the cockpit of Super Power confrontation. The formulation of the Arc of crisis policy as the focus of American paramount strategic interests is the outcome of sweeping political changes and the American loss of control in some areas coupled

1. Novik, Nimrod, and Starv, Joyce (eds.), Challenges in the Middle East, Introduction, Praeger, 1981.

with a sense of need to reassert American supremacy. The US recovery from the psychological pressures of the Vietnam War and phenomenal growth of neo-conservatism confront the violent surge of revolutionary forces in the third world, that defy both Western preponderance and domestic subserv²_^ence as well.

The loss of Iran as Pentagon's "Policeman" on the Northern tier, the fear of revolutionary fever catching the fragile neighbouring states, the speculation about Soviet designs breaking the existing political tie-up between America and West Asia allies have combined to make America more closer to confrontationist line.

The Arc of Crisis bespeaks the same alarmist approach of America to regional crisis. Coined by Carter's National Security Advisor Brzezinski in the wake of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and Iranian revolution, the phrase refers to an area that stretches from Morocco through Gulf to Pakistan. In US strategic consensus, the Gulf-Indian Ocean is considered as the cockpit of global crisis and, therefore, marks the top strategic priority. The entire idea of RDF has been drawn from such a framework, the aim being to get the forces on the scene firstest with the leastest to meet a "worst-case scenario".

The American Demarcation of the "Arc":

Brzezinski suggested that "an Arc of Crisis stretches along the shores of the Indian Ocean with fragile social and political structures, in a region of vital importance to US threatened with fragmentation. The resulting political chaos could well be filled by elements hostile to our values and sympathetic to our adversaries."² In practical terms, what Brzezinski is really speaking of are the nations that stretch across the Southern flank of the Soviet Union from the Indian subcontinent to Turkey, and southward through the Arabian peninsula to the Horn of Africa. "The centre of gravity of this Arc is Iran, the world's fourth largest oil producer and for more than two decades a citadel of US military and economic strength in the middle East".³ In 1979, the 37-year old reign of Shah was ended by months of civic unrest and revolution disturbing thereby the geo-politics of the region.

The crisis area is vast. It includes India, impoverished Bangladesh, unstable Pakistan with an

2. Time, 15 January 1979, p.6.

3. Ibid.

inept military regime. To the North-East, is Afghanistan where a pro-Soviet junta seized power. Directly South of Iran is Saudi Arabia which is highly vulnerable. On Saudi Arabia's southern flank lies the pro-Soviet South Yemen, whose radical government had been fomenting guerrilla warfare in neighbouring Oman. In the Horn of Africa, the Ethiopian junta of Lt. Col. Mengistu was being held together by Soviet military aid. Pondering the complexities of the Indian ocean region. Brzezinski concluded, "I had have to be either blind or Pollyannish not to recognise that there are dark clouds on the horizon."⁴

The nature of the cloud varies from country to country. But, what the entire region has in common is an innate fragility, a vulnerability because of being located at the centre of so strategic a territory. In US thinking, the Persian Gulf is geographically and politically a perfect target of opportunity for Soviet expansionism. "There is no convincing evidence that the Russians had been subversively operating to get rid of the Shah in Iran or that they were working them

4. Brzezinski quoted in Time Magazine, 15 Jan. 1979, p.7.

to overthrow other regimes along the "Arc".⁵ But, within a decade, according to American intelligence reports, the Soviet Union will run short of the oil it requires to fuel an expanding economy. Thus, the region could easily become the fulcrum of world conflict in the 1980s.

The Western position in the "Arc" deteriorated with the fall of the Shah whose country had been a bulwork of Western influence in the region and America's surrogate Policeman in the Persian Gulf. The United States could not reconcile to the situation of dramatic change in the Arc in which the pro-Western governments had either fallen or been weakened in Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, and pro-Moscow regimes had come to power in Ethiopia, Afghanistan and South Yemen. America adopted the cold war style of putting on the Soviet Union all the blame for these sweeping political changes.

The theme of this paper is to critically view the Soviet responsibility for the crises in the Arc. It also calls into question the alarmist portrayals

5. Time, 15 January 1979.

of the military balance by the United States. In both cases, in the military balance and the Arc, it is possible to identify Soviet policy aims and practices and to chart certain Soviet advances. The new climate in the West is not a response to wholly imagined changes or to internal factors alone. "But, much of the assessment appears to be tendentious - based upon questionable assumptions, and sometimes on questionable facts;"⁶ taking individual events out of their local and historical contexts; ignoring the limits of Soviet power and the setbacks suffered by Moscow. In sum, the positing of a "Soviet threat" as an explanatory tool for understanding the events in the Arc during the late 1970s, or as a means of legitimising US policy, cannot survive critical analysis. "It is an illusory picture produced, as is that of an unequal military balance."⁷

The Crisis in the "Horn of Africa":

The distortion of picture by the United States can be discerned in coverage of the Horn of Africa.

6. Halliday, Fred, Threat From the East?, Chap.1, Penguin, 1981, p.16.

7. Ibid.

From the end of the Second World War until 1974, the United States was well entrenched in Ethiopia, backing the archaic and repressive regime of Haile Selassie. "In February, 1974, a popular movement broke the power of the emperor. He was deposed and replaced by a military ruling body, the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC)."⁸

There is nothing to demonstrate any Soviet involvement in the events of 1974. There was no Communist Party, and the PMAC's ideology was, at best, an ill-defined form of nationalistic "Ethiopian socialism". Until early 1977, the PMAC maintained relations with the United States. Why then was the PMAC able to strengthen its ties with the Soviet Union in 1977 and 1978? There are several reasons for it. First, "in February 1977 the United States cut off all military aid to Ethiopia in protest against the internal policies of the PMAC".⁹ Secondly, in June-July 1977, Ethiopia was invaded by neighbouring Somalia at the active instigation of conservative

8. Ibid., p.98.

9. Ibid.

Arab States, particularly Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and, with at least some encouragement from the United States.¹⁰ Thirdly, the Saudis and Egyptians were advocating a general policy of turning the Red Sea into an "Arab lake", and the Arab states were inciting the Conservative Ethiopian Democratic Union (based in Somalia) in an attempt to bring down the PMAC.¹¹

Whatever be the internal policies of the PMAC, the fact remains that the growth of Soviet and Cuban influence in Ethiopia was a reaction to events that the USSR had not brought about. Quite simply, it was a response to the invasion of Ethiopia by Somalia. The revolution itself was caused by predominantly internal factors; the subsequent radicalisation of the international situation in the Horn of Africa was a

10. Somalia had a long-term ambition to create a greater Somalia by bringing the Ogaden region of Ethiopia under the Somali flag. The United States could perceive this and acted accordingly. President Carter was quoted by Time as ordering Vance and Brzezinski to "make in every possible way to get Somalia to be our friend". The US was also involved in hectic diplomatic activities after which Pakistan, Iran, Germany and Italy agreed to do their bit in pushing Somalia to a new path, i.e. an anti-socialist path; International Herald Tribune, 27 July, 1977.

11. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.99.

result of the policies of Washington and its allies.¹²

Often, the Soviet Union is charged with a "cynical" switch from the weaker state, Somalia, to the stronger one. But, the evidence does not bear it out. First of all, the Russians waited for two and a half years before playing the Ethiopian card. A former high ranking Ethiopian foreign office official told in 1979 that the PMAC tried to acquire substantial quantities of Soviet equipment with which to face Somalia. But, the Russians refused to meet these demands for fear of antagonising Somalia and Arab states.¹³ However, the turn around came in 1977, not because of some change of mind in Moscow, but because of the change in Somalia's policy, which was offensive against Ethiopia and turned against the USSR. Even here the Soviet response was controlled: the Russians first tried mediation (the Podgorny and Castro missions); then they sent limited supplies of arms - but to northern Ethiopia. The truly massive Eastern bloc intervention took place only after the Somalis had taken further step of

12. Ibid.

13. Quoted by Fred Halliday, n.6.

expelling the Russians and Cubans from their country.

Even after the Soviet and Cuban involvement in Ethiopia, the political process of that country remained independent of any outside influence. Ethiopia differed with Moscow on a wide range of issues:¹⁴ On Eritrea, on the question of party-building, on Zimbabwe and on economic matters (the Ethiopians expressed open dissatisfaction with the quality of Eastern bloc equipment). Thus, it appears that despite a general alliance with the Soviet Union, Ethiopia's internal politics and policies remained largely beyond Soviet control. Indeed, the level of nationalist sentiment in Ethiopia is such that the Russians are likely to find their position there significantly reduced in the future, once the external threats facing the Ethiopians are felt to have been overcome.¹⁵

14. For details of Ethiopian-Soviet divergences, see Washington Post, 17 March 1979.

15. On Soviet-Ethiopian divergences and Ethiopia's cautious opening to the West, see the Guardian, 31 March 1981. The difficulties, which the socialist transformation of Ethiopia will encounter, were brought out by a veteran correspondent Valentin Korovikov in Pravda, May 1976, as translated in "Current digest of the Soviet Press", vol.28, no.20, p.20.

On the other hand, the American position in the region has improved considerably. The US-Kenyan Facilities Access Agreement of June 26, 1980 provided that the United States would provide Kenya with a total of \$ 50 million in economic aid and \$ 27 million in foreign military sales credits in next two years.¹⁶ Kenya, in turn, ensured Mombasa's adjacent port and air field facilities, which should clearly enhance the operational capability of the US fleet. One of the key US objectives in Kenya was to provide rest and relaxation (R and R) in Mombasa for shop-crews deployed in the Indian Ocean.¹⁷ The unique assets Mombasa offers are not available elsewhere in the region. Kenyan naval base and port facilities in Mombasa are inherently good and will be significantly improved with the completion of projects planned as part of the access agreement. "Thus, the Mombasa port could become a tempting prospect for still further expansion."¹⁸

The US position in Somalia improved a lot in the same way with the US-Somali facilities Access Agreement

16. Report of a staff study Mission to the Persian Gulf, M-E and Horn of Africa, Oct. 21-Nov. 13, 1980, Washington, 1981, p.43.

17. Ibid., p.44.

18. Ibid., p.44.

of August 22, 1980, which ended a decade of strained relations. The agreement was intended to support US interests in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean.¹⁹ The August 22, 1980 agreement provides for United States use of Somali facilities in Mogadishu, but particularly in Berbera. Port facilities at Mogadishu, Somalia's main commercial outlet, are impressive. However, the main interest of the United States is related to the Access airship facilities at Berbera on the Gulf of Aden.²⁰ The geographic advantage of the Berbera site is that it is 600 miles closer to the Persian Gulf than Mombasa, Kenya and Diego Garcia.²¹

During this period, the United States also increased its economic and military aid to Kenya and Somalia to a huge extent. "Whatever the outcome and impact of military sales, there is need for increased and consistent US economic assistance to Somalia."²² Here is given the chart of US assistance to Somalia.

19. Ibid., p.49.

20. Ibid., p.51.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., p.53.

SomaliaEconomic and Military Assistance
(in millions of dollars)

Type of Assistance	1977	1978	1980	1981	1962- 1981	1946- 1981
Total economic assistance (including peace corps)	0.8	19.1	63.0	47.2	236.2	242.2
Total military assistance			20.0	20.3	40.3	40.3

Thus, so far as the crisis in the Horn of Africa is concerned, it is the pro-Socialist shift²³ by both Ethiopia and Somalia which disturbed the western powers. The West set about making efforts to change the situation in its favour. At the back of all the political manoeuvres of the United States, was probably the US design to have the whole of the Red Sea within its sphere of influence and that of its allies. During the Ethiopia-Somali conflict, the West set a dangerous precedent by militarily

23. While Ethiopia developed friendly relations with the Socialist countries and openly declared that it would work on Marxist-Leninist principles, Somalia and Soviet Union also signed in 1974 a treaty of friendship and cooperation in "Horn of Africa Problem" by Vijay Gupta in Foreign Affairs Report, March, 1978.

assisting a country, because it has changed sides for its expansionist designs. The US is interested in weakening Ethiopia and wiping out Soviet presence from the Horn. The Soviets have similarly faced the risk of losing their newly-acquired ally in the Horn.

The US policy towards this crisis was to cast it in East-West terms. While Moscow agreed to a ceasefire in conjunction with Somali withdrawal, Brzezinski again raised the idea of US military countermoves. He suggested the deployment of a *Caveat* task force to that region in the meeting of the Administration's Senior foreign policy and National Security officials.²⁴ However, every other member of the committee opposed this idea and that agreement was reached that there would be no linkage between the Soviets' and Cubans' activities in the Horn and other bilateral issues between the US and USSR.

Meanwhile, Cyrus Vance reported to the President that Ethiopia had given assurance that its troops would not cross Somali border. When the Administration was

24. Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices, Simon and Schuster (New York, 1983), Chap.5, p.87.

confident that the Ethiopians would prefer restraint and Somalia's territorial integrity can be preserved Brzezinski stated publicly that Soviet actions in the Horn would complicate the SALT talks. Brzezinski's Public statement implied that he would deliberately slow down the SALT negotiations unless the Soviets showed more restraint in Africa. This, in fact, distorted the picture. As Vance says, "By casting the complex Horn situation in East-West terms, and by setting impossible objectives for US policy - elimination of Soviet and Cuban influence in Ethiopia - we were creating a perception that we were defeated, when, in fact we are achieving a successful outcome."²⁵

The Myth of "threat" to Persian Gulf:

The new emphasis upon the Arc, and the Persian Gulf in particular, is a reflection of various trends in international politics during the latter half of the 1970s. Their distinct characters are too often fused into one all-encompassing Soviet "threat". None is specific to Gulf but each has particular implications for that region.

25. Ibid., p.88.

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First, the latter half of the 1970s witnessed a sustained and geographically diverse series of Social upheavals in the third world which, taken together, entailed a lessening of Western control in the developing areas. In Africa, the Ethiopian revolution took place in 1974. The South-West Asian region was transformed by revolutions in Iran (1979) and Afghanistan (1978). In Central America, there was a triumphant revolution in Nicaragua, and continuing unrest in Guatemala and El Salvador.

The Persian Gulf became a particularly apt place to respond to this wave of revolutions for three reasons. First, it was geographically near some of the most important social upheavals of the period - in Ethiopia, Iran and Afghanistan. The second important factor was the fragility of the West's remaining allies in that area, and particularly of the vital state of Saudi Arabia. All the West's allies around the Gulf were monarchies, ruling without the consent of their people and with enormous corruption and inequality of wealth.²⁶ The events of Iran showed that apparently secure regimes could be rapidly overthrown by a popular movement.

26. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.18.

This frailty would have been less important had it not been for the third reason, the special importance of the Gulf in US global strategy.

The new strategic significance of the Persian Gulf stems from the concern about Persian Gulf oil, which has arisen greatly during 1970s as a result of an important development that is, the United States has become a significant importer of oil for the first time. The oil routes run across thousands of miles; the emphasis has consequently been upon the dangers of the interruption in this supply. The emotive language of such strategic concern - "life lines" and "arteries" - evokes this alarmist perspective.²⁷

Further, the US military machine was pressing for increased appropriations throughout the latter part of the 1970s. The very refusal of local states to allow US forces to be stationed there means that a far greater emphasis has to go into the technology of "rapid deployment". For strategic planners, the Gulf region has another important military attraction: it adjoins the Soviet Union.

27. Ibid.

Moreover, throughout the 1970s, the Soviet Union has attained a rough parity in the military balance with the US. America sees the attainment of parity by the Russians in the Gulf as itself a challenge to detente, since the previous conception of detente presupposed a US superiority.

All these led the American policy makers to create the myth of "Soviet threat", when the Russians made little contribution to the course of events in Persian Gulf. So far as Iran is concerned, the causes²⁸ of the revolution are:

- (1) a political revolt against 25 years of monarchical dictatorship;
- (2) a Social revolt against the increasing inequities and material problems associated with the pattern of economic development, in Iran.

The causes of the movement were pre-eminently internal to Iran. In so far as it was partly caused by outside interference it was that of the United States - which sustained the Pahlavi monarchy for so

28. Alvin Rubinstein, The Great Game, Praeger, 1983, p. 86.

long, and thereby provoked a rationalist counter-reaction.

Events since the fall of the Shah have hardly confirmed the idea that it was all a communist conspiracy, or that the Pro-Soviet forces played a major role at all. The orientation of Iran's political leadership has been ferociously anti-communist. In a major speech on 21 March 1980, Khomeini denounced the "plunderers and occupiers of the aggressive East", who had seized Afghanistan.²⁹

About South-Yemen, another strategic Gulf state, the US myth was that the Soviet Union seized control through a coup in 1978. This presentation of events is debatable on a number of counts: first, the coup attempt was decidedly anti-Soviet; second, Soviet influence in South Yemen had been preponderant since the late 1960s, and hence it is misleading to see 1978 events as a turning point; third, the events in South Yemen came to a head above all because of increasing pressure imposed on that country by Saudi Arabia, and

29. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.87.

not through some form of Soviet "interference",³⁰ and, finally, events subsequent to June 1978 cannot be explained if it is assumed that Moscow was from then on in control of the country.

In fact, in June 1980, the main exponent of Soviet policy, Abdul Fatah Ismail, resigned from his position. His fall was caused by the failure of the Russians to capitalise on the opening which the leadership crisis of June 1978 had given them.³¹ Abdul Fatah Ismail had earlier triumphed and fortified South Yemen's alignment with the USSR - symbolised by the signing of a 20-year treaty of friendship - in expectation that the Soviets would respond with greater military aid. Yet, such aid was not forthcoming and as a result a definite backlash occurred.

Had the events of June 1978 constituted a Soviet-backed coup, it is impossible to explain the events of 1980 in which the apparently secure Soviet grip was loosened.

Another country of great significance in Gulf is Saudi Arabia, which is now the bulwork of Western

30. Ibid., p.94.

31. Charles Tripp (ed.), Regional Security in the Middle East, chap.6, p144.

influence in the region. Saudi Arabia sees its position as the West's major oil supplier, and its persistent opposition to communist advancements as complementary to basic US national security interests in the Persian Gulf.³²

Saudi officials view US-Saudi relations as "special". The US deployment of AWACS to Saudi Arabia provoked a strong favourable reaction in the kingdom.³³ All these suggest that the United States has a favourable position in Saudi Arabia.

Despite all these, the Carter Administration held the USSR responsible for the developments in Persian Gulf states, Iran, South Yemen and Libya and adopted a tough military approach. The result was the establishment of a new Security framework in the Persian Gulf area. Here, American efforts include such initiatives as significantly increasing US naval presence in Indian Ocean area, and designating US units for a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) in order to be able to

32. Report of a staff study Mission to the Persian Gulf, M E and Horn of Africa, Oct. 21-Nov. 13, 1980, p.55.

project US military capability more quickly and effectively into Persian Gulf. Complementing this effort, the Carter Administration also concluded access agreements to selective air and naval facilities in Oman ("facilities" on Mesirah island), Kenya and Somalia (Barbera).³⁴ Mesirah and Barbera would allow pre-positioning of equipment and supplies in potentially forward areas near the Gulf.

The United States got unnecessarily worried over the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, which is located thousands of miles away from American shores. In response to this development, President Carter enunciated the Carter doctrine in his state of the Union address on January 23, 1980:

An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.³⁵

In his message to Congress, President Carter stood his doctrine primarily on America's own military power. However, Carter spelt out five special limbs

34. Ibid., p.1.

35. Keising's Contemporary Archives, 1980.

of the doctrine: (1) the RDF that was being quickly assembled; (2) enhanced naval presence in Indian Ocean and acquisition of base facilities in the Gulf and N-E African littoral; (3) a commitment to the defence of Pakistan; (4) Strong military and political ties with other countries in the region; (5) a collective security framework.

The Carter doctrine was proclaimed without serious consultations with allies and clients.³⁶ Dissent to it came from several quarters. An ace columnist of the "New York Times", James Reston, suggested, "it is important not to exaggerate the Afghan tragedy". The Carter rhetoric, Reston claimed, was hedged by too many ifs, which only showed that "it is not the considered view of the government that Moscow is actually engaged in a reckless rampage to control the fuel and sealanes around the Persian Gulf".³⁷ Reston further remarked that Carter was jumping too far, too fast at a time when a great many people in the US and elsewhere "do not share his estimate that

36. Bhabani Sengupta, The Afghan Syndrome, New Delhi, 1982, p.83.

37. James Reston, New York Times, 28 Jan. 1980.

the Soviets have made a calculated military move in Afghanistan : or dominate the oil fields and sealanes of the Middle East".³⁸

Three implications of Carter doctrine: first, it claimed for the United States the right to unilaterally intervene in the Arabia-Persian Gulf - South West Asian region to protect and defend the world capitalist interests.³⁹ Secondly, it offered an awesome doctrinal justification for super power confrontation of the 1980s. Thirdly, the Carter doctrine committed US military force to be used thousands of miles away from the American shores, that too, without any request from the local regime.

Carter's state of the Union speech was quite tough. It was a hard, anti-Soviet address that largely reflected Brzezinski's views, rather than those of Vance. Said a senior state department official, "Zbig's finally got his cold war".⁴⁰

Vance was unhappy with the rhetoric of the Carter doctrine. He was concerned that the language was

38. Ibid.

39. Bhabani Sengupta, n.36, p.48.

40. Time, February 4, 1980, p.8.

flamboyant, giving the impression that Carter was over-reacting.

One uncertainty about Carter's policy is his unwillingness to define the extent of the Persian Gulf area or what US "vital interests" really are. Carter doctrine also raised the question "how willing are the countries involved to have the US intervene to protect those interests?" Carter's speech also failed to deal with the complexity of potential crises in the Persian Gulf region.⁴¹ The threat to the US is not so clear-cut as a Soviet invasion of the oil fields. Hardly anyone expects that. Instead, the US faces the same kind of challenges in the South-West Asia that have frustrated the US for several years: local revolts, radicalism, religious extremism, and instability. The oil-fields of the Persian Gulf are in jeopardy not so much because of Soviet tanks in Afghanistan as because of local out-breaks like the dissident Arabs' invasion of the sacred mosque in Mecca and the Iranian militants' seizure of the US embassy in Teheran.⁴²

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

The Soviet involvement in Afghanistan

On the Afghan question, two theories were advanced within the Administration.⁴³ One suggested that Moscow had concluded that merely propping up the existing regime offered no long-term answer to the threat of fundamentalist Islamic resurgence. Thus, Moscow's objectives were primarily local and related directly to perceived threats to its national security.

The second theory, a more global one, postulated that by consolidating their position in Afghanistan, the Soviets would be in a position to exploit events in Iran. They would also be able^{to} exert strong influence on both Pakistan and India as a counter to American moves into the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf.

In the opinion of Vance, Moscow had acted in Afghanistan for a number of reasons: its immediate aim was to protect Soviet political interests in Afghanistan which it saw endangered.⁴⁴ The Soviets feared that Amin's regime would be replaced by a fundamentalist Islamic government and this would be

43. Cyrus Vance, n.24, p.388.

44. Ibid., p.388.

followed by a spread of "Khomeini" fever to other nations along Russia's southern border. Other Soviets believed that they should seize this opportunity to position themselves more favourably with respect to China and Pakistan.

Contrary to the standard picture of Soviet policy presented by its American opponents, the evidence indicates that the Russians tried their best to avoid going into Afghanistan directly.⁴⁵ The available evidence suggests that Hafizullah Amin did invite the Russian troops and that he imagined that the forces were there to bolster his regime.⁴⁶ Soviet use of the term "invasion" tends to obscure these facts.

Now, the question arises how far the changes in Afghanistan - the April 1978 coup and Dec. 1979 intervention - can be seen as results of Soviet instigation and long-term intentions. The conclusion emerging from the evidence is that neither of the crises was the product of a deliberate Soviet initiative: the former reflected the explosion of internal tensions;

45. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.92.

46. On 26 Dec. Amin gave an interview to the correspondent of Arab newspaper in which he stated that he welcomed Soviet military aid in support of his regime (Sunday Times, 6 Jan. 1980).

aggravated by Iran, the latter was a Soviet response to its inability to influence the situation in Afghanistan, and the risks entailed by this turn of events.

The western analysis is blind to these facts and puts the blame on the Soviets. The Soviet involvement in the Arc of Crisis rests on several questionable assumptions.

(1) Soviet Instigation: Many analysts have held Soviets responsible for initiating the changes in the Arc. But, closer examination has shown that not one of the major upheavals alluded to it in the Arc discussion was instigated by the Russians.

(2) Soviet benefit: Even if the USSR did not initiate these changes, it can be argued that the Russians have benefitted from them. But, when a balance sheet is drawn up, we will discover that the Russians have not gained all that much ground, since they have in the same period suffered many reverses of which the west has taken advantage.

(3) Soviet misconduct: From 1978 onwards, the US officials have stressed that the USSR has violated the "rules" of detente, and that such misconduct will

result in a US policy of "linkage". This change of misconduct appears to rest not upon a breach of mutually accepted rules but rather upon an underlying reluctance to grant the USSR parity as a major world power.⁴⁷

(4) Soviet Responsibility for Ending Detente:

Brzezinski stated that detente "lies buried in the Sands of Ogaden".⁴⁸ However, SALT II treaty was in trouble long before Afghanistan became an issue in East-West relations.

(5) The Soviet Thirst for Oil: The Soviet energy crisis is believed to offer a plausible rationale for a Soviet interest in the Gulf. However, this does not have any influence upon Soviet policy in the region. The Russians do not need large quantities of Gulf oil; they also know that any attempt to seize the Gulf could trigger a third world war.⁴⁹

47. A characteristic example of this line can be found in the interview given by Alexander Haig to the Sunday Times, 8 Feb. 1981. Asked about Soviet and Cuban forces in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola and South Yemen, Haig replied, "these are 'illegal invasions'." The implication is that any Soviet-Cuban presence in the third world is "illegal".

48. Brzezinski in International Herald Tribune, 4 Dec. 1980.

49. Nimrod Novik and Joyce Starr (eds.), n.1, p.102.

Thus, the Soviet responsibility for the crises in the Arc is subject to critical analysis. On the other hand, the assumption of US involvement that underlies ^{most} western discussion is questionable. One can, indeed, identify three types of US contribution to the crises of the Arc.⁴⁹ The first is a historical contribution: the impact of post-war US policy on these countries. For example, in Iran and Ethiopia, the impetus for mass revolution correlated with substantial US support over a quarter of a century for the imperial despots who ruled these states.

The second concerns the role that US policy, and that of its regional allies, had in sparking off the crisis in question. Many of the alleged Soviet "advances" in the Arc have been made possible by the acts of the US and its regional allies.⁵⁰ The Nixon doctrine allocated a militant new counter-revolutionary role to key third world states, among them Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Carter-Brzezinski policy of backing what are called "regional influentials" followed the same path.

50. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.104.

In Afghanistan, the key factor that led to Doud's fall was his growing alliance with Iran. As to the crisis in the Horn of Africa, there is enough evidence to show that it was the signals⁵¹ from Washington to Siad Barre, combined with material support from the Arab world, which led the Somalis to take the decision to go into Ogaden. Once the Somali invasion started, the rest of the scenario followed: the Russians increased their commitment to Ethiopia, the Somalis then expelled them, the Cubans came into Ogaden.

Thus, the development of the internal crises in Iran and Ethiopia, was in part precipitated by the policies of the West and its allies.

The third type of US contribution concerns actions taken by the United States and its allies in influencing the course of events after the crises had begun. The US reactions to developments in the Arc have been such as to exacerbate the situation at hand. In case of Somali-Ethiopian conflict, the US decision in early 1980 to seek basing rights in Somalia ran the risk of

51. Ibid., p.106.

prolonging the Soviet-Cuban presence in Ethiopia. In South Yemeni case, the sale of the F-155 to Saudi Arabia in 1976 was defended by US Administration on the grounds of "threat" to Saudi Arabia from radical Arab states, specifically South Yemen. But this "threat" is a pentagon fiction. This will be shown by the most elementary comparison of the two countries' military resources and geographical relationship. So far as Afghanistan is concerned, there were those like Brzezinski in the administration who saw the April 1978 coup in Kabul and the December 1979 Soviet intervention as heaven-sent opportunities for embarrassing the Russians at very little cost to the west, which had long ago abandoned Afghanistan.⁵²

Conclusion:

The record of US behaviour in Persian Gulf and other areas of the Arc represents a classic case of response of a status-quo power under assault. US objectives have tended to be vague and ill-defined. "Essentially the US has desired nothing more than to

52. Fred Halliday, n.6, p.112.

have the situation remain as it was".⁵³ When this proved impossible or impracticable time and again, US objectives were progressively narrowed to defend more vigorously what remained. If necessary, it did not hesitate to adopt military approach to crises.

The vigorous steps which the US had taken immediately after the Russians entered into Afghanistan, followed by the broader political and military strategy outlined in the President's state of the Union message, caused uneasiness in Europe. "Many felt that the United States was about to swing sharply back into the cold-war".⁵⁴

Vance asks, "Can we say that our security is more threatened by the growth of Soviet military power or by the strains we can foresee in international economy?"⁵⁵ There are other factors which contribute to the US insecurity, which US should take note of. Especially about the Arc, the US should recognise the fact that it should conduct itself in a world in which the many complex problems are not susceptible to solution by simple answers or the use of military power alone.

53. Alvin Z. Rubenstein, n.28, p.38.

54. Cyrus Vance, n.24, p.393.

55. Ibid., p.396.

CHAPTER II

THE US POLICY IN PERSIAN GULF AND INDIA'S SECURITY

This chapter is addressed to three major themes of the US Policy in the Persian Gulf.

- 1) The background; nature and implications of Carter doctrine formulated on Persian Gulf;
- 2) The nature and implications of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF);
- e) The current arms build-up in the Gulf under the command of the United States in its implications for India's security.

I

The geo-political location of the Persian Gulf and its enormous oil wealth have catapulted this region into a place of prominence in world politics. In fact, the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean area has become the theatre of the new cold war. The conflicts of interest in this region have hardly been touched by detente.

The US extended its Post-war policy of military containment to the Persian Gulf region. The means

and economic aids to Turkey, Greece and Iran, strategic air bases in and near the area, a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean and a regional defence organisation. These policies were more vigorous and comprehensive than the situation required.¹

Truman doctrine became the centre piece for US containment of the Post-World War II Soviet Union. With it, "the US assumed the role of a global power and the Soviet Union was considered as the primary threat to world peace. The US also committed itself to world responsibility. It was addressed to the supposed threats of the Soviet Union to Turkey, Greece and Iran."² The threats were in fact quite unlikely in the late 1940s because of Soviet concern with Post-war rehabilitation.

Though initially addressed to Greece and Turkey, Truman doctrine, in its broader interpretation, meant that the US was committed to support governments threatened by the Soviet Union from outside, or subversive Marxist-Leninist elements within. Thus, the overwhelming

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1. Amirie Abbas (ed.), article by John C. Campbell, "The Super Powers in the Persian Gulf region", p.141.
 2. The M-E Political Dictionary, Lawrence Ziring, California, pp.350-5 .

purpose of the US under Truman doctrine was containment of international Communism.³

What the Truman doctrine ignored were the historic questions peculiar to those societies. The doctrine, in effect, committed the US to a world it did not understand. The US could not adapt to, let alone resolve, local conflicts between religious, ethnic, tribal and linguistic groups. Nor could the United States realise that many governments were unpopular, being unrepresentative of the masses. This condition caused instability in the underdeveloped states and no amount of economic assistance could change the picture.⁴

The Truman doctrine committed the US to world responsibilities, but its involvement in the affairs of the new states was based on nothing more than anti-communism.

Like Truman doctrine, the Eisenhower doctrine was also informed by a global view. US activism in Middle East by 1957 was predicated upon the increased danger

3. Ibid.

4. George and Smoke, Deterrence in American Policy: Theory and Practice, Columbia University Press, New York, 1974, p.280.

of Communist encroachments in the region, especially after the withdrawal of the French and British.

President Eisenhower requested that a joint resolution be passed by Congress authorising the President to use force in the area in the event of communist aggression.

The Eisenhower doctrine extended the policy of containment to the region directly below the "northern tier" states flanking the Soviet Union's Southern border. Eisenhower and Dulles were aware that their policy did not come to grips with regional factors, which were primarily responsible for the general instability of the area - factors such as the Arab-Israeli dispute, Arab Nationalism, anti-colonialism, the drive for modernisation etc. However, they believed that M-E instabilities per se threatened US interests only insofar as they were exacerbated by the Soviets.⁵

The assumption of the pre-eminence of the Communist threat was, however, to prove questionable later. When it was tested in the four major crises that rocked the M-E between 1957 and 1958. Only in Syrian crisis of

5. See the discussion of this issue in President Eisenhower's Jan. 5, 1957 speech in Current documents, p. 789.

August and September 1957 was there a potentially serious possibility of Communist takeover, but the Eisenhower administration discovered that such an outcome was non-deterrable, since the Syrian government was pursuing closer ties with Soviet Union of its own volition.⁶

In other three crises - Jordan in April 1957, Lebanon in May, 1958 and Iraq and Lebanon in July 1958 - American interests were put in what was perceived to be severe jeopardy by conflicts whose origins were to be found in regional instabilities. Communist involvement was only minimal in these three cases. When the US troops landed in Lebanon, the day after Iraqi coup of July 15, 1958, President Eisenhower justified the intervention as necessary to "stop the trend towards chaos". He made no mention of Communist aggression in either country.

The Eisenhower doctrine failed to deal with the regional forces which caused the instability in the M-E. For example, the crisis in Lebanon resulted from a complex

6. Ibid., p.310.

7. George and Smoke, n.4, p.37.

web of causes, which emanated from the social cleavages, the most important of these being the religious one between Muslims and Christians.⁸ Senator William Fullbright voiced his doubt that the crisis is actually Communist-inspired.⁹ House speaker Sam Rayburn was fearful that the US might be getting into something that was strictly a civil war.¹⁰

In fact, the Administration was unable to support its assessment of the grave threat to the M-E by pointing to actual communist political victories in the area. During the Senate hearings, Dulles was forced to admit that -

- 1) there was no evidence of Soviet volunteers present in any M-E country;
- 2) no country in the M-E appeared to be under Communist domination;
- 3) no country in the M-E appeared to be in imminent danger of subversion by communist coup; and

8. For details regarding the religious cleavage causing Lebanese crisis, refer to George and Smoke, n.4, pp.340-46.

9. Ibid., p.350.

10. Ibid., p.350.

4) no country in the M-E appeared to be going Communist by choice.¹¹

But, US policy in M-E during 1957-58 was profoundly insensitive to regional forces at work which precipitated the tensions in the area. The Administration believed that the M-E instabilities threatened the US interests only insofar as they were exacerbated by the Soviets.¹² This kind of belief reflects the American view of the world as a tight bipolar system. The Eisenhower doctrine was directly based on this kind of view insofar as it called for the use of force in the event of communist aggression (emphasis mine) and insofar as it identified crises in Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan as events of communist aggression.

This kind of global view of regional problems also formed the basis of Carter doctrine and its interventionist character. The belligerent nature of Carter doctrine matches with the doctrine of Truman of 1947, the specific concern of both being Middle-East. But, the contrast between the two lies in the danger inherent in the former

11. President's Proposal, pp.40-41.

12. President Eisenhower's speech, n.5.

which is much more than that inherent in the latter. The US military superiority globally or regionally is no longer absolute in 1980, thus lending a measure of dangerous bluster to the 1980 version. More fundamental is the decline of US hegemony over the world capitalist economy. The dollar has been decisively undermined as an instrument and manifestation of US predominance.¹³

The vulnerability of the US capital to recent developments in Europe, the M-E or elsewhere¹⁴ corresponds in time with a protracted period of stagnation and contraction in world economy. The very complex and intractable character of these crises impelled the Carter regime and the prospective US leadership to seize upon the notion of military intervention as a "fix" that will simultaneously divert popular attention from the structural roots of crises and score off potential challenges to the prevailing political order in the Middle East.

One important feature which the Carter doctrine shared with the Truman doctrine related to its propensity

13. For details about the decline of dollar, see Merip Reports, Sept. 1980, p.14.

14. Ibid.

to interpret local nationalist or leftist challenges to the status quo as emanations of an overarching Soviet threat. Thus, the Carter doctrine was a confrontation with the trajectory of Social forces¹⁵ in the Middle East. It may be suggested that the correlation of political forces in the region and the world does not endow the US military intervention with much promise of success even though the US possesses the physical tools for such intervention. But the great danger is that technological proficiency might be substituted for a comprehensive appreciation of the political situation, especially as the political and economic crisis widens and deepens in the United States.

Carter doctrine - that "any attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the US and such an assault will be repelled by any means, necessary including military force" - has all the

15. The Social forces have been dealt with in this chapter in the context of Lebanon; also in the previous chapter in the context of Iran (see Chap.1 and the heading Myth of threat to Persian Gulf). These forces broadly consisted of popular movements against corrupt and unpopular monarchies lacking in legitimacy, social revolt against increasing inequalities and material problems associated with the pattern of economic development, ethnic divisions and other social cleavages in gulf countries.

markings of a very dangerous bluff. Though aimed at the Soviet Union, the doctrine would be triggered by political developments in any of the countries of the gulf.¹⁶

The doctrine underscored the stake of US capital in the Middle East. One manifestation of the prominence of this region is the US military relationship with regimes there. In the first half of the 1970s, US arms sales in the M-E averaged \$ 3.2 billion per year, more than the total sales (\$ 2.3 billion) over the previous 15 years. Arms sales nearly tripled again from 1975 to 1979 to an average of \$ 8.9 billion per year. As a percentage of total US arms sales, the region jumped from 19.7% in the 1955-69 period to 69.4% in 1975-79. The M-E share of world wide military grants and credits in 1979 was 89.3%.¹⁷

Contrary to Eisenhower doctrine the Carter doctrine did not need for the US forces any request from any local country to intervene in the region in

16. Merip Reports, Sept. 1980.

17. Figures based on data from department of defence, Foreign military sales and military assistance facts, (Washington, Dec. 1979).

defence of the so-called US vital interests. Thus, the Carter doctrine claimed for the United States the unilateral right of intervention. In one important respect, the Carter doctrine also differed from that of Truman. While the latter was addressed to international communism, "Communist Subversion" and "Communist aggression", the former was specifically aimed against the Soviet Union. The Carter doctrine's specific anti-Soviet force corresponds to the United States' strategic decline, rather its strategic parity vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Truman doctrine was enunciated in the aftermath of World War II when the US position was one of strategic and economic superiority vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Carter doctrine came as a response when the US could not reconcile to a situation of strategic parity with the Soviet Union. Hence, the bogey of "Soviet threat".

The mythical nature of the danger of "Soviet threat", has been exposed already in the previous chapter. Even the US military has acknowledged that Soviet intervention is actually the least likely threat. In a written response to a question from Senator Lenin, General Robert Kingston, commander of the RDF, enumerated

the threats to the Persian Gulf from the most likely, to the least likely, saying:

- "(a) internal instability
- (b) intra-regional conflicts
- (c) Soviet-supported subversions
- and (d) Soviet-owned intervention..."

Thus, internal developments unfavourable to the US are the most likely occasions for US intervention.

Since the declaration of Carter doctrine, which claimed the right to unilaterally intervene in the Persian Gulf against "a threat from outside" the region, US armed forces actually intervened against "local countries" on several occasions.

- On April 25, 1980, an abortive US military intervention against Iran.

- In September 1980, the Carter Administration sent A-7 aircrafts to Saudi Arabia at the outbreak of the Gulf war. US, British, French and West German naval units were also deployed in the waters of the Gulf.¹⁸

18. Fearing the consequences of this intervention, the then Secretary of State, Edmund Muskie, objected saying that "we are plunging headlong into World War III". (Quoted from Brzezinski Memoirs, IHT, June 5, 1984.)

In February, 1983, the Niwitz was back in the Gulf of Sidra and the American AWACS were sent to Egypt in open military interference in a local conflict between Sudan and Libya.

Carter focussed his state of the Union address against purported Soviet designs on the Gulf, but Secretary of Defence, Harold Brown, acknowledged a few days later that "international economic disorder could almost equal in severity the military threat from the Soviet Union". Nevertheless, Brown presented a \$ 159 billion budget which concentrates "special attention and resources on the improvement of capabilities to get personnel and equipment quickly to potential trouble areas like the M-E, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea areas."¹⁹ Thus, Carter's military design encompasses the areas in the vicinity of Indian Subcontinent, especially its Western flank.

The Carter-Brown prescription for instant intervention was immediately challenged by Congressional militarists like Senator Henry Jackson, who asked: "Whether it is wise to lay down a doctrine when there

19. Michael Klare, "Have RDF - Will travel", The Nation, March 8, 1980.

is serious doubt whether it can be upheld?"²⁰ In response, the Administration disclosed that a battalion of 1800 marines with an amphibious assault force including a helicopter assault ship and five other vessels were enroute to the Arabian Sea to join the two cavier task forces (and their 150 war planes) already there.²¹ B-52 Sorties from Guam to the Indian Ocean were also announced.

Carter doctrine was certainly an overreaction. Its militarist posture and interventionist tone brought loud outcries from the Gulf. The gulf states were highly suspicious and charged that the Carter doctrine was a pretext for intervention in the area. Saudi Arabia, however, proved to be an exception; then crown king Faud reportedly supported the thrust of the Carter doctrine.²²

Regardless of the criticisms the Carter doctrine informed the world of the US resolve to use force to protect its vital interest in the gulf. The US continued

20. New York Times, Feb. 2, 1980.

21. New York Times, Feb. 13, 1980.

22. Darius and Magnus (ed.), Gulf Securities into the 1980s, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1984.

to rely on security assistance to bolster friendly governments in the Gulf region. The arms-sales were augmented, with the deployment of US naval forces to the area, "fly-ins" and joint military exercises.

The Soviet Union responded to the increased US activity in the area by proposing a doctrine of "Peace and Security". On December 10, 1980, Brezhnev called on the world leaders to agree not to set up bases or bring nuclear weapons into the area. The following day, a joint Indo-Soviet declaration was issued. Calling for the dismantling of all foreign bases in the area, including the US facilities at Diego Garcia. Washington rejected the Plan.

When the Reagan administration took office, the thrust of its new policy became known as "strategic consensus". As Secretary of State, Alexander Haig explained: "In South-West Asia, the US is seeing a strategic consensus among our friends directed towards the common Soviet threat."²³

23. For Secretary of States' remarks before the Armed Services Committee, see US dept. of State, Bureau of Public affairs, "Relationship of Foreign and Defence Policies", Current Policy 320 (30 July, 1981).

The emphasis on the Soviet Union as the common threat was directed at the strengthening of security partnerships throughout the M-E, from Israel to the Gulf States. Presumably, stronger partnerships would enable the US to increase its military presence throughout the region.

Two major policy initiatives were linked to "Strategic Consensus" - the AWACS enhancement sales and the US-Israeli strategic memorandum. The AWACS package was aimed at restoring US credibility in the Gulf and viewed as an instrument of making Saudi Arabia a strong dependable ally in the Gulf.

Thus, the Carter doctrine opted for a more assertive US military role overseas, especially in the Persian Gulf region. This was prompted by the concern about a perceived decline in American influence and prestige abroad, coupled with Soviet political successes.

II

The Carter doctrine was to be backed up with the newest military option, the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF). In fact, the major development in late 70s affecting the Persian Gulf region is the formation of a special force stationed in the USA which can be

deployed at short notice in the southern and eastern mediterranean. This special force, known as the RDF, is nuclear capable.

On January 1, 1983, the Reagan administration established a new US central command to operate in a vast area extending from eastern mediterranean to Pakistan. The decision to set up this new command was taken without the approval or even the notification of the countries of the region. Moreover, the armed forces of this command have both conventional and nuclear weapons at their disposal.

The unified central command has been assigned a geographical zone of responsibility covering 19 countries in the M-E and North Africa. In a "crisis situation", at Washington's discretion, the manpower and equipment of CENTCOM can be deployed at any time along the southern borders of the Soviet Union. The Pentagon has already drawn up plans and is engaged in active efforts to deploy the forward headquarter element of this command in South-West Asia on a permanent basis. On Defence Secretary Deinberger's own admission, "in the past few years, we have dramatically improved our military

capabilities for the region."²⁴

RDF, though its formation was announced officially in 1980, had been in planning stages for several years and was intended to enhance the US military presence in the M-E. In fact, the US defence planners had planned for a quick attack capability to counter communist insurgencies as early as 1977. The purpose of the RDF, as conceived by the defence department, was to provide the US with an enhanced capacity to intervene militarily to protect American interests overseas, particularly in the volatile Persian Gulf region. But, it was to have the capability to intervene in any part of the world where the US lacked military facilities.²⁵ The RDF was structured flexibly so as to meet any contingency. The RDF build-up was pursued even more vigorously after Ronald Reagan took office.

An encounter with a Soviet interventionary force through Iran, "a worst-case scenario", was used by the

24. Quoted in Whence the threat to Peace, (Third edition), Moscow, Military Publishing House, 1984.

25. "US Rapid Deployment Force", Congressional Quarterly, Washington D.C., 1983.

Administration to justify the RDF. The function of the RDF was envisaged to be a tripwire which, if it did not halt Soviet intervention by simply being there, would trigger the use of US tactical N-weapons, most likely cruise missiles launched from US warships in the Indian Ocean.²⁶

Recently, there has been more stress on the need to intervene pre-emptively - in Harold Brown's words, "upon receipt of even very early and ambiguous indications."²⁷ Brzezinski was always insisting on the advantages of being "First".²⁸ With Brzezinski and other RDF buffs, Preemption has become something of a Pass word. RDF chief Paul Kelley told the Press that he is "convinced with the utility of a preemptive strike... once you get a force into an area that is not occupied by the other guy, then you have changed the whole calculus of the crisis."²⁹

26. Merip Reports, Sept. 1980.

27. See his speech to the Council on foreign relations in the above issue of Merip Reports.

28. An article in Encounter, 1968.

29. Transcript of News briefing at Pentagon, June 18, 1980, p.4.

Some RDF proponents have acknowledged that "the most immediate threat to stability in the Indian Ocean area is not an overt Russian attack but rather internal instability, coups, subversion and so forth". But they have not juxtaposed this with the fact that the presence of the large US base at Wheelus was of no use when Col. Qaddafi took over power in Libya in 1969, or that thousands of military personnel in Iran were of little avail in the face of the popular revolution there. Pentagon chief Brown still touts the RDF as one of "Four Pillars of military Power", along with N-weapons NATO and US Navy.³⁰

RDF has greatly grown in size and strength since Lt. General Kelley raised the flag over the RDF headquarters of McDill air base. Kelley called for an expansion of President's authority to call up reservists from the present 50,000 to 100,000. "There is not an upward number, upper limit on the RDF", he said, "we are talking of several hundred thousand."³¹

Initially, the RDF was to consist of three marine brigades of 5500 each to be ready by 1983. At present,

30. New York Times, Feb. 19, 1980.

31. Kelley Transcript, p.6.

its composition is as follows -

Personnel - about 292,000
divisions - 4 - 5
combat aircraft - over 700
combat ships - 20 - 30.

Presumably, if a crisis called for the use of force, the RDF would be airlifted to designated areas, joined with pre-positioned Sea-based and land-based equipment, and be ready for combat in a minimum amount of time. The RDF was closely associated with the "over the horizon" fleet concept, but still depended on access to air bases and port facilities. Accordingly, the US sought facilities - access agreements with States bordering the Indian Ocean. In 1980, it reacted agreements with Kenya, Oman and Somalia, but not with Egypt and Saudi Arabia. However, the two states reacted an informal arrangement allowing the US to use facilities on the Rasbanas Peninsula. Washington also planned to expand US facilities at Diego Garcia for RDF use.

An issue that was fundamental to the RDF's readiness involved in kind of M-E war in which the US troops were to be trained to fight. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Towa, T-Texas, and the Chairman

of the Panel's Sea-power Subcommittee William Cohen argued that the original RDF Plan was ill-suited to local problems not involving overt Soviet action. Such local upheavals could develop too quickly to permit a large US force to step in at the invitation of a friendly government and deter a coup d'etat or other threat. A very mobile deployment force was needed since domestic and regional politics had blocked the basing of US forces in the Gulf States, they pointed out.³²

Thus, the later RDF Plan and the Central Command idea asserted the unilateral right of the United States to intervene in the Persian Gulf.

Tower and Cohen both favoured a greater emphasis on marine amphibious forces, which would not rely on local land bases and would be equipped to shoot their way ashore against military opposition. The Administration pointed out that the RDF plans all along had included a "forcible entry" option, relying on Marines. "We must be able to open our own doors",³³ Marine

32. US defence policy, Third edition, Congressional Quarterly, Washington D.C., 1983.

33. Ibid., p.196.

Commander General Barrow told.

According to Cohen, the increased emphasis on an assault-oriented RDF was a factor in the Reagan Administration's decision to buy more C-5 transport aircrafts instead of the proposed C-17.

A dangerous feature of the RDF related to the "special operations forces" to be added to it. After the abortive military intervention in Iran, in April 1980, the US administration proposed the formation of these forces, mainly for covert rapid actions. It declared that the special operations forces were formed to combat "terrorism".³⁴ According to the Pentagon's dictionary, this entails actions against liberation movements. The special operations forces are involved in operations against Nicaragua, El Salvador and in the Middle East.

However, the most dangerous implication of RDF relates to its reliance on N-weapons as the only alternative. The hawks in the Administration changed

34. The National Security directive 138, signed by Reagan, April 3, 1984, endorsed the principle of pre-emptive strikes against terrorists outside US territory.

that the US did not have the conventional military forces to confront any Soviet move. They pointed to the lack of military strength to defend the Gulf unilaterally. This led to a realisation that the RDF, as initially constituted, was little more than a "tripwire", probably backed by a nuclear response.³⁵

In fact, the RDF operator inheres the danger of the use of nuclear weapons due to the geo-political character of the Persian Gulf region. In case of US intervention in Gulf, conventional forces cannot be relied upon. Suppose the US intervenes in the region and even brings all the RDF troops (300,000) from the US (6,000 miles away), it will still be easier for the Soviet Union, if it positively responds to an appeal for support by local powers, to bring more forces due to its proximity to the region. In such a situation and according to the US rules of Wargames, either the RDF withdraws and sustains a defeat or advances and uses nuclear weapons. But since RDF will not go on a suicidal mission according to Pentagon's assumption, the second alternative will come about.

35. "US Policy response" in Darius and Magnus (eds.), Gulf Security into 1980s, Hoova Institution Press, Stanford, 1984.

Taking into account all these implications of RDF, some officials warned that a rapid deployment capability might make US intervention around the world more likely. According to Harold Brown, Carter's Secretary of State: "the US needed to be somewhat cautious to see that the Pendulum does not swing too far back the other way, to the point where we begin to believe that military strength can solve all of our international problems."³⁶

The US plea for its gulf military strategy as a response to Soviet action in Afghanistan needs consideration. The American concern over the Soviet presence in Afghanistan stemmed from the fact that it would annul the US strategic edge and would bring about strategic parity vis-a-vis the Soviet Union in the Gulf Ocean area. One theory within the Administration was that the Soviets would be able to exert strong influence on both Pakistan and India as a counter to US moves into the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. The facts that the Soviets went into Afghanistan with the invitation of the Afghan regime to bolster up that

36. US defence Policy, 3rd edition, Congressional Quarterly, Washington D.C., 1983.

regime and that the Soviet presence there had nothing to do with Persian Gulf - was overlooked by the Americans.³⁷ Another strategic concern of the US was that by being in Afghanistan, the Soviets can exploit the events in Iran. But, this not to be accepted since the present Iranian regime has pronounced its cold attitude towards the Russians.³⁸

The Soviet action in Afghanistan does not make Soviet Union the primary threat to Western interests in the Persian Gulf. This was recognised by Christopher Van Hollen, a former deputy assistant Secretary of State.³⁹ An exclusively anti-Soviet military approach can be dangerously destabilising if pressed with excessive zeal in the politically volatile Persian Gulf region.

The possibility of overt Soviet seizure of M-E oil fields was, according to Van Hollen, "near the bottom of the threat list." The most likely challenges to western interests will come from wars between regional states, oil embargoes and production cuts. What is

37. See the previous chapter.

38. The anti-Communist orientation of Iran's political leadership has been suggested in the Previous Chapter, see footnote 29 of Ch.I.

39. Foreign Affairs, Summer, 1981, p.108.

still worse is the fact that the proximity of the Soviet Union to Persian Gulf will make it perceive Western efforts in the region less as efforts to ensure oil supplies than as measures which increase the military weight of the West in a region near to Soviet Union.

It is most alarming that the United States is sticking to its military posture in areas of conflicts, aggressions and interventions and at a time when the concepts of a nuclear first-strike, limited nuclear war and the militarisation of outerspace are being propagated. The whole concept of Central Command with its nuclear potential suggests that in no other region is the deadly connection between interventions and the danger of nuclear war so threatening as in the Persian Gulf.

III

After considering the US military strategy and posture in Persian Gulf, it is pertinent to bring out its implications for India's security.

The Persian Gulf is the Central link connecting US military structures in the West with those located in the Indian Ocean and South West Asia. The military structures in the Gulf also have a bearing on the

security of India and whole of South-West Asia because of proximity and because of the possibility of disruption of oil supply, whereby India will lose a major source of its energy need.

RDF will be transported to the South West Asia via Guam and other US bases in the Pacific and the Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean. Several pre-positioned ships will remain in Diego Garcia with soldiers and equipments ready to intervene as the first contingent of the RDF.

During a March 23, 1981 House Subcommittee hearing, Richard Burt, director of the State department's Bureau of Politico-military affairs, said that the Administration viewed Middle East as part of a larger strategic area bounded by Turkey, Pakistan and the Horn of Africa.⁴⁰ This implies that the military build-up in Middle East also encompasses Pakistan, thereby posing a threat to India's security.

The US base facilities to aid RDF are mainly located in Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Diego Garcia. These bases have a great bearing on India's security.

40. Congressional Quarterly, Washington D.C., 1983.

Diego Garcia naval base plays a vital role in US intervention plans. Its airfield has been enlarged to accommodate the nuclear-armed B-52 bombers of the strategic air command. Prepositioned supplies for marine/airborne assault forces are stationed here. Their implication for India's security needs no stress.

The Egyptian base of Qena can be used by the US to blockade the Arabian Sea, thereby jeopardising India's security. US officials acknowledged in early January, 1980 that two AWACS and 250 airforce personnel had just completed exercises at Qena ^{airbases to practice directing fighter} bombers to targets and to aid US ships in mock blockade of the Arabian Sea.⁴¹ It is needless to say how greatly a blockade of Arabian Sea will affect India's security.

Then the bases in Somalia Initial Construction of "bare" air and naval bases at Barbera and Mogadishu, on the Indian Ocean, is reportedly complete. Cordesman notes that these bases could be used to retain access to the Red Sea and to supply naval forces in the Arabian Sea.⁴²

41. "Central Command Bases in the M-E", Merip Reports, Nov.-Dec. 1984.

42. Ibid.

Pakistan in US Strategy for Gulf:

An important implication for India's security stems from the place of Pakistan in America's Gulf strategy. Several regional events have enhanced the utility of Pakistan for the United States. First, the revolution in Iran and the fall of Shah ironically brought about by the US itself.⁴³ Here, Pakistan was viewed by the Pentagon as the most suitable power to protect the US interests in the Persian Gulf. This kind of role was assigned to Pakistan by the US because of two advantages which the former enjoyed, (1) its proximity to the Gulf region, and (2) its neutrality in the intra-gulf rivalry and its consequent acceptability to the Gulf Countries. The US decision was therefore to further strengthen Pakistan's military capability. Neither the autocratic nature of Zia regime nor the surfacing of the evidence that Pakistan was making an A-bomb was allowed to come in the way of its effort. One outcome of the US effort was that Pakistan felt encouraged to pursue its anti-Indian policy.⁴⁴

43. Chapter I deals with how Iranian revolution was brought about.

44. B.K. Srivastav, "Indo-US Relations", India Quarterly, Jan-March 1985, p.1.

The second regional event which catapulted Pakistan to a place of prominence in US strategic plan was the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The only safe means of entry into Afghanistan for US agents to organise covert and other resistance operations is through Pakistan. It served as a conduit through which US assistance reached the Afghan rebel, provided recruits for insurgency operation and extended to them training and other facilities. It played a significant role in lining up Islamic countries against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

Besides, Pakistan caters to the US need for a number of military bases for its RDF. Admiral Thomas Moora has argued for a US naval base to be constructed at the port of Gwadar in Beluchistan.⁴⁵ This would replace the facilities which the Americans have lost in Iran and would be utilised as a major station for policing the Gulf, as well as Pakistan itself. Similarly, the potential of Makran Coast (connecting Pakistan with Iran) is to be recognised from India's security point of view. Now that the RDF is there with its bases and

45. In an article in Strategic Review, cited by D.H. Butani in The Future of Pakistan (New Delhi, 1984), p.79.

port and naval facilities, we need a great deal of caution and must look beyond our frontiers. If the US military presence on the Makran coast is essential to the security of Pakistan because of Soviet presence in Afghanistan and instability in Iran, where are we heading? Why should it be considered absurd to have our own naval presence on Makran coast, in place of the US? We have to organise our defence studies along these lines.

In exchange for the bases it has provided to the US, Pakistan has sought and received assurance of total American support in regional matters, military assistance, and acceptance, at least tacitly, of Pakistan's nuclear weapon Programme.⁴⁶ This is because the US needs Pakistan for its bases close to the Gulf area and its troops for protesting Gulf regimes. Equally importance with Pakistan firmly tied with the US, the freedom of manoeuvre by the Soviet Union would be considerably restricted despite any action that the US or US-aided

46. The Sunday Telegraph (London), as early as Jan. 1980, had suggested that Pakistan has probably received tacit approval from US and China for going ahead with its N-programme. See News report in Patriot (New Delhi), 14 Jan. 1980.

local groups may undertake in Iran.⁴⁷ This is the significance of assurance given by vice President George Bush to Pakistani leaders during his visit to that country in May, 1984, to the effect that American commitment to Pakistan transcended Afghanistan.⁴⁸ More recently, US diplomats have assured Pakistan that any improvement of US-India relations will not be at Pakistan's expense.⁴⁹

India's concern is that an additional objective of US arming heavily Pakistan is to utilise the latter as a lever against India.⁵⁰

US Strategic Plans in Pakistan:

Pakistan has become a spring board for operations of the US armed forces in the entire region particularly for subversive actions against India and for suppressing the democratic nationalist movement in the Gulf countries.⁵¹

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47. R. Rama Rao, "India and Pakistan - differing Security Perceptions", India Quarterly, Jan-March 1984.
48. George Bush's statement quoted in Statesman (New Delhi), 19 May 1984.
49. R. Rama Rao, n.47.
50. Arma cost's interview at Islamabad, TOI (New Delhi), 13 March 1985.
51. The fragility of Gulf regimes serving US interests in the region has made the US feel the need of a country outside the gulf from which military operations can be carried out to protect the pro-US regime.

Electronic Surveillance bases are being set up in Peshawar, Gwadar and Sargodha to provide support for military operations in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf as well as to gather intelligence about India, Afghanistan, South and South-West Asia.

One Pakistani division is being equipped with sophisticated weapons and organised as part of the RDF. This division will consist of about 2000 men and is projected to be used in the Gulf. The Pakistani RDF division can be airlifted from Pakistan to be in operation in the Gulf or any where in South-West Asia within 24 hours.⁵²

The Pakistani RDF, according to the Pentagon's strategic plan, will operate in conjunction with the US RDF, the latter being a remote "out of sight" unit. The US RDF's presence will be a kind of deterrent, while the real operational role in the event of crisis will be that of the Pakistani RDF.

To prepare Pakistan as a major component of its Gulf Soviet West Asian strategy the US has made provision

52. P. Patavi Rama Rao, Diego Garcia - Towards a Zone of Peace, Sterling Pub., 1985, p.57.

for massive military and economic aid. In the US financial year, 1984, the Reagan Administration proposes to give Pakistan 225 million dollars in economic assistance, whereas all other countries of the South Asian region put together will get a total development assistance of 217 million dollars.⁵³

Besides economic aid, Reagan Administration has proposed for Pakistan a total of 520 million dollars in military assistance for the financial year, 1984. Also a budgetary provision of 800,000 dollars has been made to train Pakistani military officers in the USA.⁵⁴

According to Prof. Stephen Cohen, American military expert, who had recently been in Islamabad and had meetings with top Pakistani military officers and also Gen. Zia, the Pakistani military quarters are hopeful of seizing the whole of Kashmir in a lightning attack deploying the newly acquired F-16 warplanes. The hope of seizing Kashmir is directly linked with the acquisition of F-16s and the attainment of nuclear capability by Pakistan, said Cohen.⁵⁵

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Cohen, quoted by P. Patavi Rama Rao in Diego Garcia, n.52.

A dangerous potential of F-16s is their capability of being converted into nuclear bombers. According to Prof. Cohen, Pakistan's nuclear programme is making steady progress and it is closely linked with the procurement of nuclear bomber aircraft from the USA.⁵⁶

Another dimension of the US policy in Pakistan, which spells danger for India's security, lies in the indications that Pakistan is actively acquiring Chemical weapons. In December, 1981, Jack Anderson, quoting a secret report by the US joint chiefs of staff, stated that Pakistan has chemical weapons.⁵⁷ It is also stated that Pakistani forces regularly undergo training in chemical warfare at Fort Detrick in the USA.

Thus, militarisation of Pakistan is in full swing. In spite of the claims that Pakistan is armed to face the Soviet threat, which is not true, Brigadier General Nur Hussain, director of the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, in an interview to the US magazine AS IA disclosed:

56. Ibid.

57. Cited by C. Rajamohan in "Chemical Weapons in the Gulf", Strategic Analysis, April, 1984.

"Of the 495,000 soldiers and officers of the Pakistani army, as many as 390,000 or more than 80% are deployed on the Indian borders. Almost the entire airforce is lined up in aerodromes near the Indian border."⁵⁸

Truly speaking, the Pakistani explanation that the F-16 War planes and other lethal arms will not be used against India need be taken with a pinch of salt. It will be indeed suicidal for Pakistan and its political leadership to use the US weaponry against the Russians in Afghanistan. Hence, the F-16s can have only one destination - India.

Islamic Bomb and India's Security:

Another dangerous plan of Pakistan's military policy impinging on India's security relates to the Islamic bomb and Pakistan's plans to make it. This is relevant in our discussion in this chapter because the "Islamic bomb" provides the linkages between Pakistan and the Arab world. And US has united Pakistan and its Gulf

58. Quoted by P. Pattavi Rama Rao, Diego Garcia, Sterling, 1985, p.58.

allies through the concept of "Islamic bomb".

The Islamic bomb and Pakistan's crusade⁵⁹ to make its own bomb are interlinked. In fact, the concept of Islamic bomb which emanated from the Arab desire to have a strong nuclear bulwork against a nuclear and aggressive Israel would become Pakistan's mainstay in her desire to attain supremacy in the Islamic world.

However, what had escaped the attention of many was that Pakistan's interest was not really Israel, but India. How could her desire to have the bomb be linked to Israel with whom Pakistan has no quarrel. For Pakistan it was a means of annulling India's conventional superiority.⁶⁰ Moreover, Islamabad calculated that if Pakistan had the bomb, India would not so easily retaliate, even if Pakistan started new adventures in Kashmir.⁶¹ Besides enabling Pakistan

59. Reports about Pakistan's acquisition of capability to make bomb have recently been brought out. (Senator Cranston's address in the Senate on 21 June, 1984, reproduced in Strategic Digest (New Delhi), Aug. 1984, pp.827-31.

60. The view expressed by K. Subramanyam.

61. Amitav Mukherjee, India's Policy towards Pakistan, Associated Book Centre, New Delhi, 1983.

to get close to West Asia's Islamic world, Bhutto's motivations were the result of his age-old suspicions of India.

As Palit and Namboodiri state in their book Pakistan's Islamic Bomb, "As far back as 1965, Bhutto had said 'if India builds the bomb we will eat grass or leaves, but we will get one of our own'. At that stage, India was not even thinking of a nuclear explosion."⁶²

Pakistan's nuclear adventurism against India is not a remote possibility. As regards Islamic bloc's opposition to Pakistan's use of bomb, the latter would have a valid argument against it. It would not be difficult for Pakistan to persuade the Islamic nations that the liberalism of Muslim Kashmir should be regarded as a "jihad", a holy war of Islam which would justify the use of the Islamic bomb against India.

"In any event, it would obviously be in a position to go it alone if all else has failed, and under an unstable, militaristic form of government, the restraint

62. Palit and Namboodiri, Pakistan's Islamic Bomb.

consideration will be minimal."⁶³

This has been already proved by the behaviour of Pakistan in the past. Pakistan had always been determined to wrest Kashmir from India and twice it tried to settle the issue by force of arms. On both occasions,⁶⁴ Pakistan has been prevented from committing larger forces to the Kashmir front because of threat from India to Pakistan territory itself, that is west Punjab and Sind. Once Pakistan acquires nuclear capability, this strategic situation would change.⁶⁵

Conclusion:

To conclude, the militarist designs of the United States in the Persian Gulf encompass the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Pakistan. The RDF, and now the Central command, with its nuclear potential, incorporate these areas in the close vicinity of India within their sphere of operation. Since Indian Ocean is the theatre of

63. Ibid.

64. In 1965 and in 1971.

65. Other implications of a Pak bomb for India's security will be discussed later in this work.

military operation under USCENTCOM, the threat to India's security is understandable. Under the RDF plan, the United States has to rely on Sea-borne and air-borne reinforcements for forces stationed at US-owned or controlled bases in the South West Asian and Indian Ocean area. Pakistan ver well caters to the US strategic requirement in South-West Asian region. Hence, the massive arming of Pakistan and construction of military bases in it. All these, in fact, weigh heavily on India's security.

CHAPTER III

US STRATEGIC POSTURE IN INDIAN OCEAN AND INDIA'S SECURITY

"This Ocean (Indian Ocean), is the key to the seven seas. In the 21st century, the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters". This remark by Alfred Mahan appears to be quite prophetic. For nearly two decades there has been growing concern by many littoral states that the Indian Ocean was becoming an instrument of super power rivalry and possibly hegemony, detrimental to their respective regional ambitions.¹ In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the US military build-up in the Indian Ocean and US interventionist proclivity and its implication for Indian security.

The period following the World War-II witnessed a veritable upsurge of national liberation in the Indian Ocean area. The colonial powers of Europe had to withdraw from India, Burma, Ceylon and other countries of South-East Asia and East Africa. By 1971 with the

1. Amirie (ed.), Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics, Teheran, 1975, p.96.

exception of the Portuguese colonies in East Africa and the racist regime of South Africa, the entire Indian Ocean littoral area consisted of independent sovereign states. Though forced to withdraw from the Indian Ocean littoral and hinterland, the erstwhile colonial powers of the west, again resorted to the neo-colonial militarist and interventionist onslaught against the newly independent countries to reconcile their loss of vast colonies. The conflict and discord over control of the Indian Ocean has become a perennial feature of International system especially during the last three decades. Beginning with the mid 60s, the US has been trying to establish its political and military domination over the area exploiting the so called concept of vacuum in utter disregard of the decolonisation movement and the sovereignty of the Indian Ocean countries.² New imperialism and propulsion of the Indian Ocean into cold war started when US navy entered first thereby forcing the rival to respond in kind. The Indians usually blame the Americans for allegedly deploying Polaris submarines into the Arabian sea. When the Soviet navy entered into the waters of the Indian

2. Koushik, Devendra, The Indian Ocean: A strategic Dimension, Vikash, New Delhi, 1983, p.6.

Ocean in 1968, its mission was anti-Polaris.³

The growing US interests in the Indian Ocean area are directly linked with natural resources of the Indian Ocean states. In the past, imperialist countries controlled the area, whereas today after the collapse of the colonial system they have to adopt "base strategy", aimed against the littoral states. The US has always at its disposal a large number of military facilities that are constantly being enlarged and modernised. Along the perimeter, there are Persian Gulf bases, a military airforce base on the Omani island of Masira in the Arabian Sea and Cockburn Sound (Australia) two more military bases - one for the US navy in Subic Bay, the other for the US airforce in Clark Field in the Philippines - guard the approaches to the Indian Ocean from the east. Yet, the Pentagon centred on its biggest airforce and naval base (the construction of which is nearing completion) on the Diego Garcia island.⁴

The US aggressive strategy in this area is the result

3. Amirie (ed.), n.1, p.96.

4. Kosova, M., "Pentagon Shadow over the Indian Ocean", International Affairs, Moscow, no.1, Jan. 1980.

of American debacle in Indo-China, the emergence of Bangladesh, and the Arab oil embargo during the 1973 West Asian War.

The strategic significance of the Indian Ocean has increased with the appearance of submarine launched Ballistic Missile system (SLBM). The American desire to acquire a firm foothold in the Indian Ocean is explained not by the threat of increased Soviet naval activity but by the location of the Indian Ocean to the South of the Soviet Union which makes it eminently suitable for the presence of the US underwater long-range missiles - the Polaris A-3, Poseidon and now The Trident. According to T.B. Millar, "As the Polaris and Poseidon submarine systems developed, it became obvious that the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal would provide the most valuable area for missile operations against southern and central Russia."⁵

When the US strategic-nuclear presence, in the shape of the Polaris submarine, became a reality in the Indian Ocean area in the middle of the 1960s, there was no Soviet military presence. The Soviet naval

5. Millar, T.B., "The Indian and Pacific Oceans, Some Strategic Considerations", Adelphic Papers, no.57, London, 1969, p.6.

presence began from 1968 and has expanded gradually since then. The growing Soviet politico-military power in the Indian Ocean, especially in and around the Arabian Sea, posed a limited deterrence to the unhampered operations of the US Polaris submarine.⁶ Nevertheless, the USA built up its naval strength vigorously on the pretext of Soviet presence in the Ocean. The aim was not to match, but to overwhelm the Soviet naval strength. It resulted in an increase in the periodic cruisers of the US task forces in the Indian Ocean, especially since 1971. The increase in the US naval strength in the Indian Ocean provided the USA not only with a strategic superiority vis-a-vis USSR but also enabled the USA to deploy, if needed, its conventional naval power as an interventionist force in the area. The proposed naval build up of the USA, with an emphasis upon nuclear powered surface vessels and hunter killer submarines, would enable the USA not only to have a strong conventional-interventionist capacity but also a nuclear-interventionist capacity.⁷

6. Singh, K.R., The Indian Ocean, Manohar, New Delhi, 1977, p.10.

7. The nuclear component of the RDF and the recent CENTCOM forms part of the US military strategy in Indian Ocean-Persian Gulf region.

Undoubtedly, the US task force has been cruising and participating in CENTO exercises, even earlier, but the despatch of the US task force led by the nuclear aircraft carrier, "Enterprise", into the Indian Ocean in December 1971, on the eve of the Bangladesh crisis, marked a turning point in the US naval strategy in the area. Besides the earlier strategic nuclear role, it also acquired an interventionist role.

This new shift to an interventionist stance was clearly visible during and after the Arab-Israel war of 1973. This was indicated by the despatch of the US task force led by "constellation", which participated in "mid link" 1974, the largest CENTO naval exercise. It was conducted in the Arabian sea, off Karachi, and was hosted by Pakistan. Some 50 warships and 25,000 personnel participated in it.⁸ There were reports that two N-powered submarines also participated in it.⁹ The participation of "constellation" in the "mid link" and its visit to the Gulf are significant, when seen in the context of the oil crisis and the veiled threats of armed intervention that are being projected

8. Singh, K.R., n.6, 184.

9. Ibid.

from some quarters in the USA. Moreover Diego Garcia has become a strong military base of US and with it US has achieved tremendous military strength in the Indian Ocean area.

Diego Garcia Base was designed to play an important role in the US global strategy. Ronald I. Spiers, Director, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, emphasised as early^{as} 1971 that the construction of what he called, a modest communication facility, was not a sudden reactive response by the US to a possible Soviet threat in the Indian Ocean, but was a culmination of the US efforts to meet a naval communication requirements dating back to the early 1960s,¹⁰ that is, since the beginning of the SLBM programme.

Emphasis upon the interventionist strategy in the Indian Ocean area, after 1973, led to a further expansion of the base facilities. After 1973, the new developments were designed not so much to improve the communication facilities as to enable Diego Garcia to function as a base for N. Submarines, conventional task forces, a

10. Ronald and Spiers, "US National Security Policy and the Indian Ocean Area", Dept. of State Bulletin, 65 (1678), 23 August 1971, pp.199-203.

staging port for heavy transport planes and a base for long-range bomber operations.¹¹

The capabilities that the Diego Garcia base will acquire under the current expansion programme are:

1) In terms of a strategic-N base, it would fulfil a multiple role. It would have crucial communication facilities that would enable the Poseidon and the Trident Submarines to operate effectively from this area.

2) The air-ship would permit the shore-based anti submarines and maritime reconnaissance planes like "P-3c orien", used for intelligence gathering, to patrol the area.

3) Besides being a naval base, Diego Garcia has also the potential of a small strategic air command base. The lengthened airship would not only enable the transport planes, but also bombers, like the B-52, to operate from these.

4) The enhanced capacity in the strategic-nuclear field, the Diego-Garcia base would help project a strong conventional military presence in the area.

11. Ibid.

The task force, now cruising periodically in the Indian Ocean can be based permanently there thereby providing an on the spot demonstrable military capacity to buttress the western diplomacy.

The base can also be used as a staging post to supply military hardware either to the US troops operating in the area, or to allies like Israel and Pakistan, in case of another round of Arab-Israel war or Indo-Pak war. Thus Diego Garcia forms a new jumping ground from where the USA can project its interventionist capability to any point in the Indian Ocean area.

The USA and its western allies justify their naval presence in the Indian Ocean mainly on the ground that the control of the sealanes is vital for their national survival, especially because of their dependence on West-Asian oil. The west feels that the USSR is interested in denying oil to it and hence the need for a western military presence in the area to thwart Soviet designs.

But this is an over assessment of the Soviet capability to influence the oil producing region, either politically or militarily, especially in the teeth of local and western opposition. If the oil is to be used as a weapon, it would be used not by the Soviet Union

but by the oil producing nations. The events following October War (1973) proved it. Hence, the western arguments justifying their military presence to counter Soviet threat to oil routes appear to be a smoke-screen to hide their real motives i.e. increasing their interventionist capability vis-a-vis the regional power.¹²

On the other hand the US arms build up on the Indian Ocean is causing concern for Soviet Union. Soviet anxiety against this military build up is related to its own security. This is confirmed by a SEATO report which said that the interests of Russia in the Indian Ocean include ensuring the security of Soviet Union.¹³ What particularly worries the Soviet Union is the arrival of US nuclear submarines in the Ocean, which can endure longer and operate at greater depths. The motives of American deployment in the area are also clear from a comment made by an American military correspondent, that, "In the age of missiles and nuclear warheads, the Indian Ocean serves as a huge launch pad for missile carrying submarines. It is

12. Singh, K.R., n.6, p.196.

13. Bhasin, V.K., Super Power Rivalry in Indian Ocean, S. Chand and Co., New Delhi, 1961, p.127.

as near to many Russian military and industrial centres. Moreover, within the reach of naval missiles there are vast territories of Soviet Siberia.¹⁴ The latest US nuclear submarines can move silently between the mountain ranges on the well mapped out Indian Ocean floor. More significantly, they can fire nuclear missiles of the Poseidon class which have a range up to 2900 miles and can carry upto 10 MIRV. Because of such missiles the targets in the Soviet Union would be well within the range of the submarines operating in the Indian Ocean. Hence the increasing US involvement in the Indian Ocean has created concern for Soviet Union and has tempted it to make her own presence felt in the area.

While it is widely held and believed, especially by the western scholar - to correlate the presence of the Soviet navy in the Indian Ocean with the British decision to withdraw from the region,¹⁵ it is often forgotten or knowingly overlooked that this Soviet

14. Quoted by Collin Cross, The Fall of British Empire, London, 1968, p.135.

15. Millar, T.B., "Soviet troops in Indian Ocean Area", Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, No.7 (Canberra, 1970), p.1.

naval deployment in the area was closely related to the development and deployment of modern US weapon systems.

The development of Polaris and Poseidon missile systems by the US¹⁶ and their deployment in the Indian Ocean waters in 1960s exposed the Soviet Union to a greater threat which was far greater than the US land and air based N. weapon systems.¹⁷ It was also widely known that by the middle of the 1960s the US submarines filled with these missiles had started frequently roaring in the ocean. Soviet Union's southern flank comes under the effective range of the nuclear explosives.

It is accepted by such reputed western scholars as Oles Smolansky, Geoffrey Tukes and Mac Guire that it was indeed the deployment of the Polaris missiles and nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean by the US which compelled the Soviet Union to make its entry into the region.¹⁸ If we keep in mind the over all

16. For details about the gradual development of weapon systems and their effect on super powers, see K.R. Singh, n.6, pp.19-24.

17. The range of Polaris missile varied between 1200-2500 nautical miles and brings the whole of USSR within the range.

18. Admitted by Geoffrey Jukes in Adelphi Papers, No.87, (London, May 1972).

context of the global super power rivalry, it becomes clear, that the Soviet Union was not in a position to afford to its adversary an overwhelming strategic advantage in a region which was so close to it as to become vital for its own defence needs. Therefore, "the Soviet navy moved reluctantly into the Indian Ocean", inspite of the fact that it was "operationally ill equipped for such a move."¹⁹

The basic strategic necessity for the Soviet Union then was to be able to counter the US threat from the Indian Ocean through whatever means were possible. They made their entry in Indian Ocean so that they have at least the capability to detect and oppose the nuclear strike forces, although at that time Soviets neither had the capability nor had the necessity to deploy SLBMS in the Ocean.²⁰ The construction of US radio and communication centres at different strategic places and the proposal to establish such facilities at Diego Garcia made it

19. O.R. Smolansky, "Soviet entry into Indian Ocean: An Analysis" in Cottrell and Bwnell, The Indian Ocean: Its Political, Economic and Military Importance, (Praeger, New York, 1972), p. 340.

20. Jukes, n.18.

obvious for moseo that these installations were intended to facilitate the cruising of nuclear powered submarines in the Indian Ocean.²¹ The decisions regarding Diego Garcia, where apart from the most sophisticated communication equipments, facilities are also being created for the docking, repair etc. of the Nuclear submarines and for the landing of B-52 bombers, shows a growing American interest in the region.²²

Soviet Union's interest in the Ocean was essentially to contain and remove the threat from the US sub-marines and thus it started giving priority to its own sea-borne nuclear programme to neutralise the new threat.²³ Moscow's attempts are of constructing an underwater nuclear delivery system (roughly equivalent to the Polaris-Pseidon type) and a "hunter killer" submarine system designed to locate, to keep track of, and if necessary, to destroy the enemy missiles carrying submarines, thus, seem to be more in the nature of a

21. Smolansky, n.19, pp.182-83.

22. S. Chawala, "The Indian Ocean: Zone of Peace or War?" in Saradesai and Chawala (ed.), Changing Patterns of Security and Stability in Asia, (Praeger, New York, 1980), pp.182-83.

23. Smolansky, n.19, pp.343-46.

defensive posture than an offensive stance.²⁴

Thus we find that the US has several advantages over the USSR so far as naval capabilities of the two superpowers in the Indian Ocean are concerned. It possesses not only aircraft carriers but also two important communication bases in Diego-Garcia and Australia. These communication bases greatly facilitate the operations of deep-submerged vessels in the area. There are confirmed reports that the Soviet Union has not been able to establish such VLF communication facilities in the Indian Ocean as yet.²⁵ Even in terms of the facilities for land-based operations, the USA enjoys advantage over the USSR. The Soviet Union, according American report can at the most, operate from South Yemen and Somalia, which are in one corner of Indian Ocean. The USA, on the other hand, in cooperation with its allies, has the freedom to operate from various points all along the ocean - Australia, the Maldives, ~~Pakistan~~, Iran, Baharein, Masirah, Ethiopia, South Africa etc. From these areas, it can

24. K.P. Mishra, Quest for an International Order in Indian Ocean, (Allied, New Delhi, 1977).

25. K.R. Singh, n.6, p.108.

continue to have a much better control over the Indian Ocean area than the Soviet Union can hope to achieve in the near future.²⁶

Again, there are greater degrees of disparities in the force structures between USA and USSR.²⁷

1. The USA has a more versatile weapons mix that affords it greater flexibility in initiating contingencies.

2. The USSR is more vulnerable to air and sea access into this theatre. The presence of a large permanent force will require guaranteed passage through the Dardanelles and Suez canal plus uninhibited aircraft overflight rights from Iran to Turkey. In the event of some level of nuclear exchange, Soviet forces in Indian Ocean would become hostages of much smaller monitoring forces.

3. The US has allies in the region with assets - France, Britain, Australia and South Africa - that may be drawn upon.

26. Ibid.

27. T.B. Millar, n.15, p.101.

4. Finally, the US can use the Indian Ocean for strategic purposes by striking the USSR with SLBMS. The USSR cannot attack American interests from the Indian Ocean in any comparable manner.

In view of the relatively limited scope of these Soviet efforts, it is imperative to keep Soviet naval and logistic operations in their proper perspective. No doubt the Soviet vessel strength has increased dramatically in terms of crisis (1971 and 1973), but Kremlin's moves have not until now been aggressive and always endeavoured to work through (and not against the established governments of the countries and has made no attempt to prevent any of their basic prerogative or possessions.²⁸

Similarly Moscow has judiciously refrained from challenging in any real way the US interests in this region.

Moreover, apart from western countries' activities in Indian Ocean, Soviet Union has also the fear that

28. It is a triumph of Moscow's diplomacy that while the US movements in the Indian Ocean have come in for sharp criticism from the littoral and non-aligned countries, the Soviet presence has not only been condemned so virulently but has actually been welcomed at times. See Devendra Kaushik, n.2, p.35.

China would also stake a claim and would become a more potent threat to her. Though China is not directly an Indian Ocean power, it is not far from it and certainly the USSR must focus its attention in that direction. India also has every reason to harbour the same apprehension. This apprehension stems from the fact that China has tried to strengthen its fortifications through both offensive and defensive action by moving into Tibet and by making a southern outlet to the ocean via Pakistan. The Chinese help in building the 800 km. all weather Karakoram Highway makes Chinese ambition very clear in this region.²⁹ Coupled with these are the reports that China has been trying in a big way to modernise its navy, constructing nuclear submarines and for all these activities, securing even outside help.³⁰

As yet, China does not have a powerful navy to pose a threat to Soviet Union from the waters of the Indian Ocean, but once its modernisation of navy is

29. V.K. Bhasin, n.13, pp.75-77; also A.K. Chatterjee, "Naval Dimensions", Seminar (New Delhi), No.181, Sept. 1974, p.23.

30. Bhabani Sengupta, The USSR in Asia (Young Asia Publication, 1980), p.126.

completed she might pose an additional threat to the USSR and this is another potent factor that guides the Soviet Union to take an active interest in the Ocean and strengthen its naval presence so as to be able to act as a deterrent to expansion of Chinese naval power in the region.

India's concern over the possible Chinese entry into the Indian Ocean and the current Chinese modernization of navy programme is understandable keeping in view its unsolved boarder dispute with the latter. In fact, in the case of Chinese deployment in the ocean through Pakistan, the already existing US naval forces will be further strengthened and the Sino-Pak-US strategic nexus will weigh more heavily on Indian security. The matter which further aggravates the threat to India in case of Chinese entry into the Ocean is that China is a nuclear power.

Thus, the military build up of super powers has made the Indian Ocean area a theatre for nuclear rivalry. During the last few years, especially after the Soviet entry into Afghanistan, the US has been able to establish naval superiority in the region. Between 30 and 40s US combat and support ships are believed to be permanently

present in the Indian Ocean, as the main base for this activity. Construction programmes for the building of anchorage bays, submarine pens, run ways and living accommodations for soldiers and marines are under way and repair and storage facilities and missile silos are being established. B-52 bombers are operating from bases in Australia, from Guam and from the extended run-way in Diego Garcia. The US has succeeded in setting up strong bases at strategic locations and establishing vital communication links between them.

While the Soviet response to the massive US build up has been haphazard and the USSR does not have a similar line up of bases, it is catching up gradually.

Interventionist Proclivity of the US in Indian Ocean

The increasing interventionist capability of the US in the Arabian sea region, the periodic cruises of western task forces, the visit of the "Constellation" to the Gulf and its participation in Midlink exercise in the Arabian sea, and finally the construction of a fullfledged military nuclear base of Diego Garcia - arc pointers to the new interventionist strategy of the US in the Indian Ocean region.

This interventionist stance has been substantiated in the pronouncement of leading American decision-makers. One such pronouncement is that of Seymour Weiss, Director, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, whose statement before the Subcommittee on the Near East and South Africa of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 6 March - 1974,³¹ "justified the age-old arguments for pursuing the policy of gun-boat diplomacy."

The US gun-boat diplomacy was also spelled out by Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., Chief of Naval Operations, who said, "The Indian Ocean has become the area with the potential to produce major shifts in the global power balance over the next decades. It follows that we must have the ability to influence events in that area; and the capability to deploy our military power in the region is an essential element of such influence. That, in my judgement, is the crux of the rationale for that we are planning to do at Diego Garcia."³²

31. K.R. Singh, n.6, p.186. Also refer to Seymoure Weiss, "US interests and activities in Indian Ocean area", Department of State Bulletin, 70 (1815), 8 April, 1974, pp.371-75.

32. Zumwalt, "Strategic Importance of Indian Ocean", Armed forces Journal International (Washington), April 1974, p.28.

That the Soviet Union is involved in the same manner as the US in the Scramble for resources of the Indian Ocean region - is rejected by IDSA authors.³³ On the basis of the wealth of information and data, they write that while the US is dependent on outside sources for 18 critical materials, many from the Indian Ocean, the Soviet Union is in a position to meet the needs for resources on its own except for three - aluminium, fluorine and tungsten.³⁴ The thesis that the US would soon be a net importer of oil and that it would turn to West Asian oil fields is rejected by them as "a scare scenario to convince the gulf countries about the need to cooperate with the west to counter the Soviets."³⁵ Thus, there is no objective compulsion for the Soviets to intervene.

Another spurious thesis of the US justifying its militarist designs in the Indian Ocean relates to the Soviet entry into Afghanistan. But, the interventionist US posture in the "Indian Ocean and the American quest for bases was already evident early in 1979 and even

33. Namboodiri, Anand and Sridhar, Intervention in Indian Ocean, p.157.

34. Ibid., pp.147-57.

35. Ibid., p.157.

earlier and had nothing to do with the Soviet move in Afghanistan".³⁶

The escalation of US military presence in the Indian Ocean has no relevance to the situation in Afghanistan. Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her interview with the "US News and World Report" of 15th February, 1982 rejected the connection between the militarisation of the Indian Ocean and the developments in Afghanistan. She said, "I think that the plans were there long before the Afghanistan invasion, just as Pakistan's plans also were pre-Afghanistan."³⁷ A former chief of the Indian Navy (Retd.), Admiral S.N. Kohli, in his book on the Indian Ocean, stressed the just concern of the non-aligned countries of the Indian Ocean at the "threat posed to their security from the high seas."³⁸ He warned, "They can hardly forget that the powers that dominated and colonised them for centuries came to the area via the high seas... use of foreign warships in the Iranian Political Crisis of 1952, an amphibious landing in Lebanon in the 50s, the Parading of the US 7th fleet in the Taiwanese straits and the

36. Devendra Kaushik, n.2, p.49.

37. Quoted in Kaushik, n.2, p.51.

38. S.N. Kohli, Sea Power and the Indian Ocean with Special reference to India, New Delhi, 1979, pp.53-54.

steering of its task forces into Bay of Bengal in 1971, all constitute an accumulation of evidence that cannot be ignored. All these, in fact, suggest the interventionist proclivity of the United States in the Indian Ocean region. The SIPRI Yearbook justified the presence of Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean "as a counter measure to offset the US presence."³⁹

INDIAN SECURITY:

India is very much concerned in American army build up in the region, because her trade and commerce is wholly dependent on sea and a hostile power controlling this area could easily jeopardise her trade.⁴⁰ Moreover, India's history is a witness to the fact that the weakest point in her national security system is her vulnerable coast. A new threat is developing to her security and this time it is from the south. It is not the southern neighbours who have designs on her territory but it is the increasing American presence in the area and the arms build up in the Indian Ocean area that threatens her independence.⁴¹ Thus, the

39. SIPRI Yearbook, 1973, Stockholm, p.396.

40. Introduction in T.T. Poulouse, Indian Ocean: Power Rivalry (Young Asia, New Delhi, 1974), p.1.

41. V.K. Bhasin, n.13, p.127.

establishment of military and nuclear bases like Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean is a matter of deep concern for India, as India is only 1200 miles away from Diego Garcia.

We find that Soviet and Indian interest in containing American arms build up in the ocean converges as there might be a repetition of factors like the deployment of the 7th fleet in the Bay of Bengal during the Bangladesh crisis of 1971, resulting in a sense of unity between the two countries. The emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 was merely a fore warning of the pregnant geopolitical possibilities in the area.⁴²

In 1971, during the Indo-Pakistan war, India woke up from its obsessive preoccupation with the build up of its landforce, when the US decided to back Pakistan and attempted to apply pressure to India by moving 7th fleet, led by the nuclear capable "Enterprise" into the Bay of Bengal. The attempt did not succeed but India had learnt its lesson and the Indian navy is being strengthened.

The physiographic features of India make it vulnerable to the threat from the sea. One such feature

42. S.N. Chopra, India - An area study (Vikash, New Delhi, 1977), p.158.

is that India has a coast line of 3500 miles, and the islands of Andaman and Nicobar in the east and Lakshadweep in the west extended the lines of communication by another 700 miles into the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea. With such an exposure of its frontiers to Indian Ocean, the threat of the US militarisation in the Ocean to India's security is understandable.

Again, from the time of independence through the 1960s, external intervention in the affairs of the subcontinent came either from China or from the US acting through Pakistan. In 1971, however, oceanic intervention nearly became a reality. India's perception of power realities in the Indian Ocean is strongly influenced by that 1971 experience. These realities have also added a new dimension to the oceans importance for India's economic development. India's entire foreign trade flows through the Northern Indian ocean, about 80% uses the Arabian sea. Its supply of petroleum comes mostly from the Persian Gulf region, the single largest supplier of crude being Iran. India's diversified foreign makes it a trade partner of both capitalist and socialist nations. The great bulk of the arms purchases comes from USSR. Recently, Soviet Union has become an

important market for many of Indian exports. Since the trade routes to the US and the Persian Gulf lie in the Indian Ocean, India's concern for US military build-up and consequent instability in Indian Ocean is understandable.⁴³

Indian scholar and diplomat K.M. Panikar observed in 1946, "while to other countries the Indian Ocean is only one of the important oceanic areas, to India, it is the vital sea. Her life lime are concentrated in that area, her freedom is dependent on the freedom of that water surface. No industrial development, no commercial growth, no stable political structure is possible for her unless her shores are protected."⁴⁴

Unfortunately, not much heed has been paid to Panikar's warning and it is ⁱⁿ more recent times that India has taken note of the alarming level of military and naval escalation in the region and taken steps to strengthen its own naval forces. Mrs. Gandhi realized the gravity of the threat to India's security environment and stated in 1980, "The Ocean has brought conquerers

43. Bhabani Sengupta, "A view from India" in Amirie (ed.), n.1, p.183.

44. Panikar, K.M., India and the Indian Ocean, p.84.

to India in the past. Today we find it charming with danger. The frantically increasing rate of militarisation in the Indian Ocean makes the 3500 miles of own coast line more vulnerable. How can we acquiesce in any theory which tries to justify the threat to our security environment or condone the existence of foreign bases and cruising fleets."⁴⁵ The Indian Ministry of external affairs noted the threat to India: security in its 1981 Annual report, "The epicentre of world tensions has clearly shifted from Europe to Asia. This is evidenced by the build-up of military and naval presence in the Indian Ocean, search for new allies or bases, formation of Rapid Deployment Forces, the general situation in West Asia including the introduction of sophisticated weapons into Pakistan and the lingering tensions on South East Asia. These developments have aggravated the security environment of India."⁴⁶

It is clear, then, that India's security is inextricably linked with the situation in the Indian

45. Opening address by Smt. Gandhi, Prime Minister of India to the Commonwealth Heads of Government of the Asia-Pacific region, New Delhi, 4th Sept., 1980.

46. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 1981, published in 1982 by the Govt. of India.

Ocean, and that the country needs to develop a high level of maritime reconnaissance and coastal patrol capacity. This is absolutely essential for an adequate defence of its long coast lines, its outlying stand territories, its offshore oil installations in Bombay High, and adjacent areas, its exclusive economic zone stretching for 200 miles onto the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea, and its continental shelf. Similarly, preparation for naval defence is required on the eastern and the western flanks. Events in 1971, at the height of the Indo-Pak war, have convinced India that it can not afford to relax in its efforts to build up adequate naval strength to defend its territories. It established harmony between Indian and Soviet strategic interests in South Asia as well as in the Indian Ocean when the US administration ordered a task force of the 7th fleet to steam up to the Bangladesh shore in the Bay of Bengal, the Soviet ambassador assured Mrs. Gandhi that the Soviet navy in the Indian Ocean would see to it that there would be no American naval intervention on behalf of Pakistan.⁴⁷

47. According to Jack Anderson, Soviet ambassador Regor told the Indian government that a Soviet fleet is now in Indian Ocean and the Soviet Union will not allow the 7th fleet to intervene. Regor also promised on Dec. 13 that the Soviet
contd....

The presence of a Soviet naval task force in the vicinity of the zone led to the withdrawal of the US 7th fleet from Indian water. But, India has not forgotten this attempt of "nuclear blackmail" and will go to some lengths to avoid exposure to similar threats in the future. Since December 1971, Indian Policy planners can hardly ignore the possibility that the US might intervene in a future Indo-Pak war from the naval base on Diego Garcia. In the more recent years, Diego Garcia, a mere 1100 miles away from the Southern tip of India, has been developed into a full-fledged naval base and the possibility of a US RDF being stationed there has increased the threat as perceived by India and other littoral states. The Indian Ministry of Defence report for 1980-81 stated: "The enlarged military presence of the great powers in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf region,... the expansion of bases and facilities, in particular the Diego Garcia base and the deployment of an RDF by the U.S.A. threaten security and stability in the area".

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Union will open a diversionary action against the Chinese if Peking took any adventurist move. Anderson claimed that he was quoting from CIA reports to the White House. The Washington Post, Jan. 10, 1972. For Anderson's report on the aggressive intensions of the 7th fleet task force, see The Washington Post, Dec. 31, 1971.

Harold Brown speaks of the following ingredients of America's Gulf-Indian Ocean policy having bearing on India's security.⁴⁸

(1) First, an enhanced continuing peace time presence involving primarily naval forces. Our current naval power in the region is greatly superior to that of the Soviet Union in the area. It provides us an immediate tactical air capability. Further, the United States has continued to make improvements and sophistications, began several years ago in the facilities on Diego Garcia. America will have a permanent presence in the region that is much greater than before.

(2) Prepositioning of equipment is a vital second ingredient. The loaded ships will be prepositioned within a few days sailing distance of the Persian Gulf-Arabian Sea area. In an emergency, they could move to a designated port near the objective and join up there with personnel and planes flown directly from its bases.

(3) Frequent deployment and exercises in the area comprise another key ingredient. The US has

48. "Crises in Asia", Speech by Defence Secretary Harold Brown, 6 March, 1980, in Survival, vol.22, 1980.

increased the scale and pace of its periodic naval task force deployments in the region. Last October (1979), the US midway carrier battle group was conducting an exercise in the Indian Ocean with naval units from the UK and Australia. A second aircraft carrier battle group from the western pacific arrived in the Arabian Sea in December. Since that time, more than 150 carrier based tactical air crafts and 14 warships have been continuously avoidable in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea to maintain a visible US presence.

The US ability to project air power at extended distances has been further demonstrated by 3 B-52 sea surveillance and three air borne warning and control missions flown in the Indian Ocean area. Finally, a marine amphibious unit arrived in the Arabian Sea in January 1980.

There are many other considerations affecting India's security concerns. India and several other non-oil producing countries are dependent on imports of oil from the Gulf. Their dependence on oil is in no way less crucial than that of the US and its allies, and any disruption of oil supplies because of US interference would affect the interests of India very

adversely. "India quite understandably feels concerned about the monopolisation of the large markets for foreign goods by the vested interests of the western industrial countries."⁴⁹ India itself is a leading manufacturing country, and needs markets for its own goods. "It resists exclusion from 'captive markets' and assumed sources of strategic raw materials, which it sees as a manifestation of neo-colonialist attitude."⁵⁰

Another factor is India's strong ethnic, cultural and emotional links with South Asian countries, including several island republics such as Mauritius, the Seychelles and the Maldives, where there is a large number of people of Indian origin. India with its large size, and resources is major regional power and it is natural for other smaller states to look to it for assistance not only in economic and technical matters, but in security matters. India is the largest country of the Indian Ocean region and as leader of the non-aligned movement is apparently quite anxious to assume such a role in the region, but the global rivalries

49. Chandra Kumar, "Indian Ocean: Arc of Crisis or Zone of Peace" in International Affairs (London), 1984, vol.60, p.241.

50. Ibid., p.242.

of major powers have denied it the opportunity to do so.

Further, the Indian interest is seriously hampered by the massive American military and naval presence in the Indian Ocean area and its control of important trade routes.⁵¹ In fact, the rise of a hostile power like the US with access to the Indian Ocean could disrupt our foreign trade and thus seriously jeopardise our economic development, since it disrupted the free navigability of the Persian gulf, the South African Coast and the straits of Malacca which is essential for the uninterrupted flow of our foreign trade.⁵²

The security of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent on the oceanic front has been undermined from within by partition. So far as India is concerned, Pakistan is in a position to threaten the security of the western coast from Karachi. The recent report about the visit of US warships headed by "enterprise" to Karachi has caused alarm in India. The Indian concern is understandable

51. The US RDF with its military personnel and warships is stationed in the Persian Gulf as discussed in detail in the last chapter.

52. J. Bandopadhyay, The Making of India's Foreign Policy, Allied Publisher, Bombay, 1980, p.41.

keeping in view the threat experience which India has already undergone in 1971 and which arose because of the dispatch of US seventh fleet into the Bay of Bengal.

B.R. Bhagat, the external affairs Minister told the Parliament that despite Pakistan's denials, there was suspicion of a quid-pro-quo between Pakistan and USA regarding bases and facilities in Pakistan for the latter in return for military aid.⁵² Pak media reports indicated the presence of a nuclear submarine in the US naval vessels. ~~Other reports indicated two cruisers, two destroyers and another vessels.~~ Other reports indicated two cruisers, two destroyers and another vessel. Nearly 4500 US military personnel were believed to be on these ships. This is perhaps the largest contingent to have visited Pakistan in recent times.

Bhagat said, "In addition to such naval visits, we have also taken note of the increasing US assistance to the Pakistan navy which has no connection with the situation in Afghanistan and the reports of facilities in Gwadar and other ports being made available to other

53. The Hindustan Times, March 21, 1986.

countries by Pakistan".⁵⁴

Mr. Bhagat recalled that in a testimony before the Senate Budget Committee on Feb. 19, the US Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, had included Pakistan among "military access and frontline states."

Mr. Bhagat termed some of the reports in official media that providing facilities for American warships at Karachi was similar to what India was offering at Visakhapatnam as "mischievous". He made it clear that only commercial vessels were permitted at Vishakhapatnam and that no military vessel of any country including the Soviet Union was allowed to visit this port.

In fact, the formation of the RDF and the shifting of the USCENTCOM were part and parcel of the US design to bully India. The presence of the 7th fleet vessels off Karachi makes it significant that in addition to the Diego Garcia base, right at the same time US vessels were in Pakistan waters, Pakistani naval ships were visiting Colombo. It is a strange coincidence that while the US 'Enterprise', the world's biggest aircraft carrier and other American warships were at Karachi, two Pakistani warships arrived in Colombo. This reveals the development of a US-Pak-Srilanka axis in Indian Ocean,

54. Quoted in The Statesman, 21 March, 1986.

as a recent phenomenon. Even in 1973, Admiral Robert Hanks of the US Navy had admitted that he tried to persuade the Sri Lankan navy to support US naval presence as a counter to an imaginary threat from India,⁵⁵ thereby openly claiming that the US navy regarded India as a possible future adversary.

India legitimately expressed its grave concern over the US seventh fleet presence and alleged that it was an attempt to intimidate India. More so when there was a nuclear submarine along with the fleet and an aircraft carrier "Enterprise".

The Americans take the plea that the US ships were going to Karachi for "rest and recreation". But the government did not believe that any rest and recreation was available in Pakistan where even serving of liquor is prohibited. The conclusion therefore is obvious.

The naval nuclear build up of the US in the Indian Ocean is not only likely to involve some of the regional powers, but also threatens the security of the littoral

55. Hanks, "The Indian Ocean Negotiations", Strategic Review, Winter, 1978.

states which might be opposing such powers. The American "gun boat diplomacy" at the final phase of the Indo-Pak war of 1971, along with the concentration of US warships on the Persian Gulf during the upheaval in Iran reflect, in a way, the aim of re-colonising the area. The new US military interventionist strategy in the Indian Ocean is geared to manipulate and manage events all around the "arc of crisis". India has taken a very clear and convincing position on Indian Ocean security. India agrees to a mutually deterrent role of super powers in the Indian Ocean i.e. balanced super power presence in the region.

India's basic opposition to intervention of foreign forces comes from its historic experience where colonial powers conquered the distant land of India through the mastery of the Indian Ocean. In fact, the historic experience is shared by almost all littoral countries. It was also its experience that the interplay of foreign interests in the region would jeopardise its own development and restrict its freedom of action. India being a potential regional power, it sought to minimise the impact of external powers on its security environment.

Following the significant events of 1971, when India faced the prospects of a twin-security threat

from two global powers, the US and China, and when the Soviet Union extended its counter power to offset such threats, views were expressed that India's maritime security and naval deployment have to be geared in the context of the Indo-Soviet treaty. This implied that till such time when India would be able to take care of the naval problems on her own, a sort of underwriting by the Soviets was necessary.

The need for a security insurance which would minimise the impact of uncertain external security environment on the country's interest, though was originally felt in the context of Bangladesh crisis, continued to be valid. Such a view was expressed by Mr. K. Subramanyam, Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis in New Delhi as early as January 1972.

"Now this must be borne in mind that as a result of the recent war (1971 war) and the situation that is emerging after the war ~~is~~ ^{is} the necessity of considerably expanding the Indian navy in order to patrol the Indian Ocean waters, so as to know what is happening there, and secondly, for this, most probably, we will have to rely considerably on the Soviet assistance in order to expand our own navy in the years to

come."⁵⁶ India's maritime security concern is dictated by its enormous responsibility on safeguarding the far-lying islands and territories and protecting its vast offshore and other marine resources. This can be ensured only when the Indian navy is capable of controlling the waters around the sub-continent. But, in the present context of US naval deployment, Indian naval forces hardly find the chance to ensure security of India's territorial waters.

Understandably threats to land territories from Pakistan and China almost from the day of independence kept the Indian defence planners, by and large, pre-occupied with army and airforce. Not that they overlooked the importance of sea water to the country's defence. The acquisition of an aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, as early as the late 1950s was itself an expression of concern for maritime security. Yet, till 1971, the navy's role in the overall defence of the country remained absent. The Indo-Pak war of that year brought home the crucial role of sea defence and the kind of future threats that emanate from the seas around the sub-continent.

56. Quoted in Jagdish Vibanan, Afro-Asian Solidarity and Indian Ocean, Delhi, 1974, pp.74-75.

Threats to India's security from this sea front can be broadly divided into 3 categories: Military threats, Politico-Strategic threats and Economic threats. For our purpose, we will discuss the former two kinds of threat. A preliminary attempt is made here to identify them in the background of an intensified external involvement in India's neighbourhood.

The vulnerability of the Indian land mass to enemy naval action is evident from its peninsular character which requires simultaneous readiness on both eastern and western fronts.

Despite the fact that India has a large number of harbours on both the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea shores, Indian ports are vulnerable to enemy attacks since they open directly into the vast seas. There are no secure harbours. The ports on western coast are more vulnerable because of military exercises conducted by the US RDF in the Arabian Sea and Pakistan's participation in this.

Thirdly, of course, in the extended lines of communication that stretch upto 700 miles into the sea linking the subcontinent with its 667 islands in the Andaman and Nicobar groups in the Bay of Bengal and 508 islands in the Lakshadweep Group in the Arabian



Sea. The US military build up in these two zones of Indian Ocean threaten the defence of these Indian territories.

While India has so far not faced any major naval threat this may not be the case in future. In the 1965 war, the Indonesia navy offered to assist Pakistan by carrying out diversionary attacks, according to then Pak air chief, Air Marshal Asghar Khan. The 1971 war with Pakistan had exposed some other vulnerability. The Pakistani submarine, PNS Ghazi, which on a mission to torpedo INS Vikrant, was lying in wait in the harbour channel of Vizag Port when a chance discovery led to its destruction. Another lesson of that war and potentially more significant for future was the deployment of the American warship, USS Enterprise, in the Bay of Bengal during the war. Though the exact nature of the Enterprise Mission is yet ^a matter of speculation, the American Administration has admitted that it was meant to be a show of force to restrain India. "There is now talk of 'use of force without war', which suggests that in future also the US may resort naval power in Indian Ocean."⁵⁷

57. Namboodiri, Sridhar and Anand, p.233.

The Enterprise is believed to have carried nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable bombers on board. To that extent, India was subjected to nuclear blackmail for the first time. The fact that the threat came from the sea front is a matter of particular concern. Currently, there is a permanent US carrier presence in the waters adjoining the Gulf in the Arabian sea. Further, the Diego Garcia base which is only just over 1,000 km. off Kanyakumari poses a potent threat to the security environment.

India's approach to the problem of security in the Indian Ocean has been in conformity with the traditions of the anti-colonial struggle and the country's own enlightened self interest. Hence, it has been trying to realise security lengths through promoting peaceful regional cooperation among the littoral and hinterland states and preventing the militarisation of the Indian Ocean. Security of India and other littoral states can hardly be ensured in a situation where the strategically located islands in the waters washing their shores are dotted with foreign military bases and naval task forces of an outside great power pose threat to the national liberation movement by practising gun-boat diplomacy

in a style reminiscent of the 19th century. Hence India has been insisting that Indian Ocean should be left alone by the great powers as a sea of peace - a demand endorsed at the Lusaka Non-aligned Summit in 1970 and at the subsequently held summits.

CHAPTER IV

US POLICY IN SOUTH-WEST ASIA AND INDIA'S SECURITY

This chapter attempts to bring out the implications of US-Pak strategic ties for Indian security, especially in the context of the Afghan problem. China also here in the US strategic policy for South Asia. Thus, the themes covered in this chapter relate to:

1. Pakistan in US strategy;
2. Washington-Beijing-Islamabad axis;
3. Issue of Pakistani bomb; and
4. Afghan Problem.

The US strategic policy for South West Asia is as old as its policy of containment of Communism and military encirclement of the Soviet Union. What is recent about the US posture in this area is that the policy is being pursued more vigorously and aggressively than before. This is due to a few developments that occurred between 1978 and 1983 - the endorsement of the confrontationist posture by NATO Summit in May, 1978, the collapse of the Shah's regime in Iran and the dismantling of the US surveillance outfit in January, 1979, the movement of Soviet troops in

Afghanistan in December; next month 1980 January, the Carter doctrine of "Hands off the Gulf" and the use of force to defend the US vital interests in West Asia was pronounced, followed by the formal operationalisation of the RDF as the concrete manifestation of the Carter doctrine, and the expansion and upgrading of the Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean; resumption of US arms supply to Pakistan and the formation of US Central Command in 1983. In this way, "simultaneity of developments in Iran and Afghanistan became a key factor in the power game that for the first time linked up South Asia, rather clearly in the perception of the US policy-makers, not only with South-West Asia, but also with the Gulf, and in terms of strategic factors, even with the entire West Asian scene - the arc of crises of Brzezinski's imagination."¹

In this significant shift in US security concerns, Pakistan emerged, as never before, as an important link, in what is called US "strategic consensus" in the region. This is qualitatively a new situation. Several

1. Rasheeduddin Khan, "Indo-Pakistan Strategic Equations", in V.D. Chopra (ed.), Pakistan and Asian Peace, Patriot Publications (New Delhi), 1985, p.116.

observers have noted that while for long "in the total context of US global concerns and overall foreign policies South Asia (has been) a relatively neglected area", and that "from a security point of view the United States has never been as involved in this region as in East Asia and South East Asia", but that "the Carter Administration has given more continuous attention to South Asia than has almost any previous US government, with the possible exception of the short-lived Kennedy Administration and the Nixon Administration during the 1971 South Asian Crisis."²

With the establishment of the US Central Command in 1983, with its area of jurisdiction stretching to 19 countries from Egypt to Pakistan and Kenya to Iran, with a possible advanced headquarters in the Indian Ocean area, probably in Diego Garcia, "the security relationship between Pakistan and the USA... is currently at an all-time high."³ "With Pakistan

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2. Norman Palmer in Chowla, Sudarshan and Sardesai, D.R. (eds.), Changing Patterns of Security and Stability in Asia, (New York, 1980), pp.133-34.
 3. Sawhney, R.G., "Focus on US-Pak Security Relationship", Strategic Analysis, VII:8 (November, 1983), pp.575-87.

becoming, in US perception a 'frontline state', it acquired a strategic importance which transcended all other considerations - human rights, narcotic smuggling, democracy and even nuclear non-proliferation."⁴ It should be noted that earlier the Carter Administration gave a waiver of the Symington Amendment to resume military and economic aid to Pakistan in the context of the Afghan situation.

During the crisis of 1971, there was a tilt towards Pakistan by the United States. Kissinger, in his "White House Years", made this point quite clear. His own version of the crisis of 1970-71 makes it clear that the US attitude to the crisis was dictated by the White House perception of American self-interest. The most important self-interest was the preservation of the Chinese link. The US was profoundly grateful to Pakistan's military dictator - Yahya Khan for performing this great service for her.⁵

4. Sawhney, R.G., "A New US-Pak Security Relationship", Strategic Analysis, IX:2 (April, 1984), pp.11-12.

5. Kissinger, H., The White House Years, (New Delhi, 1979), p.739.

Both Nixon and Kissinger had a deeprooted dislike and suspicion for India well before the India-Pakistan crisis of 1970-71. It was the Kissinger report to Nixon that reliable information indicates an overall East Pakistan. Kissinger had no doubt that in fact the India-Pakistan war had begun and that India had started it.

Thus, during the 1971 crisis, Nixon and Kissinger both developed ill perceptions about India's wartime motivations. India never revealed its hegemonistic ambitions. It was a western propaganda for creating suspicions in the minds of India's neighbours. Time itself has proved India's desires when she returned about 50,000 sq. miles of Pakistan's territory without any pre-conditions.

However, after the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict, the US found it necessary to accept the new realities and to acknowledge India's pre-eminent position in the subcontinent. It also recognised the reality of Bangladesh (April, 1972).

Despite the reduction of strategic importance of Pakistan, Nixon Administration made several attempts to fortify Pakistan again. It decided to supply arms and equipments to Pakistan whose delivery had

been suspended in 1971.⁶

However, Pakistan was back in American security fold when Afghanistan shot into the world arena because of the entry of Soviet troops on the request of the Afghan regime. American intelligence sources announced that the December 27, 1979 Coup (which brought Babrak Karnal to power) was engineered, planned and executed by Soviet military forces who had been airlifted to Kabul.

The American response to Soviet military presence in Afghanistan was as usual hasty, unrealistic. It is the hurried and unimaginative response of Washington that has posed a serious threat to peace in this region. President Carter announced that he would arm Pakistan and China to the teeth and encourage Sino-Pak military intervention in Afghanistan.⁷

It seems America has not learnt that arming to the teeth of tottering unpopular regimes never pays. It tried that experiment in South Vietnam where it

6. Department of State Bulletin, 20 March, 1972, pp.436-37.

7. Singh, Rajvir, US, Pakistan and India, Chugh Publications, Allahabad, 1985, p.147.

proved a total failure. Similarly, the most sophisticated and enormous amount of military equipment could not save the Shah of Iran. Today, America is arming the most unpopular military junta in Pakistan. Therefore, if an Ayatollah type of revolution takes place in Pakistan, the American aid will turn out to be counter productive.

In the wake of Afghan situation, the Carter Administration tried to put Pakistan in front of its common enemy, that is the Soviet Union. But, Mr. Thorn Ton, in his analysis, said that the new found enthusiasm for Pakistan was not universally shared in Washington and that many saw the Soviet attack as much less traumatic event than portrayed by the President and Brzezinski. He further said that the Pakistanis did not share American enthusiasm. Their priorities were different.⁸

However, the new focus on Pakistan continued. With assumption of presidential office by Ronald

8. Thomson Peny Thorn Ton, "Between the Stools, US Policy towards Pakistan during the Carter administration," in Asian Survey, October, 1982, p.969.

Reagan the new US Administration saw Afghanistan as an opportunity to bleed the Soviet Union. Pakistan was vitally needed as conduct for weapons to Afghan insurgents to keep the insurgency going.

Thus, the Americans took the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan as an excuse to add momentum to the process of reinvigorating US-Pak relations. Pakistan was called "frontline State" in the area of crisis visualised by Brzezinski, the then National Security adviser. The Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, stated that Pakistan's security was a matter of special concern to the United States and that the Reagan administration would try to develop a strategic "consensus" to counter Soviet influence in the area stretching from Pakistan to Egypt.⁹

Pakistan has thus been treated as a crucial strategic asset for the USA. When the Reaganites came to power on the crest of a tide of hawkish sentiment, it was easy for Pakistan to persuade them to accept its offer of cooperation in their anti-Soviet ^{crusade.} Nor was the Regan administration particularly disturbed by the

9. Statement by Haig, Pakistan Affairs, 16 Dec. 1981, p.122.

feats expressed regarding the Zia regime's stability or that Pakistan had clandestinely embarked upon a nuclear programme. Zia obtained a large assistance package of 3.2 billion including the most sophisticated fighter-bombers and other arms. In spite of denials there appear to be indications that Pakistan's territory on the Arabian Sea Coast will be made available to the USA for the construction of a naval-cum-air base.¹⁰

Obviously, the US-Pak new relationship has developed for mutual interests and needs. General Zia, who had rejected the \$ 400 million Carter offer earlier as "Peanuts", established a new security relationship with the USA on acceptance of the \$ 3.2 billion US military aid package. While the US needs Pakistan with its efficient and war-tested military machine to check the alleged Soviet expansionism towards the Gulf, and views the US-Pak connection in its anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" Plan,¹¹ Pakistan needs the US support for its requirement of massive arms supply for expansion and modernisation of its

10. Singh, Rajvir, n.7, p.183.

11. Sreedhar, "Impact of Reagan's Arms Transfer Policy", Strategic Analysis, vol.V, No.5 and 6, Aug-Sept (Delhi), 1981, p.190.

armed forces and for its design against India. It also needs the support of the USA to ensure the regime's security against threats from within the country.

Beijing-Washington-Islamabad Axis:

A fusion of geo-political interests of Beijing and Washington took place in Southeast Asia after the American defeat in Vietnam. It is this disaster which changed American policy of confrontation with China to a policy of friendship. Chinese leaders too on their part developed the same perception.

Sino-Pak flirtation began as early as mid-fifties, almost at the same time as the US-Pak Pact was signed. Sino-Pak relations took a concrete shape after the Chinese attack on India in 1962. It was precisely at this time that China and Pakistan entered into a border agreement covering areas which were in dispute between India, Pakistan and China. China officially described Pakistan as an "anti-imperialist" country.

Though the Pakistani leaders in the mid-50s were claiming that they were moving away from Washington and drawing closer to Beijing, it was not true. Not only did Pakistan continue to be a member of CENTO

and SEATO, but also its naval units participated in the joint exercises with the American seventh fleet off the Philippines and earlier in the Arabian Sea. This collusion was essentially directed against India to force a settlement on the Kashmir question. The interests of Beijing and Washington coincided, because both of them wanted to use Islamabad card to pressure India. Yet another aspect is that the Chinese aggression of 1962 and Pakistani aggression of 1965 on India had the same objective - forcibly capture the Indian territories. This was in the interest of Washington too, since the US was interested in "cutting India to size." Thus, Pakistan became a link between Beijing and Washington.

The Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, has analysed the strategic implications of the two converging trans-Karakoram highways built by the Chinese with some assistance from Pakistan. The aim is to bring China logistically to the shore of the Indian Ocean.

The first all-weather road linking Gilgit in the so-called Azad Kashmir with Skardu in Chinese Sinkiang is already in operation. Built nearly 250 kilometres on Kashmir side, this road reduces a journey

of two weeks to nine hours.¹² The construction of this road, as an Indian note to China has underlined, demonstrates "China's collusion with Pakistan to undermine the sovereignty of India..."¹³

Sino-Pak cooperation in the field of Defence, both to set up defence-related industry and to train military personnel, has reached a level that could match the relationship between the US and its allies.¹⁴ Beijing, therefore, gives top priority to Pakistan while formulating its policy moves in South Asia. One major reason for this close military cooperation is "Beijing's perception that Pakistan's reliance on China would build pressure on India."¹⁵

Beijing-Islamabad relationship received a significant fillip after the recent developments in Afghanistan. "Pakistan's acquisition of Chinese equipments includes two squadrons of T-54 and T-59 tanks, reconnaissance vehicle PT 76, armoured carrier BTR,

12. Chopra, V.D., Asian Peace and Neo-imperialist axis, n.1, pp.70-71.

13. Ibid., p.71.

14. Ibid., p.76.

15. Ibid., p.76.

85 mm and 100 mm field guns and 100 mm anti-aircraft guns. In 1982-83, China is reported to have supplied to Pakistan a large number of F-6 and F-7 fighters and TU-16 and TU-4 ground attack bombers. In 1982, Pakistan's navy acquired from China two Romeo class submarines, in addition to submarine chasers and patrol boats."¹⁶ On Sino-Pak nuclear cooperation, Dr. R.R. Subramanyam has collected certain facts which throw a flood of light on the Chinese role in the nuclearisation of Pakistan. The "Washington Post" recently published a story saying that intelligence sources had reason to believe that China was helping Pakistan in the development of nuclear bomb. Unconfirmed reports indicate that China has provided drawings and design data pertaining to the 20 kiloton uranium bomb that it had tested in 1964.¹⁷ Pakistani analysts themselves have noted that Pakistan is the only lever that China¹⁸ has for pressuring India. Hence, it would not have been difficult for Pakistan to obtain bomb details from China.

16. Ibid., p.76.

17. Ibid., p.136.

18. Naveed Ahemad, "Sino-Pak Relations: 1971-81", in Pakistan Horizon, vol.XXXIV, no.3, 1981, p.59.

Even the Pakistani nuclear programme is well within the knowledge of the United States. According to authentic American sources¹⁹ themselves, Pakistan has been producing enriched uranium of weapon-grade "on an assembly line" basis, since it has already set up a centrifuge plant with a capacity of 2000 to 3000 SWU (separate work units) which could produce about 45 kg. of highly enriched uranium, or three bombs worth, per year. More recently, Pakistani agents were buying Krystrons in Canada and the USA, for bomb trigger mechanisms.²⁰ Hence, the USA, despite its formal commitment to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, has quietly accepted the transition of Pakistan from a non-nuclear to a nuclear weapon state.

The Pakistani Nuclear factor:

Scientists and experts in the USA and other countries believe that the amount of enriched uranium produced in Pakistan in the second half of the 1980s

19. Senator Alan Cranston after a visit to Pakistan, in an address on 21 June, 1984 in the US Senate, made these points.

20. V.D. Chopra, n.12, p.136.

will be enough to make six bombs every year. By 1990, the military regime will be able to accumulate about 30 nuclear devices.²¹

Senator Cranston has disclosed that Pakistan was likely to reach nuclear capability by end of 1982 on the basis of information he had verified with the officials of Reagan Administration. Secretary of State, Haig, chose not to react to Senator Cranston's disclosure with the remark that he had not studied the subject. Francis Fukuyama of Rand Corporation had stated in his report "The Security of Pakistan: A trip Report": "What matters here is that there is probably nothing the United States can do at this point to prevent Pakistan from acquiring a nuclear capability. Sanctions will not forestall the programme, nor will increase conventional arms fully answer the insecurities that push Pakistan towards modernisation. US non-proliferation policy is not unimportant; it is simply not relevant to the question of US-Pakistan security relations."²²

21. Ibid., p.73.

22. Quoted in K. Subramanyam, India's Security Perspectives, ABC Publishing House, New Delhi, 1983, p.185.

Here "modernisation" means nuclearisation. No American who has visited Pakistan recently and discussed the nuclear weapon issue with Pakistani authorities has come up with the suggestion that a nuclear weapon free zone proposal would influence the Pakistanis to desist from their efforts to reach weapon capability. It was a policy to buy time and cover up their enormous global procurement operations.²³

The government of Pakistan is unable to convince even the United States, which is currently engaged in fitting Pakistan into its framework of "strategic consensus" as a "frontline state", that it is not making nuclear weapons. American Senators, Congressmen, and officials who have visited Pakistan have all gone away with the conviction that Pakistan is bent on reaching nuclear weapon capability. Senator Cranston's disclosure has left us with no doubt about Pakistani nuclear weapon programme.

General Zia himself admits that the Pakistani scientists are working on uranium enrichment. Besides, we have irrefutable evidence painstakingly compiled

23. Ibid., p.207.

by the Dutch government in its report on "Khan Affair", ~~how~~ Dr. A.Q. Khan, a Pakistani, took away the documentation and data on the centrifuge process of uranium enrichment from Almelo in Holland.

Evidence is also available of the Pakistani purchases of equipment relating to either uranium enrichment or Plutonium reprocessing in the United States, UK, France, Holland and Italy. The enriched uranium for peaceful purposes is required for light-water reactors. Pakistan has so far no light water reactor. Nor has it any peaceful use for reprocessed plutonium in the absence of a programme for the breeder reactor. Consequently, the simultaneous two-pronged drive for both plutonium reprocessing and enriching uranium without having reactor programmes, and enormous extent of clandestine equipment purchases cannot be fitted in with a peaceful nuclear programme. Hence, the Pakistani aim is clearly a nuclear weapon programme.

Now, let us bring out the implications, strategic and political, which the Pakistani nuclear weapon programme will have for India.

First of all, international peace in nuclear age has been so far maintained through nuclear deterrence.

Nuclear weapons are used in a situation when the victim cannot retaliate. They have not been used where some sort of symmetry of capabilities has existed. In case of a non-nuclear India and a nuclear Pakistan, the former cannot ensure symmetry of capabilities in which case it will endanger its security by failing to retaliate.

Secondly, if India faces a Pakistani nuclear threat in a situation of nuclear asymmetry, it will be only Soviet Union which will come to its rescue. But if India wants to be strategically self-reliant, a nuclear Pakistan will not let her do that.

Thirdly, if Pakistan gains an asymmetric nuclear capability, the Chinese will start dealing with the subcontinent through Pakistan. Once that stage is reached, India's smaller neighbours will start making demands on India.

Fourthly, in a situation of nuclear asymmetry, the conventional strategic superiority of India over Pakistan will be totally nullified.

Finally, if Pakistan acquires nuclear weapons, India will face the danger of being subjected to "nuclear blackmail" by either Pakistan alone, or USA

and Pakistan in collaboration. India had this experience in 1971 war, when the nuclear-powered US Enterprise was moved into the Bay of Bengal. Such a situation of nuclear blackmail will seriously jeopardise India's security.

US-Pak Policy on Afghanistan and India's Security:

The Afghan situation has provided an opportunity to Pakistan to give new teeth to its military might and to go ahead with its designs against India. Islamabad magnifies the presence of the limited Soviet contingent to such a dimension as to pose it as a "threat" to Pakistan.

In fact, Pakistan has been exploiting the presence of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan to shore-up its military might. And if Islamabad, following the instructions of Washington tries to play Afghanistan card, this is done for justifying the boosting up of the supplies of the latest American armaments to Pakistan. The list of these weapons includes the F-16 fighter-bombers, the Harpoon missiles, self-propelled artillery, armoured personnel carriers, cobra helicopters, SAMS and many others. The character of the weapons and their amount and distribution shows that the Afghan direction is far from being

the only one.²⁴

In fact, the question arises against what threat Pakistan is to use these new and sophisticated equipments? Are the Soviet troops in Afghanistan the threat as the arms suppliers of Pakistan would have us believe? The Pakistani perception²⁵ about and posture towards Moscow rules out this contingency. Further, the sort of equipment Pakistan is acquiring has no relevance to the mountainous region separating Pakistan and Afghanistan. Even if the new acquisitions of military hardware were suitable for military engagement in mountainous terrain, does Pakistan, in its senses, afford to indulge in an armed confrontation with Soviets?

Further, if all these arms were directed only against Afghanistan, Pakistan would have never needed the Harpoon water-to-water missiles since Afghanistan has no outlet to the sea. This question was touched

24. V.D. Chopra, n.12, p.101.

25. At a Seminar at Lahore, Agha Shahi ruled out a direct Soviet attack on Pakistan. He said that the Soviet Union had given an assurance that there was no possibility of an attack on Pakistan and it should have no fear on that account. P.B. Sinha, "Impact of Afghan development", Strategic Analysis, Aug-Sept 1981, p.208.

upon during the hearings in the US Congress and a spokesman for the administration indirectly said that those could be used against India.²⁶ It is not just by chance either that 30 per cent of the Pakistani fleet of tanks, reequipped for fighting in present day conditions, has been concentrated along the "control line" in the Pakistan-occupied part of Kashmir.²⁷

All available evidences point towards India as the target of Pakistan's rearmament drive. After the Soviet entry into Afghanistan, the US had suggested to Pakistan to withdraw at least two divisions from its borders with India and reinforce its strength in the N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan to "stem the tide of Communist expansion. But Gen. Zia refused to consider the suggestion on the ground that the main threat to Pakistan came from India. He maintained that if the Soviet Union decided to overrun Pakistan from Afghanistan, the additional troops would be of no consequence. Even today, most of its armed strength is deployed along the borders with India.

26. V.D. Chopra, n.12, p.102.

27. Ibid.

Pakistan's controlled press has already started talking of the period when the superiority at present enjoyed by India shall stand neutralised as a result of the acquisition of modern F-16 fighters, armed helicopters and other sophisticated ground military equipment by Pakistan. "Nawa-i-Wakt", an influential Urdu daily, in an article entitled "Can these (F-16) planes really attack nuclear centres in India?" remarked²⁸ that F-16 planes are better than low-flying deep penetration Jaguars (that India possesses) and their acquisition by Pakistan would bring the Kota nuclear installations within (attacking) range of the Pakistan Airforce. No wonder, the Reagan Administration which initially promised that US arms to Pakistan would not be used against India, has now accepted the position that it is arming Pakistan because it is vulnerable to threats not only from the Soviet Union, but also from India. According to Selig S. Harrison, the Reagan administration has now "frankly acknowledged that Pakistan wants help mainly to build up its military posture

28. This remark is mentioned by P.B. Sinha, n.25, p.210.

vis-a-vis India."²⁹

The present military relationship with Pakistan, once it is further established, the US would expectedly receive tacit support of Gen. Zia to its "containment" plans. Also, the US would, then, have several means to make Pakistan play the ball. One of the gestures on part of the USA in the process of mutual accommodation with Pakistan is their acceptance that military acquisitions by Pakistan were primarily to meet an "Indian threat". Thus, once the centrality of Pakistan in the US gulf strategy was determined, the Reagan administration appears to accept that if India in the process is made to pay a price that would be teaching India a lesson for being friendly to the Soviet Union.³⁰

The Afghan situation, though it does not pose an immediate or direct military threat to the sub-continent, has provided alibi to anti-Soviet forces to initiate steps which have the potential of endangering the peace, stability, and security of

29. P.B. Sinha, n.25, p.211.

30. Ibid.

the subcontinent. The most important of these steps is, as noted earlier, the decision of the United States to supply sophisticated military equipment to Pakistan. Even more ominous is that the Reagan administration, in its zeal to make Pakistan a "frontline state", is prepared to look away as Pakistan ~~identifies~~^{intensifies} its efforts to attain nuclear weapon capability.

Subversion of India:

The USA, in league with Pakistan, has aimed at subversion of India. One of such subversive attempts is in respect of Kashmir. The map of RDF deployment in West Asia as a revealing admission of US-Pak strategic link up, places the whole of Pakistan in this RDF's operational zone. The most sinister and serious aspect of the map, however, is that the whole of Jammu and Kashmir has been sliced off from India and shown as part of Pakistan in the RDF's area of operation.³¹ This has serious implication, because it provides documentary evidence that Pakistan's military regime had already become a

31. V.D. Chopra, n.12, p.84.

full-fledged partner in the American strategic plan for West Asia and the RDF and had decided to make Kashmir its main target.

Another instrument of subversion has been espionage. Long before the terrorist flare-up in Punjab, the police had busted a ring of spies relaying information to Pakistan in the Poonch and Rajouri areas of Kashmir for the past many years.³² Besides spying activities, these spies smuggle Pakistani arms into North India. One of its members had regular dealings with a man in Agra, another had set up a base for sale of illegal arms in Delhi. This is the revelation of a senior intelligence officer who does not want to be quoted.³³

Yet, another instrument of subversion fashioned by Pakistan is heroin smuggling into India. One has to visit the border areas of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab to have some idea of this new menace and its close relationship with the forces of destabilisation operating in these two states. Both Pakistan and America have vested interests in promoting smuggling.

32. Ibid., p.85.

33. Ibid.

Firstly, these drug runners, being dare-devils, can undertake any risk and therefore are best suited for espionage and terrorist action. In fact, some Sikh boys, who have crossed the border, were put in touch with the heroin smugglers after they received training from specialists.³⁴

However, Pakistan is still relying mainly on subversive elements trained by her. She has reportedly set up camps in Chirat in Muree district and Allahabad near the famous Haji Pir Pass in occupied Kashmir to train terrorists who escaped to that country during the army action in Punjab.³⁵

Reports received from across the border indicate that the training includes commando courses and methods to hijack aircraft. Some terrorists had corroborated this during interrogation. These reports also revealed that Pakistan has set up a guerilla command organisation to supervise subversive operations in J&K and Punjab, and that Pakistan had divided its

34. P.M. Pasricha, "India's Current Strategic environment", Strategic Analysis, Nov. 1984, p.713.

35. V.D. Chopra, n.12, p.87.

guerilla force into three formations known as SSG (Secret Subversive Group) comprising Muzahids, Razakars and Paracommandos.³⁶ These formations have been allotted different jobs, the SSG having been assigned the sole task of supervising operations in the Kashmir valley.

Muzahids, a specially trained group in guerilla warfare, which had unsuccessfully supervised the guerilla operations in the Kashmir valley during the 1965 Indo-Pak conflict and was later banned, has recently been reorganised and reequipped with sophisticated weapons. These Muzahids have been scattered around Poonch, Rajouri and Uri sectors.

Pakistan has also built an artillery base at Mehmoodgali near Chiricot Commanding Post, which is at a height on the line of actual control near Poonch. Reports also speak of heavy concentration of Pakistani troops all along the borders and switching units frequently. These replacements of troops are being mainly done along Kashmir borders. According to these reports, trenches are being dug and modern defence

36. Ibid.

equipment installed near the no man's land in the Sawajian and Bharooti areas in the Poonch sector.

The foreign hand behind the secessionist movement has been amply proved. It has been officially admitted that J.S. Chauhan has links with various organisations in the US. Similarly, Dhillon maintains liaison with US senators and persons in the higher echelons of the Pakistani administration. In this connection, a startling fact has come to light that Chauhan had contacts with Heritage foundation of Washington - which is a CIA outfit - though the official circles have not identified this foundation in these terms.³⁷

Besides the attempts at internal subversion of India, the US-Pak military alliance has seriously jeopardised India's external security. Reagan's arms sales policy towards the subcontinent is quite pertinent in this regard. In the military package which the US proposed to sell to Pakistan, the most significant is F-16 highly sophisticated long range fighter bomber.

37. Ibid., p.92.

The sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan would dangerously escalate arms race between India and Pakistan by introducing into the subcontinent an aircraft technologically superior to any currently being used in the region. India would be driven, as pointed out by the Indian Counsellor in Washington, "to consider the purchase of technologically sophisticated weapons, including Mirage 2000 aircraft."³⁸

Secondly, the historical and current security perceptions of Pakistan were focussed on India and not on the Soviet Union. The sales of these aircrafts, which could penetrate deep into Indian territory and reach sensitive Indian targets, would increase the likelihood of another war between India and Pakistan.³⁹

Official Indian response to the US military aid plan has been highly strident. India believes that

38. Richard Burt, "US will press Pakistan to Halt Arms Project", New York Times, 11 August, 1979.

39. Selig Harrison, "India and Reagan's tilt towards Pakistan", New York Times, 15 July, 1981.

"the sophistication and quantity of the projected US arms supplies to Pakistan is far in excess of Pakistan's legitimate defence requirement,"⁴⁰ that the weapons being supplied by the United States "are not meant for defensive purposes but essentially for offensive purposes."⁴¹

A disturbing aspect of US-Pak strategic link up relates to General Zia's promise to allow US planes to use Pakistani airfields as per the disclosure by Jack Anderson. Pakistani airfields could be used by AWACs, SR-71 and RC 135 for intelligence gathering over India. The USA may agree to pay this price for Pakistan's participation in its "strategic consensus" plan against the Soviets. There is little doubt that the USA is in a position to provide intelligence about India to Pakistan based largely on satellites, high level air reconnaissance (SR-71) AWACs and electronic momentoring (including operation with RC 135). The sort of intelligence which Pakistan would require from the US, both strategic and tactical, would broadly relate to force levels, operational

40. Statement by Minister of State for Defence, Shiv Raj Patil in the Rajya Sabha, 19 Aug. 1981.

41. Indira Gandhi's interview with Spanish journalists, 27 January 1982. India, Ministry of External Affairs, PM Indira Gandhi, Statements on Foreign Policy, Jan-March, 1982 (New Delhi), p.46.

readiness status, deployment and mobilisation warfare, maritime surveillance including location of fleets and ships,⁴² tactical intelligence pertaining mainly to the location, deployment and movement of armoured formations and major trends relating to defence preparedness.

In this context, Pakistan's plan to launch communication satellites in next few years for quick transmission of information is relevant. But, it would be most disconcerting if the USA decided to supply digital maps to be fed into the navigation computer of F-16 for air strikes against Indian targets. The position even would be even more serious for India, if Pakistan becomes a beneficiary of the lantern system, which will bestow an all weather low level navigation capability.⁴³

To conclude, Pakistan's rearmament drive backed by the United States is to realise Islamabad's Indo-centric goals. The US policy would, in fact,

42. The Times of India, 15 May 1984.

43. Rajvir Singh, n.7, p.190.

inevitably lead to seriously disturbing the present military equation between India and Pakistan. What worsens the strategic situation further is the nuclear factor introduced in India's security environment because of nuclearisation of Pakistan with the Sino-US collusion. This, in fact, results in strategic imbalance between India and Pakistan. Experience has shown that whenever the rulers of Pakistan felt militarily strong vis-a-vis India, they started an armed confrontation with India. Incidentally, the two major wars that Pakistan thrust on India - in 1965 and 1971 - were at a time when it was being ruled by the army. The present armament drive has been launched by Pakistan again when the country is under a military dictatorship. India can overlook these developments (resulting from US-Pak security tie and China's collusion with them) only at the cost of her security. An upswing in the arms race in the subcontinent is very much on the cards because of the introduction of the nuclear factor.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In order to identify the implications of US policy in the Arc of Crisis for India's security, it is necessary to differentiate between national security perception of the USA and of India. A look at official military postures and commentaries of important US Administration officials in and out of office, suggests that the US has global imperialist national security concerns. Harold Brown, e.g., defines national security thus: " it is the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory, to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms, to protect its institutions and governance from disruption from outside and to control its borders".¹

This notion is more elaborately stated in the military posture of the US for FY 1979 by chairman of chiefs of staff, which adds to this maintenance of international environment conducive to US interests. It says the basic national security objective of the US "is to preserve the US as a free nation with its fundamental

1. Harold Brown, National Security, p.4

institutions and values intact", which meant "an international environment must be maintained in which US interests are protected and US freedom of action is assured."²

By all counts, the Soviet Union is alleged to be behind the threats to the US national security in international environment in which its allies and third world countries in all regions are involved. As Caspar Weinberger says, "the growth of insurgency and political instability within many third world ^{Countries and 42 wor} wide Soviet military presence increasingly able to exploit this instability of the US and its allies and control the third world resources have all contributed to a more complex military balance."³

This is the continuation of the rationale behind Carter-Brzezinski doctrine and its application in the Arc of crisis. The operationalisation of this doctrine is

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2. Statement of Gen. George Brown, Chairman of joint chiefs of staff on the defence posture of the US for FY 1979, p.3.
 3. Annual Report to the Congress, FY 1986, p.15.

expressed by Gen. David C. Jones, Chairman, Joint chiefs of staff, in his overview for FY 1981 thus: "..... the US should have the capability to deploy a military presence rapidly and efficiently into areas of the world which lie outside either bloc."(p.5).

The US official position as indicated from the approach of present Administration is to negotiate from a position of strength, which determines its military posture and presence in different parts of the world. This implies that the Americans feel secure in the situation of strategic superiority vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and the situation of parity is conceived as a threat to security. This alarmist perspective underlined in the concept of "Arc of Crisis" is the US response to sweeping political changes in late 1970s and the American loss of control in many parts of the globe coupled with a sense of need to reassert American supremacy.

Its inability to reconcile to these changes made it adopt the cold war style of putting on the Soviet Union, all the blame for the social and political upheavals. Throughout this work, an attempt has been made to critically view the Soviet responsibility for the crises in the

Arc. In fact, the critical analysis in this work has exposed the American notion of "Soviet threat" as a myth. The crises have been rather located in their local and historical contexts, as brought out in Chapter-I.

As in the case of Horn of Africa with regard to development in Ethiopia and Somalia, America invented the myth of "Soviet responsibility" in the wake of crisis in the Persian Gulf when in fact the crisis was due to the causes internal to Iran, or rather more due to the American policy of backing and sustaining a corrupt and unpopular regime of Shah. Truly speaking the crisis in the Gulf is attributable to the fragile social and political structures, corrupt, inefficient and unpopular regimes and the pattern of economic development, breeding economic inequality. The purpose of U.S.A. is to control the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf region through its control over Horn of Africa and Persian Gulf countries in order to seek what Weinberger says "facilities".

The "Carter doctrine" enunciated on Persian Gulf is interventionist in its tone since it claims unilateral right to intervene. The intervention is sought on the pretext of protection of vital interests of the U.S.A.

But America does not define what its vital interests are. To operationalise "Carter doctrine" the RDF has been deployed, which is nuclear-capable and is intended for intervention even in local countries when Soviet Union is not in picture.

The United States proclaims that oil is its major strategic interest in the Persian Gulf. But, the oil fields of the Gulf will be in jeopardy not so much because of local outbreaks like the Iranian militants' seizure of the US embassy in Teheran. Hence, the Gulf strategy and the Rapid Deployment Force is not only targeted against the Soviet Union, but against the local countries.

The interventionist posture of the US in the Gulf caters to the pressing demand of the US military machine for increased appropriations throughout the latter part of the 1970s . In fact, for strategic planners of the USA, the Gulf region has an important military attraction: it adjoins the Soviet Union. Thus, the US notion of National Security in the Gulf is expansionist rather than defensive.

Coming to the Indian ocean, the massive US military presence has precipitated the crisis not only for the Soviet Union but also for the littoral states. The US strategic -nuclear presence (in the shape of Polaris submarine) in the Indian Ocean became a reality in the mid - 1960s when there was no Soviet military pressure. The Soviet naval presence began from 1968 and has expanded gradually since then. Though the Soviet presence is quite moderate, it has been used as a pretext by the US to pursue vigorously the building up of its naval strength. The aim is not to match, but to overwhelm the Soviet naval strength, to achieve strategic superiority vis-a-vis the Soviets on Indian Ocean front. The proposed naval build up of the USA with the nuclearisation of Diego Garcia base and with an emphasis on nuclear powered surface vessels and hunter killer submarines would enable the USA not only to have a strong conventional interventionist capacity but also a nuclear-interventionist capability (the role of RDF as a nuclear "tripwire" gives to the US strategy in the Indian Ocean a nuclear component).

The US and its western allies justify their naval presence mainly on the ground that the control of sea-lanes is vital for their national survival, especially because

of their dependence on West Asian oil. The West feels that the USSR is interested in denying oil to it and hence the need for Western military presence in the Indian Ocean area to thwart the Soviet design.

But this is an over-assessment of the Soviet capability - to influence the oil producing region, especially in the teeth of local and western opposition. The Soviet Union is quite conscious of the costs of risking a confrontation in a region like Indian ocean. In fact, if oil is to be used as a weapon , it would be used not by the Soviet Union, but by the oil producing nations themselves. The events following October war (1973) proved it. Hence, the Western arguments justifying their military presence and further augmentation of their strategic - nuclear strength to counter Soviet threat to oil routes appear to be a Smoke-screen to hide their real motives, i.e. increasing their interventionist capability vis-avis the regional powers.

The national security perspective of the U.S. in the context of the "Area of Crisis" seems to presuppose U.S. strategic superiority. So when the Soviet Union achieved a rough parity vis-a-vis the US in the 1970s, the United States felt its national security threatened.

The policies and postures of United States adopted in various regions of the Arc of Crisis - the Horn, the Parsian Gulf and the Indian Ocean - as noted above and noted in preceding chapters are the dictates of an imperialist, expansionist notion of national security rather than those of the defensive notion of national security which India represents.

Apart from the aggressive and interventionist postures and presence of the US the introduction of the arms race in general and in the South West and South Asian Region in particular causes threats to security and stability of states in this region. Hence the question of regional security and stability is linked up, with the strategy in the 'Arc of Crisis'.

For a developing country of India's geo strategic and political ~~expanse~~, national security would involve strategic political and economic considerations. National security for India would imply (a) defense of its frontiers - both land and sea (b) integrity of its geographical territory (c) its democratic political institutions (d) the value systems of secularism, socialism and democracy and (e) its economic development strategy of self-reliance.

A comprehensive understanding of the Indian security problem demands that we must relate it to our world view, to other aspects like economy, polity, nation ~~building etc.~~ instead of narrowly conceiving it in military

terms only. In fact what is important here is the linkage between India's national security on one hand and its techno-economic development and socio-political development on the other.

India's security perspective is very much in line with its non-aligned Foreign Policy. In fact, the birth of the concept of non-alignment is to be traced to the broadcast of Pandit Nehru on 7 September 1946 as Vice Chairman of the Viceroy's Executive Council when he spelt out the outline of India's foreign policy. He said, "....., we seek no dominion over others and we claim no privileged position over other peoples". This reflects the non-hegemonic and non-expansionist nature of our security policy.

In fact, India's conception of national security is defensive in nature. Its emphasis is more on the evolution of its own road to socio-economic transformation after independence than on arms race or defence preparedness. India seeks security through development. This notion of security comes in conflict with American imperialism and

its security orientation.

In fact, the global imperialist notion of National Security one adopted by the United States is premised on the "defence of allies", the armament drive and is thus expansionist in nature.

In contrast to Indian security perspective which is one of "enlightened national security" , the American view is one of interventionism and one of aggrandisement in respect of allies. While protecting the allies, the US is not bothered about the consequences of its policy (say arms transfer) on other nations. This boils down to the dictum of "American interests at any cost", no matter if it brings insecurity to other countries.

In fact, when the US is incorporating a particular nation into its strategic plan, it pays little attention to its impact on other nations and even to the internal conditions of the nation incorporated into its strategy. This is exemplified by the cases of Iran and recently Pakistan.

Since the early 80s, the Pentagon has evolved a three-dimensional strategy for the developing countries

and all these three facets of its strategy are in operation in India. They are:

1. create and aggravate tensions in various parts of the world and thus create objective conditions to justify the presence of American military. The way the RDF has been widening its net and the Indian Ocean militarilised, needs to be seen in this context.
2. arm to the teeth those countries which are willing to play the American game. Pakistan is an ideal example.
3. Proxy Wars or aid its puppets to aggress others e.g. South Africa, Israel.
4. In this aggressive ^{cause} plan, internal subversion, helped by the intelligence agenices. Organise terrorist gangs and deploy the CIA to subvert the country internally. This has been noted earlier(in Chapter IV) while dealing with the role of the US Subversive mechanisms in Punjab. According to Western press reports , training of these terrorist gangs is being updated to include Urban Warfare and use of modern military hard-ware. What has been happening in India in recent years bears testimony to this.

All these dimensions of the US strategy greatly bear upon the Indian security as shown in the preceding chapters.

However, we can not remain content with this narrower definition of Indian Security - namely American aid to Pakistan, including the sale of F-16s, the development of a Pakistani nuclear device and the Indian response to it and so forth. All these must be related to the perception of Indian neighbours about India and the problem of national integration faced by India itself. Almost all of our neighbours harbour suspicion about India's expansionist ambitions and fear a politico-military threat from the latter. But India poses neither a military threat nor a political hegemonic threat. The threat it poses is only in the realm of values. Most of India's neighbours have fragile Socio-political structure. When they use the terms hegemony and expansionism, they are in reality expressing their fears about the ideas of representative Government, federal structure, linguistic autonomy and secularism spreading to their states.

In fact, India is the only democracy in the region claiming political stability. Its sense of insecurity arises because of absence of stable and legitimate political regimes in the neighbourhood, which brings external influence to its doorsteps. What adds to this sense of insecurity is the fact that the elites in the neighbouring countries have been conditioned with an anti-Indian bias created by the external imperialist powers.

Further, the nuclear factor in Pakistani context has jeopardised India's security. It has exposed India to the danger of blackmail and has stood in the way of its peaceful programme, besides diverting its scarce resources from the development sector. Already today in India there are voices for India acquiring nuclear weapons. They propound the theory of deterrence in their support. For example a recent study conducted by Birla Institute of Scientific Research says that in the context of nuclear arms race "India may have no alternative but to start building atleast a modest nuclear arsenal". (Self Reliance and Security Role of Defence Production, Birla Institute of Scientific Research, Radiant Publishers, 1984, p. 15.

The implications of such strategies would have a bearing on our economic development. Though going for nuclear weapons programme may not involve a great diversion of resources as argued by many defence analysts in India, this may have repercussions on the economy in the long run and the objective of the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the short run.

All these contribute to the blocking of the Path of independent policy making and independent developmental effort - the over-whelming objective of India's pursuit of 'enlightened' National Security, expressed in the saying of Jawaharlal Nehru, i.e. "Peace is indivisible, so is prosperity and so is disaster in this thermo-nuclear age."

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