

**INDO — US RELATIONS : THE SECURITY AND
NUCLEAR DIMENSIONS (1977 — 86)**

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SHASHI BHUSHAN SINGH

CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL, SOUTH-EAST
ASIAN AND SOUTH,—WEST PACIFIC STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI—110067

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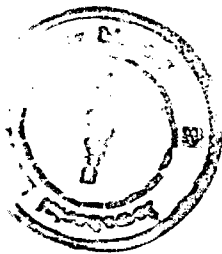


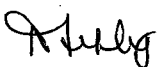
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067


CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL AND
SOUTH-EAST ASIAN AND SOUTH-WEST
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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University, is his original work to the best of our knowledge
and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.




DR. NANCY JETLY
Supervisor


PROFESSOR URMILA PHADNIS
Chairperson

Prof. (Mrs.) Urmila Phadnis
Chairperson
Centre for South, Central and Southeast
Asian and South West Pacific Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

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P R E F A C E

Notwithstanding the often used rhetoric of being the "two largest democracies" of the world, sharing many political and economic ideals and goals in common, the record ^{of} Indo-US relations shows that these two countries, in reality, do not share much in common. On the contrary, their relationship has often been punctuated by serious differences of perceptions over a number of issues of both regional and global significance. Not that there have not been efforts on their parts to patch up differences and evolve a mature understanding of, and cooperative relationship with, each other. But such attempts have met with only limited success. The basic 'overtones' of disharmony and mutual distrust have persisted. Why has this been so? Different explanations have been offered by academics, diplomats and statesmen in this context with varying degree of emphasis on the major variables that determine Indo-US relations.

Of these variables, the ones such as 'non-alignment', the 'China factor', the 'Soviet factor', and above all the 'Pakistan factor' are considered crucial for the overall Indo-US relations. An alternative explanation has also been offered suggesting the primacy of US desire to contain India - a middle-Power in its own right, directly.

The present work, which takes up the period between 1977-86 for analysing the security and nuclear dimensions of Indo-US relations, seeks to explain its basic dynamics in terms of deep strategic divergences existing over various security issues. It has been emphasized here that such differences have occurred mainly due to the different, unequal, power-status of India and the United States.

India, which can be termed as a 'rising middle Power' has its own aspirations on which it shapes its perceptions. Aware of its regional status, it has often found the US security policies in the region detrimental to its own interests. The United States, on the other hand, has always shaped its policies with a global perspective. A basic preoccupation of the US policy has been to contain the Soviet Union. In South Asia, it found in Pakistan a willing partner for the promotion of its strategic designs which has had serious security implications for India. Similarly, US hobnobbing with China since the 70s further complicates India's security environment. In the post-Afghanistan period, the US arms aid to Pakistan and military and nuclear cooperation with China pose for India a serious dilemma in terms of its security perspective vis-a-vis its two regional adversaries.

Thus, when the United States fashions its policies in this region they may not be necessarily directed against

it, but they do have certain implications for India. India as a preeminent Power in South Asia would not like extra-regional power presence in the region, including the Indian Ocean. But the US global policies require its military presence in the region. Similarly, in the nuclear field also, the United States practises double-standards. While waiving its rules for Pakistan and China with whom it has congruence of strategic views, it applies the same rules stringently in case of India which refuses to identify itself with the US strategic perceptions. Seen in this background, the present study makes a modest attempt to put the Indo-US relations in a regional Power-global Power perspective and thereby explain the underlying divergences of perceptions.

This study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter traces the background of the Indo-US relations and puts them in a historical perspective since 1947. Here, the important variables and basic determinants of Indo-US relations have been discussed. The second chapter seeks to focus on the asymmetrical nature of the Indo-US security relationship in terms of differing perceptions over a number of security matters. More emphasis has been laid on the issue of US arms to Pakistan and its implications for India's security in the 1980s. The increased threat to Indian security emerging from massive US naval and nuclear build-up in the Indian Ocean

has also been discussed in this chapter. The reasons for the repeated failure of India's arms relationship with the United States have also been studied here.

The third chapter is concerned with the nuclear dimensions of the Indo-US relations. This chapter seeks to analyse sharp differences between India and United States on such issues as nuclear non-proliferation, fuel and spare parts for Tarapur and the question of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia. The divergence of Indo-US perceptions on these issues has been subjected to critical analysis in this chapter. The fourth chapter concludes the theme of Indo-US differences in the security and nuclear fields.

I take this opportunity to record my profound sense of gratitude to my Supervisor, Dr.(Mrs.) Nancy Jetly, for her invaluable guidance and sincere help in completing this dissertation. I am also grateful to Professor Bimal Prasad, Professor Urmila Phadnis, Professor S.D. Muni and Professor I.N. Mukherji of the Centre for their help and encouragement at various stages.

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Shashi Bhushan Singh
(SHASHI BHUSHAN SINGH)

CHAPTER - I
B A C K G R O U N D

This chapter is primarily concerned with placing the Indo-American relations in a historical perspective to stress the point that from the very beginning, the policies of the two largest democracies of the world have often clashed over a number of issues of international and regional significance. The starting point for this purpose is 1947 - the year India achieved independence. For, prior to independence, Indo-US interactions were extremely limited. While India remained under the colonial rule of the British until August 1947 and therefore, could not pursue an independent foreign policy vis-a-vis the United States, the latter's interest in India's freedom movement always remained limited and peripheral, conditioned by British refusal to be pressurized by Roosevelt to grant independence to India.

With its emergence as an independent state in 1947 after two centuries of colonial domination, the most pressing need of the hour, in the perception of the nationalist leadership of India, was to protect the hard-won freedom and retain autonomy of decision in foreign relations. The stupendous task of nation building could not be fulfilled unless there was a peaceful environment for that. Also, due to its sheer

size and history, India had an urge to play a major role in world affairs.

Jawaharlal Nehru, who had been the chief spokesman of the Congress on international affairs during the freedom movement, also became the main architect of independent India's foreign policy. Non-alignment, as conceived by him became the cornerstone of India's conduct in international relations. The policy of non-alignment was in keeping with Nehru's earlier thinking. As early as 1946, he had declared:

We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on even vaster scale.¹

In his view, non-alignment was "a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind during our struggle for freedom and inherent in the circumstances of today".²

Thus, although the policy of non-alignment was deeply rooted in India's experiences during its struggle for freedom

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961 (Delhi, 1961), p.80.

2. India, Lok-Sabha Debates, Vol.23, December 1958, Col.3961.

the Cold War, which veritably divided the world into two hostile power blocks, provided an immediate context to this policy. For, a major security challenge to India came from the politics of the Cold War. The Cold War with its block politics threatened to take away both India's independence and autonomy of decision in foreign relations.

Thus, India's policy of non-alignment became anti-thetical to the United States' chief foreign policy objective viz., the containment of the communist bloc led by the Soviet Union through a system of world-wide military alliances. When China also went 'Red' in 1949 the United States felt even more seriously confronted with the challenge of communism, especially in Asia.

Apart from non-alignment, India accorded high priority to the issue of anti-colonialism. After two centuries of European domination, it was natural for India to pursue a strong anti-colonialist policy. Nehru spoke for most Indians when he said that "the crisis of the time in Asia ^{is colonialism} vs. anti-colonialism".³ Obviously for India, the colonial evil seemed to be a greater threat than communism as perceived by the United States. This difference in assessment made it difficult for Indians and Americans - who did not regard themselves

3. Quoted in W.J. Barnds, India, Pakistan and the Great Powers (London, 1972), p.59.

as colonialists - to communicate, much less to arrive at a common position on international issues. The United States could not appreciate as to why India failed to recognise that colonialism was on the wane and that communism was the real threat to the newly won independence of Asian nations.⁴ Thus, Asia's resurgence symbolized more than just freedom for the former colonies; it was the beginning of a new epoch in world history in which the Asian nations would again count for something.⁵

Related to the issues of anti-colonialism and Asian solidarity was India's friendly overtures to China. To Nehru's mind, China with its enormous potential strength had come to occupy the position of a great Power in the world.⁶ Hence, his policy of cultivating a friendly relation with China had an inherent security rationale, apart from the latter's role in the resurgence of Asia. India, much to the annoyance of the United States, extended its recognition to communist China soon after 1949. Not only this, it strove arduously for China's admission to the United Nations. Thus, while Nehru thought that the emergence of China as a

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. For details, see Nehru, n.1, pp.304-5.

unified country would change the balance of power in Asia, the United States' leaders on the other hand saw in China another sinister embodiment of international communism threatening the capitalist world order.

When Nehru visited the United States for the first time in October 1949 on "a voyage of discovery"⁷ the Secretary of State, Dean Acheson found him "one of the most difficult men to deal with".⁸ On the crucial question of containing the two communist powers - the Soviet Union and China - the Indian and American views remained poles apart during Nehru's visit. India also questioned the utility of the Western-led military alliances to contain communism in the new states of Asia where political sentiment was consolidating around nationalism. In India, the application of American military power outside Europe to create regional balances against the expansion of communism was seen as aggravating the very conditions which the United States sought to prevent.

By the early 50s itself then, the basic divergence in the strategic perspective had become clear as exemplified

7. Norman D. Palmer, The United States and India: The Dimensions of Influence (New York, 1984), p.22.

8. Quoted in T.V. Kunhikrishnan, The Unfriendly Friends: India and America (New Delhi: 1971), p.125.

by differing Indian and US views on the Cold War, China and the issue of anti-colonialism. The Korean crisis that erupted in 1950 as a spill over of the Cold War found India and the United States taking quite different stands. When civil war broke out in Korea, the United States wanted to contain North Korea which, according to Washington, represented international communism. India opposed this view, and when the United States wanted a UN force to fight against North Korea, India voted only for a UN presence in Korea.⁹ The UN force, composed largely of the Americans under General MacArthur's command crossed the 38th parallel despite India's warning that this action would bring China into the fray. In January 1951, India was the only non-communist state that voted against a US sponsored resolution in the United Nations General Assembly, condemning the Chinese invasion of Korea.

When peace talks on Korea began in July 1951, the two warring sides remained divided on the issue of exchange of POWs which again threatened to start fresh hostilities. India took a mediating role and prepared a plan to resolve the deadlock. Although the United States finally accepted the Indian plan and Dean Acheson, the US Secretary of State, praised Krishna Menon for his dedication to peace, Washington did not forget for a long-time the firm stand India took

9. Ibid., p.121.

against the United States, on Korea. The US failure in Korea made Washington more suspicious not only of communist regimes but also of India.¹⁰

II

The security alliance between the United States and Pakistan in the 1950s became the single most important irritant in Indo-American relations.¹¹ Thus, as a noted US analyst puts it, "next only to the problem of international communism, it^{is} differences over policy towards Pakistan which have brought misunderstandings and irritation into Indo-American relations".¹²

The security links forged between the United States and Pakistan were based on the logic of mutual reciprocity. The United States was frantically looking for an ally in the region to contain the menace of communism. Interestingly, it was India and not Pakistan which was first favoured as a surrogate and subordinate ally of the United States. But India, aspiring for an independent role in international politics, did not agree to the US strategic calculations.

10. Ibid.

11. Francine R. Frankel, "Indo-American Relations: Sources of Old Friction," in The Times of India (New Delhi), 17 May 1985.

12. Phillips Talbot and S.L. Poplai, India and America: A Study of Their Relations (Connecticut, 1973), p.68.

On the other hand, Pakistan for its own reasons was willing to ally itself with the United States in the latter's grand design against communism. A militarily weaker Pakistan which by itself could never hope to achieve parity with India in terms of military power, began to look to external sources for strengthening itself militarily vis-a-vis India. The United States was the most promising external source for this purpose. Pakistan was willing to act as a bulwark against Communism in the region, in return for US arms and political support, chiefly on the Kashmir issue. The United States could not hope to get a better deal.¹³

The United States, under the Eisenhower Administration, decided to supply arms to Pakistan in early 1954 even though the US Ambassador to India, Chester Bowles had protested against this, arguing that "American arms supplied to Pakistan could be used against India and would tend to foster greater instability in the Middle East and South Asia."¹⁴

This heralded an era of close US-Pak military links which was manifested in three major security agreements

13. See M.S. Venkataramani, The American Role in Pakistan: 1947-58 (New Delhi, 1982), pp.80-88.

14. Quoted in Rajvir Singh, "US-Pakistan-India: Strategic Relations" (Allahabad, 1985), p.30.

between them in both bilateral and multilateral arrangements. In May 1954, the United States and Pakistan signed the 'Mutual Defence Agreement Pact,' whereby, the former undertook to provide arms to Pakistan for its defence. Later the same year, Pakistan also joined SEATO, a multilateral security pact sponsored by the United States, primarily directed against China. A year later in 1955, Pakistan joined the Baghdad Pact which afterwards came to be known as CENTO. Subsequently, the US arms began to be "pumped" munificently to this "most allied ally".

This evoked strong opposition from India. Nehru reacted thus:

In effect Pakistan becomes practically a colony of the US... The US imagine that by this policy, they have completely outflanked India's so-called neutralism and will thus bring India to her knees. Whatever the future may hold, this is not going to happen. The first result of all this will be an extreme dislike of the United States in India. As it is, our relations are cool.¹⁵

India could not fail to discern a sinister design in the US hobnobbing with Pakistan whose bete noire remained India and not the Soviet Union. Clearly, the Pakistani security link-up with the United States was directed against India and not either China or the Soviet Union. General Ayub Khan, who was instrumental in Pakistan's entry into

15. S.Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography (Bombay, 1976) Vol.2, p.185.

CENTO, himself made this point clear later. According to him "the crux of the problem from the very beginning was the Indian attitude of hostility towards us: we had to look for allies to secure our position".¹⁶ He also observed that "after all, India is five times our size and Indian armed forces are four times the size of Pakistani forces. In actual fact, the military aid to Pakistan was designed to provide merely a deterrent force".¹⁷

Obviously, by forging close defence links with the United States, Pakistan was seeking to change the regional balance of power in a way favourable to itself particularly in terms of acquiring parity with India and assuming a strong posture on the Kashmir issue. Not that the United States was not aware of the implications of its arms supplies to Pakistan for India. The United States knew Pakistan's limitations in serving as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. Still, it hoped to get some base facilities in Pakistan which was so close to the Soviet Union geographically. Secondly, it deliberately wanted to "build-down" India by "building-up" Pakistan militarily. A noted scholar, Baldev Raj Nayar has accused America of trying to contain India directly. He says: "From the early 1950s, when India

16. Ayub Khan, Friends Not Masters (London, 1967), p.154.

17. Ibid., p.130.

asserted an independent role in international politics, through the policy of non-alignment, it became the target of American containment through the mechanism of building up Pakistan militarily as a counterpoise against India."¹⁸ His arguments are, at least in part, valid. Even if the United States was not trying to contain India in the same sense as it was trying to contain the Soviet Union, the fact remains that it did not quite relish India playing preëminent role in South Asia. The US refusal to listen to the strong Indian protests over the arming of Pakistan underlines this fact adequately.

The US-Pak military ties were further reinforced when, in March 1959, they signed another Bilateral Agreement of Co-operation which was in effect, a second Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement. This contained a pledge that in the event of aggression against Pakistan, the United States would "take appropriate action, including the use of armed force".¹⁹

This agreement, which was basically a security pact but for the name, only added to the early Indian fear of the dangers of bringing extra-regional powers into the sub-continent. In other words, for India, this security alliance

18. B.R. Nayar, "US and India: New Directions and Their Context," Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.12, no.45, and 46, November 5-12, 1977, p.1906.

19. Cited in Pakmer, n.7, p.127.

meant bringing the Cold War to South Asia. Hence the only way India could meet the threat emerging from a heavily armed Pakistan was to build up its own defence.

Thus in the 1950s, apart from sharp perceptual differences over the Cold War and East-West relations which marred the prospects of good Indo-US relations, the United States military aid to Pakistan became another stumbling block. According to two American experts on South Asia, "It was the initiation of a formal military assistance programme to Pakistan that was to shape the American role in the sub-continent for almost twenty years".²⁰

III

On the sensitive issue of Kashmir, India found the US stance hostile to it right since the very beginning. No wonder then, that the issue of Kashmir, so vital to India's security, only widened the cleavage in the Indo-US relations.

When India referred the question of Kashmir to the UN Security Council, the United States adopted an unfriendly attitude towards India and wanted the UN Security Council not to sit in judgement over Pakistan's aggression but to

20. Stephen P. Cohen and Richard L. Park, India: Emergent Power? (New York, 1978), p.55.

decide on the terms of a plebiscite to determine whether the state should be a part of India or Pakistan.²¹ The United States never condemned Pakistan's aggression. Rather, it always pressurized India at the United Nations to hold the plebiscite quickly, even before the aggression was vacated by Pakistan.

Quite naturally, India felt offended by the US insistence on the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir. India had valid reasons to suspect that the United States support to Pakistan was tied up with the American hope of acquiring military bases in the Pakistan-occupied portion of Kashmir adjoining the Soviet Union and China.²² Much worse, the United States was inciting Sheikh Abdullah to aim at an independent Kashmir. During his visit to Kashmir in May 1953, Adlai Stevenson, the US Senator, was believed to have urged Sheikh Abdullah to repudiate Kashmir's accession to India and declare Kashmir independent.²³ Timely intervention by New Delhi led to Abdullah's arrest and to the foiling of the US-Abdullah plan.²⁴

The US-Pak security links in 1954 made it impossible for India to withdraw troops from Kashmir and hold a plebiscite

21. Kunhikrishnan, n.8, p.115.

22. Ibid., p.166.

23. Ibid., p.117.

24. Cited in V.D. Chopra, Pentagon Shadow Over India (New Delhi, 1985), p.69.

Ever since then, the United States has been favouring Pakistan on Kashmir at the multilateral forums. It was because of the Soviet support to Indian stand on Kashmir that India avoided being pressurized by the United States to make serious compromises on Kashmir. In the 50s and 60s, Kashmir remained a major irritant in Indo-US relations.

IV

Throughout the 1960s also, Indo-US relations were marked by differing perspectives on issues of strategic importance. Although there were occasions when Indo-US relations warmed up, on the whole differences continued to persist. When Indian troops entered Goa and liberated it from the Portuguese rule in December 1961, the United States criticized its action. President Kennedy called it as India's invasion of Goa and deplored it as most unfortunate. When the UN Security Council discussed the issue of Goa, the United States mounted scathing criticism of India for using force and violating the UN charter. This came as a rude shock to India and created bitterness in Indo-US relations.

The Sino-Indian border tensions were brewing since the mid 50s and they assumed very serious dimensions by 1959. Nehru's China Policy came crumbling down when the

Chinese launched a massive attack on India on 20 October 1962. India found itself ill-prepared militarily to check the Chinese invasion in the mountaineous regions of NEFA and Ladakh. In the event, Nehru made an urgent appeal to Washington for military supplies to meet the Chinese threat. The Kennedy administration responded very promptly to Nehru's appeal. As two noted Indian analysts put it: "In a speedy response to the Indian military requirements, the US provided small arms and equipment of the value of \$5 million".²⁵

Although highly disillusioned with China, India was not willing to forge a military relationship with the United States. However as the Chinese troops kept on advancing menacingly, India submitted a list of weapons to the United States which included small arms, artillery, road building equipment, radars and transport planes.²⁶ In addition to arms, India also requested "for American fighting air support".²⁷

According to the then US Ambassador, Chester Bowles, Kennedy instructed him to explore the "possibility of a long range military understanding which would prevent India

25. M.S. Rajan and A. Appadorai, 'India's Foreign Policy and Relations (New Delhi, 1985), p.238.

26. Ibid., p.239.

27. Cited in *ibid.*

from developing military relationships with Communist states and strengthen our political military ties with the Government of India against Chinese Communists."²⁸ But even this gesture of US military cooperation with India was not offered without putting indirect pressures and preconditions. In United States' estimation, "the supply of weapons could be used as a lever to achieve Indian concessions on Kashmir".²⁹ In fact the United States did insist on India to resume negotiations with Pakistan on the Kashmir problem. And India had to hold as many as six rounds of talks in this regard though they proved abortive eventually.

Thus, the Indian optimism that the United States could prove a reliable partner dissipated away very soon when the Johnson administration, which had succeeded the previous administration after Kennedy's assassination, attached unacceptable strings with an already curtailed offer of US arms. As India would not accept these stringent conditions for US arms supply, a large part of the conceived arms deal did not materialise. Also responsible for this failure was Pakistan's strong protest to the United States against arms supply to India towards

28. Quoted in Surjit Mansingh, India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy: 1966-82 (New Delhi, 1984), p.77.

29. Michael Brecher, "Non-Alignment Under Stress: The West and the India-China Border War," Pacific Affairs, Vol.52 no.4, Winter 1979-80, p.622.

which the Johnson Administration showed a great deal of sensitivity. India naturally felt greatly disillusioned with what it perceived as US 'double-standards' in dealing with India and Pakistan. While India was refused its legitimate demands for US arms suitable for mountaineous terrain against China, Pakistan continued to be given US weapons, mainly suitable for use against the plains along the Indo-Pak border. The US attitude in the post-62 war period only demonstrated the limitations of accommodation of Indian interests in the region.

Thus, the 1962 war presented a good opportunity for a long term security relationship between India and the United States. The United States did have good intentions to help India. It had a stake in the survival of Indian democracy. China's crushing victory on India would have meant its unchallenged dominance in the region which was not acceptable to the United States whose relations with China were quite tense over the issues of South East Asia and Indo-China.

It was thus that the opportunity to build-up stronger relations slipped by, without being exploited to the fullest extent. There were several reasons for this. First, the United States started pressurising India to hold talks with Pakistan on Kashmir.³⁰

30. Mansingh, n.28, p.77.

Secondly, when India requested Washington for long-range defence support including supply of arms and assistance in creating an arms industry, the request was rejected by the United States. The Indian request, originally estimated at billions of dollars, was whittled down to only \$500 million by the United States and of this also only \$82 million worth of radar and communications equipment were delivered before the arms embargo imposed by the Johnson administration on both India and Pakistan in 1965.

V

In September 1965, the second Indo-Pakistani war brokeout. Once again, Pakistan was the aggressor. In fact, it was the massive stockpile of US weapons in Pakistan that had emboldened it to attack India and settle the problem of Kashmir militarily. According to Stephen P. Cohen, "the transfer of US arms to Pakistan undertaken in mid-1950s had become a Pakistani asset and an Indian problem by 1965".³¹ Thus India's early fears that the US arms would ultimately be used against her came true. The US weapons, most notably the M-47 and M-46 Patton Tanks, F-86 Sabre aircraft, F-104 super sonic fighters and B-57 light attack jet bombers were all used against India during this war.³²

31. Stephen P. Cohen, "South Asia and US Military Policy" in Rudolph L.S. and Rudolph S.H. (eds.), The Regional Imperative: US Foreign Policy Towards South Asian States (New Delhi, 1980), p.104.

32. Ibid.

Eisenhower's written assurance to Nehru that the United States would not permit Pakistan to use American equipment against India were worthless.³³ Although Pakistan had violated US policy by using US-supplied military equipment, the Johnson administration was unwilling to choose between the two rivals.³⁴ Though the United States adopted a neutral posture in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war, it only exposed its negative attitude towards India. For America, South Asia had become an area of low priority and its focus of attention was shifted towards Vietnam. As such, it was ready to play a low key role in the subcontinental affairs and allow the Soviets to act as mediators between India and Pakistan. The real fact, however, was that the United States wanted the Soviet Union to shoulder the responsibility of countervailing the increasing influence of China in South Asia due to the growing Sino-Pakistani politico-military collaboration.

Amidst strong Indian protests, the United States cut off its military assistance to both India and Pakistan. But this was greatly resented by India. The Indian Government was angered that the United States without taking into

33. Mansingh, n.28, p.79.

34. Francine R. Frankel, "Play the India Card," Foreign Policy (Washington), no.62-65, Spring 1986, p.154.

account which country was wrong, equated the aggressor and the agressed party,³⁵ by cutting off aid to India and Pakistan simultaneously.

VI

In the late 60s the Super Power sponsored NPT which finally came into effect in 1970 led to serious differences between India and United States in regard to global nuclear proliferation. Under article I of the NPT, nuclear weapon states were prohibited from transferring nuclear arms or devices to any recipient and from helping Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) in the production or acquisition of such weapons. Article II obligated upon Non-Nuclear Weapon States to undertake not to receive nuclear arms or control over them from any state and not to produce or obtain such weapons or to seek help in their production. Article III, the most restrictive clause made it binding for each NNWS signatory to the treaty, to observe the safeguards of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over all their nuclear installations.

India, being sceptical of certain things like, (1) the balance of obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear

35. Rajan, n.25, p.242.



countries, (ii) the nature of the security assistances from the Super Powers to non-nuclear countries, (iii) the prohibition of certain peaceful uses of nuclear technology and (iv) the inspection clause,³⁶ refused to sign the NPT. Besides, India was also convinced that the NPT could impede its nuclear programme for basic developmental purposes and would make it dependent for many years to come, in the nuclear weapon states for its nuclear technology.³⁷ Thus, the NPT would go against India's professed policy of self-reliance in the nuclear field.

Pointing to the provision of unequal application of the safeguard clause, India branded the NPT as a "Super Power led international regime that discriminated against the nuclear have-nots".³⁸ It strongly objected to the absence of a balance of obligations between the nuclear "haves" and non-nuclear "have-nots". Under the provisions of the NPT the nuclear powers were under no obligations to either destroy or reduce their own nuclear stock-piles. As such, the NPT did not seek to check the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. It only sought to check

36. P.R. Chari, "India's Nuclear Policy," in K.P. Misra (ed.), Janata's Foreign Policy (New Delhi, 1979), p.67.

37. Palmer, n.7, p.215.

38. Ashok Kapur, India's Nuclear Options: Atomic Diplomacy and Decision Making (New York, 1976), p.210.

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horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and thereby to maintain a status quo in the global distribution of nuclear power.

Quite naturally, India held the NPT to be highly discriminatory and refused outrightly to be a signatory to such a treaty. Besides, India was unwilling to commit itself to any future restraint by acceding to legally binding international obligations. As a result, the NPT became a major factor in souring Indo-US relations in the late 60s and through 70s. It demonstrated on the one hand, the US intentions to prevent India from acquiring nuclear weapons capability and thereby becoming a power to reckon with and India's persistence to assert its autonomy of action in the nuclear field on the other.

VII

If the 1960s ended on a note of bitterness in Indo-US relations, the following decade was predestined to start off more disastrously as the events of 1971 would show. The regional crisis that erupted in Bangladesh soon assumed international dimensions and India found itself diametrically opposed to the United States throughout the duration of the crisis. The US policy of 'tilt' in favour

of Pakistan during this crisis amply demonstrated the length to which the United States would go to achieve its global strategic interests in the region. Though earlier also India had found the United States opposing and hurting its interests, this was the first time that the United States went about it in such a high handed manner. The US 'tilt' in favour of Pakistan became an official pronouncement rather than an implicit intention.

It may be noted here that the famous US 'tilt' in favour of Pakistan, was meant not to back Pakistan or oppose India per se but to subserve an entirely different purpose viz., to enter into a new relationship with China. It was a great irony of circumstances that the US which had come to India's help albeit in a limited way against China in the 1962 war, was this time seeking just the reverse - friendship with China. No doubt, the United States was guided by the changing dynamics of its relations with both the Soviet Union and China and its strategic calculations to exploit the Sino-Soviet rift to its own advantage.

Seen against the above background, "the great event of 1971, from the White House point of view, was not the nationalist revolution in Bangladesh but the secret opening to China."³⁹ The role Pakistan was able to play as a

39. Mansingh, n.28, p.86.

"channel of communication between Washington and Beijing"⁴⁰ became "unquestionably a major consideration in shaping in the policy of Nixon Administration, during the 1971 South Asian Crisis."⁴¹ According to Henry Kissinger, "Pakistan was favoured as an earnest of goodwill to China, which had befriended Pakistan against India, and as a demonstration of United States' reliability as an ally or partner".⁴²

India, on its part, had long been asking Pakistan for a political solution to the Bangladesh crisis. Burdened by ever increasing influx of refugees from Bangladesh following the heavy military crackdown by Pakistan it was imperative for India to demand a quick political solution of the problem. With India feeling increasingly isolated in the region, vis-a-vis the emerging Islamabad-Peking-Washington axis, it concluded on 8th August 1971 a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union.

When war broke-out between India and Pakistan on December 3, 1971, the United States took a clearly pro-Pakistani stand at the United Nations by accusing India of aggression. However, in the UN Security Council, the US

40. Ibid.

41. Palmer, n.7, p.46.

42. Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston, 1979) p.186.

sponsored resolution condemning India were vetoed by the Soviet Union. Having failed in his diplomatic effort to force India to end military operations against Pakistan, President Nixon pursued the blatant 'gun-boat' diplomacy. He ordered the US Enterprise, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier of the Seventh Fleet to sail towards the Bay of Bengal. However, in real effect the United States did nothing to coerce India during the climax of this crisis.

Coming out victorious in the 1971 war, India convincingly established its credentials as the most dominant regional power in South Asia - a fact that could no longer be overlooked by the United States. The US President, Nixon, declared in his 1973 foreign policy record: "The United States respects India as a major country. We are prepared to treat India in accordance with its new status and responsibilities".⁴³ The political and military parity sought by Pakistan vis-a-vis India with the American help received a fatal blow in the period that followed the 1971 war. Acknowledging this fact, the United States welcomed the Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan to sort out their mutual problems through bilateralism.

43. Quoted in B.R. Nayar, "Regional Power in a Multipolar World" in J.W. Mellor (ed.), India - A Rising Middle Power (Boulder, 1979), p.156.

When the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger visited India in October 1974 he remarked, "the size and position of India gives it a special role of leadership in South Asia and world affairs."⁴⁴ He further stated that "there was no question of equating India and Pakistan and the United States did not intend to encourage an arms race in the sub-continent".⁴⁵

However, despite such US claims to redefine its policy towards India on an equal footing, the basic mutual distrust remained. When India exploded its peaceful nuclear device (PNE) on 18 May 1974 at Pokharan, it led to serious US suspicions that India was moving towards a nuclear weapons programme. Following India's PNE, the Indo-US nuclear cooperation in the form of Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) received a severe blow. The United States began to insist on stricter observation of international safeguards by India. But, India which was opposed to the NPT since its inception, did not succumb to US pressures.

Meanwhile the United States decided to lift its arms embargo imposed on Pakistan in February 1975 which was a clear indication of US displeasure over India's PNE. India opposed the new US decision in the strongest terms. The

44. Ibid., p.157.

45. Government of India Reports, Ministry of External Affairs, 1974-75, p.70.

Indian External Affairs Minister, Y.B. Chavan stated on 25 February, 1975 in the Parliament:

This policy has proved disastrous. Whatever may have been said by the US Administration from time to time to justify arms supplies to Pakistan, it was these arms which were used on three occasions to commit aggression against India. Our concern is naturally heightened by the unfortunate experience of the last two decades.⁴⁶

When Mrs.Gandhi imposed an internal emergency in 1975, it was received with bitter criticisms from the US press. The American press and the liberal wing of the Democratic Party lost their cause in democratic India when Mrs.Gandhi tightened the reigns of her authority.⁴⁷ Though Mrs.Gandhi and her advisers insisted that the emergency 'made no difference' to inter-governmental relations,⁴⁸ a deep distrust about India's survival as a democracy in which the United States had a vital stake was created. Some US observers even speculated that "India might attack their ally Pakistan in order to rally mass support."⁴⁹ The imposition of emergency only added to the growing US indifference towards India.

46. Foreign Affairs Record, Vol.21, no.2, February 1975, p.77.

47. Mansingh, n.28, p.94.

48. Ibid., p.93.

49. B.Raj Nayar, "India and the Super Powers: Deviation or Continuity in Foreign Policy?", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.12, no.30, July 23, 1977, p.1186.

Thus, despite Nixon's and Kissinger's claims in the immediate post-Bangladesh crisis period to recognise India as the region's dominant power and accord her due importance in US foreign policy, India did not see these US gestures being implemented in the latter's strategic calculations in the region. India's PNE in 1974, fresh US arms to Pakistan in 1975, Mrs. Gandhi's declaration of emergency in 1975, India's opposition to the US base in Diego Garcia - these issues became new sources of Indo-US frictions, apart from the ones already existing earlier, between the years 1972 and 1977.

The above record of the Indo-US relations between the year 1947 and 1977 makes it amply clear that India and the United States could not come to an understanding on vital strategic issues. This resulted in mutual distrust and suspicion on a number of occasions and issues. There always remained a lack of synchronisation of strategic perceptions between the two 'largest democracies' of the world. This in turn, was largely a function of the different aspirations of India and the United States. India, a regional Power with great potential of resources and strength, aspired to play an independent role in the region and asserted its own autonomy in international politics. The United States, on the other hand, framed its policies in a global context and in the process, ignored India's

aspirations most of the time. Strained mutual relations became an inevitable outcome. As a noted analyst put it astutely, Indo-US relations need to be examined in the context of the dynamic interaction between two fundamental but opposed driving forces: the persistent Indian aspiration to be a 'subject' of international politics, while lacking in capabilities, and the United States' aim to render other countries including India as 'objects' in the pursuit of its own security interests.⁵⁰

50. B.R. Nayar, "Treat India Seriously", Foreign Policy, (Washington) No.32-35, Spring 1975, p.138.

CHAPTER - II
THE SECURITY DIMENSION

The divergence of perceptions over security issues, especially those relating to regional security have often resulted in mutually incompatible policies between India and the United States. India, as a regional Power in South Asia, has always tended to follow a regional approach to its national security, whereas, ^{the} United States, as a Super Power has always formulated a global approach for the security of this region. This basic difference in approach has resulted in different threat perceptions, thereby precluding the possibility of congruence in strategic perceptions.

The theme of strategic divergences between India and the United States has constantly been highlighted by various scholars. Thus, a noted Indian expert says: "The basic problem of Indo-American relations lies in the divergent security interests of the two states in South Asia."¹ According to another scholar on Indo-US relations, "at the heart of the problem between the United States and India has been a fundamental strategic conflict making them adversaries".²

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1. Raju G.C. Thomas, "Security Relationship in Southern Asia: Differences in the Indian and American Perspectives", Asian Survey (California), Vol.12, no.7, July 1981, p.692.
 2. Baldev Raj Nayar, American Geo-politics and India (New Delhi, 1976), p.4.

This strategic conflict in the Indo-US relations has occurred basically because of the divergent security policies pursued by the two countries. The chief pre-occupation of the United States in the region has been to counter a perceived threat of communism emanating from the Soviet Union and China. For this purpose, it has sought to maintain its military presence in the Indian Ocean and Pakistan. This military presence, in turn, produces certain security consequences for India.

The adverse result of the US security policy approaches in the region may be deliberate or just consequential so far as India is concerned, ^{but} the fact remains that India's legitimate security interests are ignored by the United States. In other words, the United States, as a global Power, does not take into account the consequences created by its own strategic policies, for India. As a result, India, as a dominant regional power, not only perceives threats to its own security from the US moves but also discerns a subtle attempt on the part of the United States to dilute India's status as a regional power in South Asia.

The year 1977 witnessed important political changes in India and the United States. Mrs. Gandhi's government was replaced by the Janata government as a result of the

March 1977 general elections held in India. The Janata Government had come to power pledging to "restore democracy" in India which had been compromised with by Mrs.Gandhi's imposition of Emergency.

In the sphere of foreign policy also, the Janata Party's policy declarations won United States' attention. The new Indian Prime Minister, Morarji Desai declared that his government intended to follow a policy of "genuine non-alignment". Implied in this declaration was the fact that under Mrs.Gandhi's rule "India's non-alignment and its foreign policy generally tilted too heavily in the Russian direction".³ Between the two Super Powers, there was a systematic effort on the part of the Morarji Desai's government to draw away from the Soviet Union to conform to the new interpretation of non-alignment that called for diplomatic balance between Moscow and Washington.⁴ The new Indian government also questioned the wisdom of India's military dependence on the Soviet Union. In pursuit of a policy of equidistance between the two Super Powers the Jan^ata government consequently sought to reduce Indian military purchases from Moscow and correspondingly, to increase purchases from the West.⁵

3. Norman D.Palmer, United States and India: The Dimensions of Influence (New York, 1984), p.80.

4. Raju G.C. Thomas, "India, Balancing Great Powers and Intra-Regional Security," in Raju G.C. Thomas (ed.), The Great Power Triangle and Asian Security (Lexington: 1983), p.68.

5. Ibid.

Similarly, when Carter assumed the US Presidency the same year, it aroused Indian hopes for a better relationship with the United States. Carter Administration had made the issue of 'human rights' a key component in his foreign policy. The new US Administration recognised the crucial importance of India to the success of such a new approach to the 'Third World', and was prepared to take the initiative with New Delhi to overcome the inhibitions of the past.⁶ The Janata Foreign Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, expressed satisfaction with the 'sense of equality' which now marked the Indo-US relations. He spoke of an "equal partnership based on friendship and a common will to cooperate both in bilateral matters and on international issues".⁷ Similarly, the US National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski claimed that the "Carter Administration had developed new links with the newly influential countries and we have never had such a good relationship with India as now."⁸

However, despite such high rhetorics and attempts to emphasize in the areas of cooperation rather than conflict between the two countries, India and the United States still differed over a variety of issues especially in the security field.⁹ India continued to be critical of the US naval build-

6. Surjit Mansingh, "India's Search for Power: Mrs. Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966-82 (New Delhi, 1984), p.94.

7. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.95.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Palmer, n.3, p.82.

up in the Indian Ocean and insisted on making it a 'Zone of Peace'. On ^{the} nuclear issue also, the Janata posture remained the same as in the past. In the course of his visit to the United States the Foreign Minister, A.B. Vajpayee stated:

I therefore suggest that the United States should exert all its influence on Pakistan to desist from starting a nuclear weapons race in the region. India had made a firm and public commitment not to manufacture nuclear weapons and to use nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. Despite many years of nuclear weapons testing and development by China, we had restrained ourselves. As such India's bonafides could not and should not be suspected.¹⁰

In other words, the basic differences outlived the Janata-Carter period's initial enthusiasm. A fruitful relationship could not mature because there was no meshing of expectations and no reconciliation of well established national stances on vital issues. The nuclear issues could not be resolved by Carter and Desai despite their obvious desire to accommodate each other's view points.¹¹ The flurry of initial declarations in 1977 to correct the imbalance towards the Soviet Union, efforts to rely more on the United States, were not equally reciprocated by the

10. Foreign Affairs Record, Vol.25, No.4, April 1979, pp.98-99.

11. Mansingh, n.6, p.95.

United States.¹² Thus, towards the end of 1978 until the collapse of the Janata Government a year later, increasing Indo-Soviet political exchanges and economic agreements again became evident. Strategic considerations involving the Sino-US quasi - alliance continued to make a shift away from the Soviet Union difficult for India.¹³

Thus, the Janata's failure to correct the balance vis-a-vis the Super Powers only highlighted the limited extent to which Indo-US relationship could lend itself for improvement. Two major events during the period under survey made India and United States drift further apart. The first was the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the second was the return of Mrs. Gandhi to power in 1980 and her opposition to the US moves in the region.

II

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the last week of December 1979 and the subsequent developments in Southwest Asia created sharp perceptual differences between India and the United States. From the US perspective, the Indian reactions to the Soviet moves in

12. Thomas, n.4, p.68.

13. Ibid.

Afghanistan revealed, at best, a deplorable and alarming ambivalence, and at worst, a decided pro-Soviet bias. From the Indian perspective, the US reactions added unnecessarily to India's security problems and raised the level of international tensions unduly.¹⁴ India abstained from voting in the UN General Assembly resolution of 14 January 1980, calling for the immediate termination of armed intervention in Afghanistan. India was naturally more disturbed by the prospect of a renewal of substantial US military aid to Pakistan than by the new threats posed by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.¹⁵

Thus, for India, it was the over-reaction of the United States in military terms in response to the Afghanistan crisis as reflected in its decision to rearm Pakistan, rather than the presence of the Soviets in Afghanistan per se that caused concern for its security. Clearly, Indian policy concerns were centred less on the immediate regional implications of a Soviet presence than on the dangers of an American over-response which would further extend the East-West security matrix into South Asia.¹⁶

14. Palmer, n.3, p.86.

15. Ibid., p.87.

16. Timothy George, Robert Litwik and Shaharam Chubin (eds.), Security in Southern Asia: India and the Great Powers (Hampshire, 1984), p.112.

For India, the issue of a rearmed Pakistan in the wake of Afghanistan crisis assumed primary significance while the Soviet role in Afghanistan became secondary since it did not directly affect its security.¹⁷ Although Mrs. Gandhi always spoke of withdrawal of 'all foreign troops' from Afghanistan implying thereby 'Soviet troops' also, she never indulged in an 'one sided condemnations' of the Soviet Union. In fact, if the past behaviour was any guide, the Soviet Union hardly loomed large on India's security horizon. Rather, Mrs. Gandhi told a gathering in December 1980 that "the Soviet Union had stood by India at times of trial and, although issues have to be decided on their merits, India could not lose sight of the support it had received from the Soviet Union in the past."¹⁸ In the main, the Indian response was shaped by a clear understanding of the fact that while dangerous implications of the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan had yet to unfold fully, the US arms to Pakistan constituted a serious threat to India's security.

On the whole, India's stand on Afghanistan was a sound one, if seen from the point of view of India's national interest. Although India did not approve of the

17. Robert M. Crunden and Others (eds.), New Perspectives on America and South Asia (New Delhi, 1984), p.86.

18. The Statesman (New Delhi), 13 December 1980.

Soviet action in Afghanistan, it assessed the situation in its totality. The Foreign Minister, P.V. Narsimha Rao, reacting to the US decision to supply arms to Pakistan stated:

The government expressed grave concern at the moves to step up military supplies to Pakistan as well as our apprehension that induction of arms into Pakistan could convert the South Asian region into a theatre of great power confrontation and conflict.... A dangerous dimension is added when the great powers start using these nations in their quest to gain advantage in their global strategy'.¹⁹

Mrs.Gandhi took the stand that the Soviet action did not take place without a context and that foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan had been going on for a long time even before the Soviet intervention.²⁰ When President Carter's special emissary, Clark Clifford met her in New Delhi in 1980 to explain to her ^{the} US position on the Soviet intervention, Mrs.Gandhi pointed out to him that the United States had taken disproportionate measures in response to the crisis in South-West Asia. She also reaffirmed that her government could not regard Soviet moves in Afghanistan in complete isolation. This was an implicit reference from Mrs.Gandhi,

19. Foreign Affairs Record, Vol.26, no.1, January 1980, p.19.

20. Bimal Prasad, "India and Afghanistan Crisis," International Studies (New Delhi), Vol.19, no.4, October-December 1980, p.636.

both to the expansion of American facilities in Diego Garcia as part of the US plans for increased military preparedness in the Gulf region and the evolving Sino-American relationship.²¹

Even when Mrs. Gandhi met Reagan during her visit to the United States in 1982, her stand on the Afghanistan issue remained unchanged. She was not ready to share the Western perception on Afghanistan which was chiefly moulded by the United States. In a statement to the Lok Sabha following Mrs. Gandhi's US visit, Narsimha Rao stated:

President Reagan's attention was drawn to India's concern at the increased flow of arms into our region and to our opposition to foreign interference of any kind. It was pointed out in particular that India's misgivings over the acquisition of sophisticated weapons by Pakistan arose out of past experience of such weapons having been used by Pakistan against our country.²²

Thus, the Afghanistan crisis only highlighted the strategic divergences that characterize Indo-US relations. India's stand on this issue evolved from a regional perspective while the US approach manifested the latter's global approach. India's stand remained unchanged even under the new government headed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. When he visited Washington in July 1985 he

21. Timothy, n.16, p.112.

22. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol.31, nos.21-25, 13 August 1982, p.366.

only reiterated India's old stand. Addressing the US Congress, he described the Afghanistan situation thus:

Afghanistan and Southwest Asia are all on our minds. Outside interference and interventions have put in jeopardy the stability, security and progress of the region. We are opposed to both foreign presences and pressures. The one is advanced as justification for the other. We stand for a political settlement in Afghanistan that ensures its sovereignty, integrity, independence and non-aligned status, and enables the refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. Such a settlement can only come through the consensus among the parties directly concerned.²³

While this statement was seen by some in Washington as a new, more helpful departure in Indian policy, Gandhi himself put such notions to rest the following day while speaking to the National Press Club. He pointed out that his formulation was much the same as India had accepted in the 1981 non-aligned Foreign Ministers' meeting.²⁴

Thus, India was fully aware of the US intentions in the region in the aftermath of the Afghanistan crisis. The United States was clearly using the Soviet intervention as an excuse to further build up its military strength in West Asia and the Indian Ocean. But it had serious

23. Rajiv Gandhi, Selected Speeches and Writings: 1984-85 (New Delhi, 1987), p.249.

24. Quoted in Theodore L. Eliot and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff Jr. (eds.), The Red Army on Pakistan's Border: Policy Implications for the US (New York, 1986), p.67.

implications for India's security too. Hence, India and the United States could not and did not see eye to eye on the Afghanistan crisis. This created further cleavage in Indo-US security perceptions in the 1980s.

III

When Carter assumed office in 1977, Pakistan had loomed fairly small, on the US policy horizon. The importance it had enjoyed as a link in Dulles' chain of containment had long since failed. Pakistan's geographic location was of dwindling interest to the United States, since Iran had become the principal listening post, and along with Saudi Arabia, the principal supporter of US interests in West Asia.²⁵ This downgraded the geostrategic importance of Pakistan in the US policy framework. Apart from this, Pakistan also fell out of favour with the Carter Administration on several key issues and policies initiated by the latter. The issue of non-proliferation was accorded a very high priority in Carter's foreign policy for which South Asia provided a testing ground. The Glenn and Symington Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 was invoked in the case of Pakistan leading to termination of US aid to Pakistan in August 1978.

25. Thomas P. Thornton, "Between the Stools? US Policy Towards Pakistan During Carter Administration," Asian Survey (California), Vol. 22, no. 10, October 1982, p. 959.

The US arms supply was yet another important issue on which Carter's policy was to get "the US out of the business of arms purveyor to the world".²⁶ He had already announced in his election campaign that "the US could not simultaneously claim to be the world's leading peacemaker and remain the world's largest arms merchant."²⁷

Consequently, the US showed a very cool attitude towards Pakistan on the issue of arms. But, the cool and somewhat indifferent posture of the Carter Administration towards Pakistan, however, could not last for long. A series of developments took place in 1978-79 in Iran and Afghanistan that were of immense significance to the United States. These events came as a direct challenge to US interests in West Asia. In the changed priorities, Pakistan's importance as a strategic ally in the region was realized clearly by the Carter Administration. In what came to be known as the "Carter Doctrine", President Carter declared the entire "Persian Gulf" to be of vital economic and strategic importance to the United States as also his pledge to meet any threat to the security of the region by outside aggression, by any means, including military.²⁸

26. Ibid., p.962.

27. Shirin Tahir Kheli, The United States and Pakistan (New York, 1982), p.91.

28. New York Times, 24 January 1980.

To bolster Pakistan's defence, the Carter Administration announced an aid package worth \$400 million, of which \$200 million was to be in the form of military assistance. This offer was turned down by Zia as 'peanuts'. To Pakistani rulers, this offer was considered as not only inadequate for Pakistan's defence but also lacking 'America's commitments and their durability'.²⁹ President Carter however, took India also into confidence over the issue of US arms to Pakistan by sending his personal emissary, Clark Clifford to explain the thrust of the US approach to the Indian leaders.³⁰ This seemed to soften the Indian attitude as India did not voice an outright criticism of US arms to Pakistan. In her interview to Newsweek of January 22, 1980, Mrs. Gandhi said: "I am not one of those who have been terribly worried about arms to Pakistan. But our people get excited over it. What worries me is that Pakistani government is not stable and it seems to me that the US proposals prop up a person rather than the country. This is dangerous. Like the Shah."³¹

At the same time, Mrs. Gandhi did voice concern regarding US arms to Pakistan to the US leadership. She told Clifford that "Washington should seek diplomatic rather than

29. Timothy, n.16, p.175.

30. S.D. Muni, "Pakistan as a Factor in Indo-US Relations", Mainstream (New Delhi), Vol.25, No.23, February 21, 1987, p.26.

31. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.27.

military solution to the Afghan crisis.³² On the whole, even in the wake of the Afghanistan crisis, India's objection to Carter's offer of arms to Pakistan was mild.

When Reagan assumed the US presidency on a hawkish note, his purely military oriented approach to contain the Soviet Union added a new dimension to the US-Pak military relationship, thereby causing alarm in India. Under the Reagan Administration, Pakistan was assigned a major role of a front-line state in the US strategic consensus for the whole region called 'the arc of crisis'.

The earlier offer of \$400 million aid made by Carter was considered inadequate to meet the contingencies arisen in the wake of the Soviet action in Afghanistan. Accordingly, a new aid package of a gigantic size (\$3.2 billion) was offered to Pakistan by way of economic and military assistance. The military component of the package had two parts. One provided for the sale of \$1.55 billion worth of armour and support equipment consisting of the following items: 100 M48 A5 tanks, 35 M88 A1 recovery vehicles, 20 M109 A2 self propelled howitzers, 40 M110 A2 8" self propelled howitzers, 75 M198 towed howitzers and 10 AH-15 attack helicopters.³³

32. Dawn (Karachi), 9 February 1980.

33. Stephen P. Cohen, The Pakistan Army (New Delhi, 1984), p.151.

The second component consisted of the separate sale of 40 F-16 Hornet aircraft and their spare parts and repair facilities. It was this component of the Reagan aid package that had a much more serious bearing on India's security. The F-16s are one of the most lethal aircraft available today for air-battle. India found no way of matching it. The induction of F-16s in Pakistan Air-Force brought most of the major industrial and highly populated Indian cities within the range of air bombing. Major cities like Delhi, Bombay and important Indian air-fields now became easily vulnerable to the onslaught of F-16s. Even the US Congressional and academic critics objected to the offer of the F-16s as being unnecessarily provocative because it had an excellent ground attack capability as well as air-defence capability as well as air-defence capability.³⁴ In addition to its tremendous strike power the 'F-16 also had a capability for the delivery of nuclear weapons.³⁵

The Indian reaction to the decision to sell F-16s and other arms to Pakistan was very strong. A government spokesman stated in a press release that: "The Government of India has noted with concern the agreement announced in Islamabad yesterday of the immediate sale by the US of F-16 aircraft and other advanced military hardware to Pakistan...."

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p.152.

It could introduce immediately a new level of weapons sophistication into the region which would affect the existing balance".³⁶

India perceived the Reagan Administration's decision to sell the most advanced weapons to Pakistan as affecting India's security environment very adversely for a number of reasons. First, it disturbed the regional balance of military power to India's disadvantage. Secondly, it set into motion a new arms race in the sub-continent. In a way, the US arms to Pakistan forced India to enter into an arms race with Pakistan in order to match the latter's latest offensive weapons acquisition. This, in turn forced India to divert its scarce national resources from developmental programmes to defence.

There were still other serious implications of the US arms aid to Pakistan. The sale of weapons like F-16s and Harpoon missiles, apart from their technical superiority, represented, from India's standpoint, symbolically a broader US commitment to support Pakistan. Such a commitment, both at symbolic and substantial levels, raised India's fears that a heavily armed Pakistan would feel emboldened to attack India and reopen the Kashmir issue.

36. Foreign Affairs Record, Vol.27, No.6, June 1981, p.179.

Much worse for Indo-US relations, India did not get any guarantee from the Reagan Administration, beyond some vague assurances, that these arms would not be used against her. In the 1950s, when the Eisenhower Administration had initiated the process of US arms transfer to Pakistan, it had, at least, offered a written assurance to Nehru that the arms were not to be used against India. This contrast in approach spoke volumes for the indifferent attitude of the Reagan Administration towards Indian susceptibilities. Mrs. Gandhi expressed India's fears thus: "The present Administration has said that the guns can be fired in any direction, and we have no doubts that these guns and equipment are meant to be used against India".³⁷

That this Indian fear was a valid one becomes clear if one looks at the fact that most of the weapons the United States supplied to Pakistan were of limited use in the mountaineous terrain along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. On the other hand, these weapons could be very useful in the plains i.e. vis-a-vis India.

Moreover, in Indian perception, the American claim that these weapons were supposed to defend Pakistan against the Soviets in Afghanistan becomes a ridiculous one considering the fact that the United States has also given

37. Quoted in Timothy, n.16, p.195.

to Pakistan destroyers for the navy as well as the Harpoon anti-ship missiles. Obviously these navy-oriented weapons could not be used against the land-locked Afghanistan. Besides, if one takes into account the pattern of Pakistan's troop deployment in the post-Afghanistan period, it becomes clear that even now most of the Pakistani troops are deployed on the Indian border and not the Durand Line. According to a noted Western analyst, "Pakistan's main-line forces, organised into approximately twenty divisions, grouped into six corps largely face east [i.e. India] not west [i.e. Afghanistan]."³⁸

Since early 1985, Pakistan started pressing for an Airborne Early Warning (AEW) system from the United States. The primary justification for AWACS in Pakistan was sought to be explained in terms of the "threat" emanating from alleged border intrusions by Afghan and Soviet aircraft. However, this was at best a lame excuse, for, given the mountaneous ranges between Afghanistan and Pakistan, even AWACS would be of limited use in detecting intruding planes. On the other hand, as a keen analyst has put it, "AWACS capability would provide Pakistan with a major quantum, qualitative superiority over the Indian air force, navy and army. And the perceptions of such superiority could provide the incentives for launching yet another military aggression

38. Cohen, n.33, p.148.

against India. AWACS would also be critical for nuclear weapon delivery by combat aircraft."³⁹ The AWACS capability of Pakistan would, thus make India's air defence seriously vulnerable.

Pakistan also sought to acquire some more advanced weapons from the United States in order to enhance its offensive military capability. These included "improved HAWK missiles, self-propelled artillery, Multiple Launched Rocket Systems (MLRS), counter-battery artillery and mortar radars, APCS, and above all, the latest M1A1 Abrams tanks, the pride of the US Armored Corps and the tank most coveted by the NATO armies".⁴⁰ Pakistan has also asked the United States for at least 20 F-16C multi-purpose aircraft in addition to another 60 F-16s.⁴¹ The F-16C is, if may be noted here, an advanced version of the F-16s that Pakistan already possesses, and is even more lethal in its strike capability.

The implications of US sale of AWACS to Pakistan for India can become much more complex in the context of a new move by Pakistan to acquire more advanced weapons from the United States which provide an excellent support to the

39. Jasjit Singh, "Threat AWACS must Pose for India", Times of India (New Delhi), 11 November 1986.

40. India Today, (New Delhi), July 15, 1987, pp.46-47.

41. Times of India, 10 November 1986.

Pakistani offensive capability on the ground, and air in a possible war scenario against India. India was seriously concerned by the United States move to supply the AWACS and other weapons to Pakistan in 1986-87 that would completely upset the existing balance of military power on the subcontinent to India's greatest disadvantage.

India, therefore, strongly reacted to the proposed sale of AWACS to Pakistan. India's Foreign Secretary, A.P. Venkateshwaran, argued that "the sale of AWACS to Pakistan made no sense if it was meant to monitor air attacks from the Afghan Air Force".⁴² On the other hand, he argued, "they will be extremely effective to peep into the plains of India. And in the context of conflicts we have had in the past with Pakistan, we are very concerned as this will lead to a spiralling of arms race which we can ill-afford."⁴³ Thus, throughout the period under study i.e. 1977-86, the issue of supply of sophisticated US weapons to Pakistan remained a major irritant in Indo-US relations.

IV

The Indian Ocean assumes great significance in security terms because of India's geographical location.

42. The Hindu (New Delhi), 18 January, 1987.

43. Ibid.

A noted diplomat and scholar very aptly underscored the importance of Indian Ocean to India's security: "It is an obvious fact to any student of history that India's security lies in the Indian Ocean: that without a well-considered and effective naval policy, India's position in the world will be weak, dependent on others and her freedom at the mercy of any country capable of controlling the Indian Ocean".⁴⁴

Just as the US arms to Pakistan have always constituted a serious threat to Indian security, so have the US naval activities in the Indian Ocean. Although the US is not the only major power engaged in the growing militarisation of the Indian Ocean, India perceives the most serious threat coming from the US strategies for dominance in the Indian Ocean. This has been so because, "from a geopolitical perspective, the positions of the two countries (on the Indian Ocean) have often diverged significantly."⁴⁵ The strategies of India and US with regard to Indian Ocean security have been antagonistic.⁴⁶

While the US strategy in the Indian Ocean initially appeared to be directed against the Soviet Union, an event in 1971 ominously pointed out the dangerous consequences

44. K.M. Panikkar, India and the Indian Ocean (Bombay, 1972), p.92.

45. Palmer, n.3, p.193.

46. Crunden, n.17, p.129.

of US naval build-up in the Indian Ocean for India. During the Indo-Pakistan war over Bangladesh in 1971, as part of the deliberate Nixon-Kissinger "tilt" towards Pakistan, the US dispatched a naval task force headed by the "USS Enterprise" into the Bay of Bengal. This deliberate flexing of US muscle portended the emergence of a US 'interventionist strategy' in the Indian Ocean which could adversely affect India's security.⁴⁷ This US "gunboat diplomacy" made India realize that the US was not only trying to build up Pakistan against India, but would also be prepared to directly interfere, if the need arose.

It was in the wake of the British announcement of withdrawal of its forces from East of Suez that the United States under the pretext of the theory of "power vacuum" began its naval entry into the Indian Ocean in a big way. Diego Garcia, a small atoll in the Chagos Archipelago taken on lease from the British, began to be developed into a major American naval base in the mid-70s. Initially, this base was meant to be used only for the purpose of naval communications. But it became central to the US Indian Ocean strategy in the late 1970s. Adverse developments in Iran and Afghanistan led the United States to step up its naval build up in the Indian Ocean to counter the Soviet threat to the Gulf region.

47. Ibid., p.132.

Later, when the Soviets moved into Afghanistan, Carter authorised a speeding up of the development of Diego Garcia facilities.⁴⁸ This included the construction of a 12,000 feet long runway capable of handling all types of aircraft, including B-52 bombers, a deep underwater anchorage, including nuclear powered aircraft carriers of the Nimitz Class, fuel storage tanks with a capacity of 640,000 barrels... sufficient to support a carrier task force for 30 days; and an electronic communications station to provide rapid radio communications with ships and aircraft operating in the Indian Ocean.⁴⁹

It may be pointed out here that the US naval base in Diego Garcia, barely 900 nautical miles away from India's southernmost landmass is crucial for ensuring smooth and uninterrupted supply of oil to the West and Japan as also to intervene quickly in case of any kind of instability in West Asia threatening pro-US regimes.

To achieve these objectives, the United States established a new unified military command called the Central Command or CENTCOM in January 1983. This new command has been bracketed with the five already existing US commands - Atlantic, European, Pacific, Southern, and Readiness. It

48. Palmer, n.3, p.198.

49. Quoted in Palmer, n.3, p.199.

specifically covers nineteen countries in Southwest Asia, Persian Gulf, and Horn of Africa region ranging from Kenya and Somalia to Pakistan and Afghanistan.⁵⁰

Pakistan, as a "designated" state within CENTCOM's area of operations is expected to allow the use of Pakistani air bases for the American surveillance aircraft. According to a report of the Indo-American Task Force on the Indian Ocean: "...General Kingston and the Central Command hope to draw Pakistan into a network of understandings... this does have implications for the subcontinent since Pakistan is covered by CENTCOM..."⁵¹

On the other hand, the "Peace Zone" idea, pursued vigorously by India has remained a far-cry till today even after 15 years of its acceptance by the UN General Assembly. In December 1971, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the elimination from the Indian Ocean of "all bases, military installations and logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of great power military presence conceived in the context of great power rivalry".⁵² But ever since then, the "Peace Zone" concept has been reduced to an annual ritual at the UN. As far back as in

50. Lawrence Lifschultz, "US-Pak Strategic Relationship," Mainstream, Vol.25, no.8, 8 November 1986, p.3.

51. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.4.

52. C.Raja Mohan, "Indian Ocean: Zone of Peace or Conflict?" Strategic Analysis (New Delhi), Vol.10, No.3, June 1986, p.249.

1974, the UN ad-hoc committee on the Indian Ocean had recommended the holding of an international conference to decide upon the "Peace Zone" proposal.

In 1980, the UN General Assembly recommended convening of the conference at Colombo in 1981. But this conference failed to materialise because of strong US objections. The US argument was that the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan had made it impossible to hold the conference.⁵³ According to a report on the Indian Ocean by the joint Indo-American Task-Force, "the US has indicated in the UN Ad-hoc Committee that it would not participate unless the Soviet Union withdrew its force from Afghanistan."⁵⁴ Thus, in order to get the conference postponed indefinitely, the US set as a precondition the demand of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. The fact of the matter is that the US has no intention whatsoever to withdraw its naval presence from the Indian Ocean. On the contrary, it is engaged in a massive arms buildup programme in the Indian Ocean. In fact, during the year 1981-86, it built a string of military bases in the Indian Ocean.

Thus, the Indian Ocean issue has emerged as a major irritant in the Indo-US relations. It has been rightly

53. V.D. Chopra, Pentagon Shadow Over India (New Delhi, 1985), p.160.

54. India, the US and the Indian Ocean, Report of the Indo-American Task Force (Washington, 1985), p.73.

suggested that "India's security parameter is much wider than its immediate neighbourhood".⁵⁵ It is thus that the developments in the Indian Ocean have a direct bearing on India's security. India, to a great extent, holds the United States responsible for the developments taking place rapidly in the Indian Ocean, thereby greatly jeopardising India's security environment.

V

The United States has never been a major arms supplier to India. Even though the Kennedy Administration had come to India's rescue on the occasion of the Chinese aggression, and a major arms deal had been arrived at between the two countries, what India received ultimately from the United States was much less than it had expected. After the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war, the United States banned arms sales to both India and Pakistan. During Carter's period, as also under the Reagan Administration, the possibilities of major US arms transfers to India emerged at various stages, but in real terms what India could get, has been, at best, only next to nothing.

Why has this been so? A general explanation for this can be sought in the differences over security

55. U.S. Bajpai (ed.), India's Security: The Politico-Strategic Environment (New Delhi, 1983), p.114.

perceptions. In other words, in the absence of a common enemy, or for that matter, a 'common threat perception', a major arms deal between India and the United States remains an unrealistic proposition.

However, it is only part of the explanation. A fuller explanation can be sought only in the policies that guide the two countries on the issue of arms. As a noted scholar on the area, has observed, India's arms procurement strategy has three basic components: (1) Indigenous production; (2) Licensed production in collaboration with an overseas manufacturer; and (3) Overseas purchases.⁵⁶

These components, in turn, are guided by India's basic policy of self-reliance with a view to minimize its dependence on external sources. Since the very beginning, India wanted to pursue an independent foreign policy, without external pressures. It refused to receive military aid from both the power blocks until the 1962 war when for the first time New Delhi sought assistance from the Soviet Union and the United States to modernize its armed forces.

As self-reliance was not feasible in an absolute sense of the term, India wanted to enter into collaboration with

56. Raju G.C. Thomas, "Prospects for Indo-US Security Ties," Orbis (Philadelphia), Vol.27, no.2, Summer 1983, p.386.

foreign arms manufacturers. Also, India preferred purchases directly from the international arms market so that it could buy weapons of the latest generation as and when it felt the need of doing so.

Thus, with a policy thrust on indigenisation, India has always insisted on being given the technology and licence to produce the weapons domestically after initial purchases. On the other hand, the United States has been reluctant to agree to transfer the technology of weapons. This US policy has both economic and political implications. From the economic standpoint, it ensures continuing productions and profits to the giant military-industrial complex of the United States. From the political angle, this would mean sustaining the recipient-donor relationship between the two countries and the political leverage inherent therein. Thus the United States would not agree either to the issuance of license for domestic manufacture of its arms or if it did, it retained the right to cancel it any time. Its fear is that its high-technology may be leaked to the Soviet Union through countries like India which have close relations with the former.

Another big obstacle in case of supply of US weapons to India has been the commercial basis on which the United States sells its weapons. India found it difficult to pay

the high price-tag attached to the US equipment. The United States insisted on ready cash payments and always demanded a high price for its weapons from India. Quite naturally, India found it more convenient to buy arms from the Soviet Union which supplied to India on concessional credit terms payable in the Indian rupees.

When the Janata Government came into power, the heavy Indian military dependence on the Soviet Union was decried and a major effort was made to diversify the overseas sources of India's weapons procurement so as to minimise over dependence on the Soviet Union. It was in pursuance of this policy that the United States was viewed as a potential major supplier of arms along with the other Western countries like France, the United Kingdom and West Germany. The Janata government initiated negotiations for the purchase of TOW anti-tank missiles and M-109 howitzers for an estimated cost of \$330 million. But the agreements did not materialize finally because of disagreement over the terms and conditions of these supplies.

Not only this, the United States also blocked the Janata regime's efforts to negotiate for the purchase of sophisticated arms from other countries. For instance, negotiations were progressing well to obtain Saab-37 Viggen aircraft from Sweden until they were vetoed by the United States. As Saab-37 were purported to be powered

by the Pratt and Whitney engines of an American company, an agreement on the supply of these engines could not be reached. The US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, rejected the request for the US engines on the ground that this would amount to an indirect supply of arms to India, and would, therefore, contribute to the arms race in the Indian sub-continent.⁵⁷ This refusal led the Janata government to conclude an agreement for the purchase and subsequent manufacturing of the Anglo-French 'Jaguar' deep penetration strike aircraft (DPSA).

Thus, even during the Janata rule which was favourably disposed towards the United States, and was sincerely interested in diversifying India's source of military supplies in order to reduce its heavy dependence on the Soviet Union for arms, no major deals with the United States could be entered into. Undoubtedly, the US policy at that time i.e., in the pre-Afghanistan period, was to detach itself from the sub-continent. A ban had been already put on the US arms to Pakistan under Glenn and Symington Amendment provisions. But more important, the US terms and conditions remained as unfavourable as ever to India during the Janata period.

When Mrs. Gandhi returned to power in January 1980, she also expressed her willingness to diversify the sources

57. Times of India, 21 September 1978.

of arms supply, but she was not as enthusiastic about the US arms as the previous government was. The United States, on its part, wanted to soften India's objections to the reinforcement of US-Pakistan security ties and to help it diversify its sources of weapons supply.

The issue came up during Clark Clifford's visit to New Delhi in 1980.⁵⁸ The talks for TOW anti tank missiles and M-198 howitzers which had remained inconclusive during the Janata period were revived again. The negotiations for the purchase of these weapons were resumed and a high-level team led by the Indian Defence Secretary visited Washington by the middle of October 1980.⁵⁹ Although, formal agreement to purchase those weapons was reached, ultimately, the deal was aborted largely because of different policies of the two countries on arms deals. India insisted that after initial purchase, it should be authorised to produce these weapons indigeneously. Washington, on the other hand, insisted on veto privileges over the transfer of these equipment at any time during the proposed supply period and refused to agree to the eventual manufacture of these weapons under licence in India. In the meanwhile, India concluded a major \$1.6 billion multi-faceted arms deal with the Soviet Union for

58. S.D. Muni, "Reagan's South Asia Policy: The Strategic Dimension," IDSA Journal (New Delhi), Vol.16, no.2, October-December 1983, p.143.

59. Ibid.

the purchase of MIG 23, MIG 25 fighter aircraft, T-72 tanks, equipment for navy etc.⁶⁰

Through out 1985 and 1986, under the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi, on many occasions the prospects of US arms to India came to almost being realized. For instance, testifying before the House of Representatives sub-committee on South Asia, General Burns, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of defence said:

India has evaluated in recent years various US systems - including C-130 aircraft, TOW missiles and howitzers - but no purchase have resulted so far. We think we can play a reliable, mutually advantageous role in aiding India to modernize its forces and should do this as our part of a more comprehensive cooperative bilateral relationship. Consequently we are heartened by the new Indo-US memorandum of understanding on technology transfer and hope that it is a harbinger of increased dialogue and interaction with India's defence establishment.⁶¹

In the first week of May 1985, Dr. Fred Ikle, the US under secretary of defence, visited New Delhi to discuss the sale of American weapons, particularly artillery, related technology, combat helicopters, a wide variety of missiles and surveillance equipment. Besides, India also showed interest in buying the American transport aircraft, Hercules C-130 for use in its Antarctic missions. However, no concrete deals could be finalized thanks to

60. Thomas, n.4, p.78.

61. Times of India, 2 March 1985.

the rigid and unchanged US stand on the terms and conditions on these sales.

In the latter half of 1986, Indo-US talks on arms were mainly concentrated on transfer of high-technology rather than direct purchase of weapons per se. The United States evinced renewed interest in entering into a modest defence relationship with India through technology transfers and assistance in the development and production of some sophisticated equipment to help meet India's legitimate requirements.⁶² An official spokesman of the US Defence Department went so far as to say that "the United States stood ready to assist and cooperate with India in its attempts to modernize its defence technology and attain self-sufficiency".⁶³

For the first time in history, in early October 1986 an American Defence Secretary was despatched to India by the Reagan Administration to conclude an agreement on transfer of weapons-technology to India. Casper Weirberger visited New Delhi between October 11 and 14 to have wide ranging talks on the subject. An agreement was reached on the sale of the General Electric 404 engines for India's Light combat Aircraft (LCA) scheduled to be manufactured by

62. The Hindu (New Delhi), 1 October, 1986.

63. Ibid., 2 October, 1986.

1994. A comprehensive package in this regard was agreed upon which provided for direct purchase of eleven engines from the General Electrics. This package also covered servicing, maintenance and supply of spares. The GE 4 404 engines, no doubt, marked a slight change in the US policy of hitherto denying sophisticated technology to India. Substantial agreements were reached also on telemetry equipment for missile testing range in Orissa, night vision equipment, armour and armour piercing shell alloys.⁶⁴

However, differences continued on the issue of Super computers. India was interested in buying the latest generation of CRAY super computer for meteorological purposes. But the US fears that this sensitive technology may become accessible to the Soviet Union stalled the deal. Weinberger stated in New Delhi that, "...I don't find any feeling on the part of anyone that it is a good thing to let the technology slip into the hands of the Soviet Union."⁶⁵

Thus, even the visit of the US Defence Secretary did not mark any major breakthrough on the issue of US arms to India. India did not have any "shopping list" ready for

64. Ibid., 16 October 1986.

65. Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 12 October 1986.

the purchase of US weapons this time unlike the past. This was so because India had come to doubt the reliability of the United States as a long term arms supplier.⁶⁶ Hence, the whole exercise remained confined to the issue of technology transfer and wherever possible, future manufacture or co-production under a licence.

VI

China has been one of the two main adversaries of India in its neighbourhood. It has already once inflicted a humiliating military defeat on India in 1962 and has acquired a great power status in terms of both conventional and nuclear military capabilities. United States' shifting attitudes towards China has also had an impact on India's security perceptions, thereby vitiating Indo-US relations to some extent.

The United States began to take diplomatic initiatives with China as far back as 1971 with Nixon-Kissinger's famous "opening to China" via Pakistan. Subsequently, the US policy has been to forge compatibility of strategic views with China in response to the perceived Soviet threat of expansion in the Persian Gulf and South Asia. China's

66. The Hindu, 16 October 1986.

importance in US regional military strategy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union got heightened following the Afghanistan crisis. The Carter Administration offered ^{the} sale of limited US military equipment to China. In addition, in 1979 itself, the United States and China agreed to place seismic devices in the Western part of China to monitor Soviet nuclear testing. The Reagan administration was more forthcoming in granting liberal US military and nuclear technology to China. In June 1981, the Reagan administration concluded a major agreement for the transfer of sophisticated American military equipment and nuclear technology to China.⁶⁷ In early October 1986, the US Defence Secretary Casper Weinberger paid a visit to Beijing which led to a US-China military deal on October 30, 1986 envisaging supply of \$550 millions worth of US avionics equipment to China.⁶⁸ China has reciprocated the US moves by opening its ports for US naval ships visits. For the first time since 1949, the US ships, possibly armed with nuclear weapons docked at Qingdao port on November 5, 1986.⁶⁹

In the nuclear field also, China and the United States have entered into agreement for cooperation though

67. New York Times (New York), 16 June 1981.

68. Sujit Dutta, "Recent Trends in China's Foreign Policy", Strategic Analysis, Vol.11, no.7, October 1987, pp.760-61.

69. Ibid.

it is quite clear to the United States that China is assisting Pakistani clandestine nuclear weapons programme. Though such reports led to the delay in the ratification of US-China nuclear cooperation, the US Senate finally approved it in December 1985 after obtaining assurances that China will not proliferate in the future.⁷⁰

Thus, the United States is using double standards in its implementation of non-proliferation policies. In case of Pakistan and China, it is bypassing its own laws which it enforces so strictly in case of India. India could hardly fail to detect the continued US insensitivity to Indian concerns in the region.

Thus, viewed from ^awider politico-strategic perspective, the United States' efforts at wooing China were seen in India as challenging India's security environment.

The Soviet Union is also prepared to make certain concessions to China under the new leadership to facilitate the process of Sino-Soviet normalisation. This may dilute to some extent the importance of India in Soviet priorities in the region. But, this ^{is} a less likely development given the past record of Indo-Soviet cooperation as well as Sino-Soviet tensions. On the other hand, the possibility of

70. R.R. Subramaniam, "China as an Emerging World Power," Strategic Analysis, Vol.11, No.9, December 1986, p.1025.

American convergence of strategic perceptions with China is a greater one. American military support to China and Pakistan - on a quid pro quo basis - in order to weaken the perceived Soviet threat in the region and buttress support for its own strategic designs, would leave India exposed to the military might of China and Pakistan simultaneously. China's aggressive posture on the Sino-Indian boundary question was revealed recently in the Sumdorong valley episodes. Pakistan has already provided access to China on the Karakoram high way. With Pakistani support and US strategic cooperation, China might use pressure tactics on India. Similarly, on the question of Indian Ocean, United States and China have similar views regarding the US naval build up in clear contrast that of India's.

Thus, in the background of an evolving US-China strategic understanding, combined with an already forged US-Pakistan strategic consensus, as well as Pakistan-China nuclear cooperation, the US moves have the effect of challenging India's security in the 1980s. India naturally found its manoeuvrability drastically reduced due to the cooperative triangular relationship between the United States, Pakistan and China from 1979 onwards. An expert on the regional security in South Asia, has rightly observed:

The regional strategic triangle (India-Pakistan-China) continues to be linked to the global strategic relationship among the United States, Soviet Union and China. Chinese and American efforts to contain the growth of Soviet military power have usually produced military ties with Pakistan which in turn has tended to increase India's military dependence on the Soviet Union.⁷¹

Such US hobnobbing with China currently, quite understandably, causes some concern for India so far as its security perceptions are concerned.

The above discussion of Indo-US relations in terms of security dimensions during the period under review, i.e. 1977-86, makes it very clear that the security interests of the two countries had become even more divergent than they were earlier. The US moves in the region in the aftermath of Afghanistan crisis seriously jeopardised India's security. In particular, the heavy arming of Pakistan with most advanced US weapons sought to completely alter the power-equation between India and Pakistan and India found it increasingly difficult to offset the "balance of power" which decisively went in Pakistan's favour. The sinister US moves in the Indian Ocean further complicated the situation from the point of view of India's security. Finally, the United States has continued to remain an ever unwilling partner of India in terms of arms sales and transfer of

71. Raju G.C. Thomas, Indian Security Policy (Princeton, 1986), p.12.

military technology. Though India is trying hard, notwithstanding the various constraints, to re^spond to this threat in its own way, there is no doubt that the US policies in the recent years have posed for India the most serious threat since independence in security terms. This has naturally affected Indo-US relations^a dversely.

CHAPTER - III

THE NUCLEAR FACTOR

Since the late 1970s the nuclear aspect of Indo-US relations has come to act as a major irritant adversely affecting the overall relations between the two countries. As in the case of their security relationship, here also the basic differences have arisen chiefly due to the fact that while the United States acts as a global Power seeking to dominate the nuclear scene globally, India, as a regional Power, has tried both to follow an independent nuclear policy as well as to assert its autonomy of decision in the international context. In the circumstances, they have continued to pursue different policies to achieve their nuclear goals which often clash with each other.

The United States being a global Power and enjoying a Super Power status - in a large measure due to its nuclear power preponderance - has tried to protect its status along with a few nuclear weapons Powers. It has shaped its policies in such a way as to deny this "latest" or "front-line" technology to other countries. Its plea that nuclear proliferation would endanger world-peace is a case in point.

On the other hand, India, as a regional Power, determined to pursue an independent foreign policy and

play an important role in world affairs, has chalked out its own nuclear programme and policy. In the process, it bitterly opposed some of the US policies. India's stance, thus, became quite repugnant to the US interests and, therefore, led to serious perceptual differences.

The period from 1977 to 1986 witnessed certain important developments relating to issues like the NPT, Tarapur fuel and spare parts problem, the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia as well as Pakistan as a factor in Indo-US nuclear relations. On all these issues, India stubbornly resisted the US attempts to contain its nuclear power capability and asserted itself despite several constraints.

II

As already noted in an earlier chapter, the bilateral agreement on Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS), to begin with, symbolised a very important aspect of Indo-US nuclear cooperation. For almost 5 years after TAPS became operational, the US supply of enriched uranium as fuel for the Tarapur plant was uninterrupted. This was so despite the fact that India had outrightly refused to be a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of which the United States was a major sponsor. It was only after the underground

peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) conducted by India at Pokharan on May 18, 1974 that a serious controversy arose over the Tarapur nuclear fuel supply issue. The reactions against the Indian PNE in the United States were, indeed, hostile and violent. The major fear amongst the US decision making institutions, especially the US Congress, was that India was now on the nuclear threshold and was a potential proliferator. Members of the US Congress believed that the Plutonium that was used in the Indian explosion was produced in a reactor (CIRUS) furnished by Canada, utilizing US supplied heavy water as a moderator.¹ This certainly was not the case, because India had exhausted the US supplied heavy water much before the Pokharan test was conducted in 1974. Be that as it may, inordinately long delays began to take place in the supply of enriched Uranium for Tarapur. The US attitude towards the Indian application XSNM-845 for the shipment of nuclear fuel at the end of 1975 became suddenly cool and indifferent. Though the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as well the US State Department were not entirely opposed to the idea of making immediate shipment to Tarapur three US organisations which represented the public opinion at large, viz., the

1. Christopher S.Raj, "Tarapur: A Test Case for US Nuclear Non-Proliferation of 1978?", Foreign Affairs Reports, (New Delhi), Vol.30, No.12, December 1981, p.253.

Natural Resources Defence Council, the Sierra Club and the Union of Concerned Scientists filed motions requesting public hearings on the proposed shipment on March 2, 1976. Among the major points raised by these organisations the following were important:

- India was not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT);
- The US has not required India to place international safeguards on all its nuclear facilities;
- The US has not required India to refrain from development ^{of} enrichment and reprocessing facilities;
- The US has not required India to refrain from developing additional nuclear explosive devices;
- The US has not required India to agree, prior to the shipment of nuclear fuel to Tarapur to safeguards and physical security requirements for any future reprocessing of such ^{fuel}, should reprocessing be permitted.
- The US has not required India to accept bilateral safeguards, supplementing the international safeguards applied by the IAEA at Tarapur.
- The US has not required India to agree to US control over the disposition of plutonium produced at Tarapur; and

- Exports would be inconsistent with and would violate US obligations under the NPT.²

However, the State Department strongly recommended to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that an immediate supply of enriched uranium be made to India. While doing so, the State Department was obviously taking note of the change in the political leadership in India. Mrs. Gandhi's government had been replaced by the Janata Party government led by Morarji Desai. This fact was clearly demonstrated in the letter which Peter Tarnoff, the Executive Secretary of the Department of State wrote to Lee Gossick, Executive Director for Operations of the NRC on June 8, 1977:

A new and democratic government has taken office in India as a result of general elections in March. President Carter has indicated that we wish to expand our dialogue with that government on a variety of issues including nuclear matters. We believe that our foreign policy interest will be best served by establishing a favourable atmosphere for these discussions and that approval of this license application would be an important step in this process.³

The State Department memorandum proved decisive in the NRC's prompt recommendation for clearing India's application XSNM-845. As a result, this application was cleared within five days by the NRC. While issuing this

2. US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Arms Control, Ocean and International Environment, Nuclear Fuel Export to India, Hearing May 24, 1978 (Washington, D.C.) Ninety Fifth Congress: Second Session, p.129.

3. Ibid., p.34.

license, the NRC was acutely aware of the fact that if XSNM-845 was withheld in order to solve the problem of spent fuel and other issues, it would not only hurt the reputation of United States being a reliable supplier of nuclear fuel but also the response received thus far from the Government of India on the specific issue of the disposition of spent fuel at TAPS would not be very encouraging.⁴

Moreover, initially, the Carter Administration found Desai's Government a little flexible on the nuclear issue. In the initial months, the Desai government tried to modify India's nuclear policy by showing compromising attitudes. The earlier government had maintained that since PNEs were useful and belonged to the realm of futuristic technology, the country could develop her own PNE technology.⁵ But Prime Minister Morarji Desai's statement that India would conduct PNEs in consultation with 'others' without attempting to define 'others', indicated that there was a sliding down on the nuclear stand. This slightly flexible attitude was markedly evident in Janata government's verbal stance that: (a) Indian nuclear weapons were ruled out;

4. Raj, n.1, p.254.

5. India, Lok Sabha Debates, Series 3, Vol.35, No.10, 27 November 1974, Col.2287.

(b) more Indian PNEs were ruled out by this government for the present; (c) Western governments were told that the 1974 test was immoral; (d) India was against discriminatory international arrangements; (e) India believed in fulfilling its contractual obligations and expected others to do the same; (f) India wanted nuclear disarmament; and (g) India would not accept full-scope safeguards.⁶

Notwithstanding the initial leniency, the Desai government later gave support to its predecessor's stand of not succumbing to any kind of nuclear blackmail. Desai had categorically declared at the special session of the UN General Assembly on June 9, 1978 that "we are unilaterally pledged not to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons and I solemnly reiterate that pledge before this august Assembly. But, he added, "we ask from others no more than the self-restraint we impose on ourselves."⁷ Thus, even a seemingly pliant Janata Government stuck firmly to the basic tenets of India's nuclear policy.

Though Carter Administration had genuine interests in improving Indo-US relations, it became too obsessed with

6. Ashok Kapur, "Janata Government's Nuclear Policy" in T.T.Poulose (ed.), Perspectives of India's Nuclear Policy (New Delhi, 1978), p.175.

7. Quoted in A.G.Noorani, "Indo-US Nuclear Relations," Asian Survey, (California), Vol.21, No.4, April 1981, p.399.

the issue of global nuclear non-proliferation. Along with the issue of human rights, nuclear non-proliferation became the cornerstone of Carter's foreign policy. The US Congress passed two Acts aimed at curbing proliferation of nuclear weapons. The first was an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1963, known as the Glenn-Symington Amendment which empowered the Administration to cut-off economic assistance to any country that did not accept internationally approved safeguards for its nuclear facilities or that embarked on programmes that seemed to be designed to develop nuclear weapons capabilities.⁸

On March 10, 1978, the US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act (NNPA) was signed by President Carter to become a national law of the United States after it was passed by both Houses of the Congress. It imposed stricter rules over nuclear exports. Section 127 of the NNPA set forth six criteria for nuclear exports viz:

- a. IAEA safeguards would be applied to all nuclear material exported by the US;
- b. No exported materials would be used for nuclear explosive purposes;
- c. Adequate physical security would be maintained;

8. Norman D. Palmer, United States and India: The Dimensions of Influence (New York, 1984), p.216.

- d. No materials would be re-exported without US approval;
- e. No materials would be re-processed without US approval; and
- f. No export technology would be replicated without the foregoing conditions applying.⁹

In addition to these criteria set forth in Section 127, the NNPA also forbade export approval to non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) which had not placed all nuclear activities under international safeguards within 18 months of the law's enforcement. Thus, the NNPA of 1978 intended to bring the restrictions of the law into full force in two phases—the first imposing the criteria of Section 127 immediately ^{and} the second imposing the additional criterion at the end of the 18 months grace period. In other words, the NNPA brought into existence the above proviso which were not at all agreed upon by India at the time of signing the Tarapur Agreement in 1963. According to Robert Goheen, a former US Ambassador to India, "The NNPA soon brought American policy hard up against the Indo-US nuclear cooperative agreement of 1963. It was clearly intended by some on Capitol Hill to do just that."¹⁰

9. U.S. Congress, 95th Congress, Second Session, PL-NNPA 1978, p.136.

10. Robert F. Goheen, "Problems of Proliferation: US Policy and the Third World," World Politics, no.35, January 1983, quoted in Palmer, n.8, p.217.

By making nuclear non-proliferation the centre-piece of America's relations with the Third World, Carter hurt India's nationalist pride as well as its nuclear development programme.¹¹ It was, indeed, ironic that the United States expected India to observe the stringent conditions laid down under the NNPA. For, India had earlier rejected the NPT out of hand on the ground that it was discriminatory. Against this background, it was quite unrealistic on the part of the United States to make India "behave" through the NNPA channel. Thus arose a situation wherein the United States was refusing to honour an international obligation (i.e. to supply enriched uranium to Tarapur under the 1963 arrangement) on the ground that a national act (i.e. NNPA) required it to do so. An eminent Indian lawyer and scholar summed up the impact of NNPA on the Tarapur agreement very aptly when he observed that "the NNPA had pronounced a sentence of death on the accord of 1963".¹² The US attitude towards the full-scope safeguards of the NNPA was like a carrot and stick policy - an inducement for nations like India to agree to upgraded non-proliferation conditions in order to qualify for continued US exports and the threat of a cut-off otherwise.¹³

11. Bhabani Sengupta, "India and the Super Powers" in M.S. Rajan and S.Ganguli (eds.), Great Power Relations, World Order and the Third World (New Delhi, 1981), p.138.

12. A.G.Noorani, "Indo-US Nuclear Relations," India and Foreign Review (New Delhi), Vol.18, No.6, November 15, 1980, p.12.

13. Reter A.Clausen, "Non-Proliferation Illusions: Tarapur in Retrospect," Orbis (Philadelphia), Vol.27, no.3, Fall 1983, p.749.

India, quite expectedly, branded the restrictive conditions imposed by NNPA as "absolutely compelling and non-negotiable". It also refused to adhere to it.¹⁴ There were important policy considerations underlying India's absolute unwillingness to surrender its options to the US nuclear blackmail. In the first place, as a matter of security policy, it was impossible that India would unilaterally accept additional nuclear controls. Secondly, the prospect of availability of alternative sources of low-enriched uranium (in particular France and the Soviet Union) lessened the significance of the cut-off threat.¹⁵

The above factors proved decisive in the Desai government's opposition to NNPA both in principle and practice. India made its position clear that it would co-operate with the US Government on the issue of non-proliferation only on a voluntary basis and not by any coercive tactics. But, even this Indian offer of rendering voluntary support presupposed meeting certain preconditions viz., (1) The nuclear weapons states should negotiate a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; (2) They themselves should

14. Raj, n.1, p.255.

15. Clausen, n.13, p.752.

accept fullscope safeguards which would simply put an end to further production of weapons grade materials and (3) the nuclear weapon states should adopt tangible measures towards achievement of total nuclear disarmament.¹⁶

The Indian Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, paid a state visit to the United States in June 1978. On this occasion, detailed discussions in regard to the Tarapur fuel problem took place between the Indian and US leaders. Desai was quite blunt in expressing his views on this issue. While warning against unilateral abrogation of the 1963 treaty, he asked, "Must India be singled out for disfavour by a friendly country like the United States through a unilateral modification of its contractual obligation?"¹⁷ He was assured by the US President, Carter that he would sincerely work for the continued supply of enriched uranium to Tarapur. The joint communique issued after Desai's visit stated that President Carter "pledged to make every effort consistent with American law to maintain fuel supplies for Tarapur and continue nuclear cooperation with India."¹⁸

16. B.M. Jain, "India's Nuclear Policy and the United States," Indian Journal of Political Science Vol.41, No.2, June 1980, p.272.

17. The Times of India (New Delhi), 15 June 1978.

18. Paul F.Power, "The Indo-American Nuclear Controversy," Asian Survey, Vol.19, no.6, June 1979, pp.588-89.

After Carter's decision to authorise the shipment, in July 1978, 7.6 tonnes of enriched uranium was made available to India.

However, another Indian application XSNM-1222 for the export of 16.8 tonnes of nuclear fuel to India was also pending with the State Department. For this the Nuclear Regulatory Commission wanted to be assured of the adequacy of the IAEA safeguards before clearing the application. This was unacceptable to the Indian Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, who hinted at unilateral abrogation of the 1963 agreement should the United States fail to meet the request for the shipment of fuel to India. He stated in the Rajya Sabha on 30 November 1978 that:

I have said and made it clear also to the US Government that their not supplying this fuel or an undue delay in its supply will amount to a violation of the agreement on their side. As long as they have not refused it I cannot say there is violation. It is delay... But if the agreement is violated then we are free to make other arrangements that we have to make.¹⁹

It was only after the State Department's assurances to the NRC about India's good intentions that the shipment of 16.8 tonnes of enriched uranium was finally cleared in March 1979. But soon afterwards, all subsequent Indian applications for the fuel supply were made to lie pending. The reason for this was that the 18 month's grace period

19. India, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol.17, No.9, 30 November 1978, Col.14.

as provided for by the NNPA had come to an end. The NRC refused to issue any further license to India as it would amount to violation of the NNPA because India had not accepted the full-scope safeguards till then. P.V.Narsimha Rao, the then Foreign Minister of India, declared India's opposition to full-scope safeguards thus:

Over the last three years, the US Government has been making various requests for additional assurances from the Government of India regarding safeguards. In essence, these amounted to our accepting full scope safeguards over all our nuclear facilities. The Government of India has constantly replied that it could not accede to these requests.²⁰

In early 1980, India again filed applications XSNM-1379 and XSNM-1569 for further supply of 39.7 tonnes of US fuel for Tarapur. But the NRC rejected these applications outrightly on the ground that India had not committed itself either to refrain from conducting future nuclear tests or to accept full-scope safeguards as laid down in the NNPA. In doing so, the NRC was taking a very strict view of the grace period incorporated in the NNPA provisions.

On the other hand, Indian opposition to such commitments became even more rigid after Mrs.Gandhi was re-elected as India's Prime Minister in 1980. In a major policy statement, she made it known to the Americans in unequivocal terms:

20. India, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol.2, No.6-10, 17-21 March 1980, Col.249.

We remain committed to the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, and, we have to have explosions or implosions, whatever is necessary for our development and other peaceful purposes. This will be done in the national interest.²¹

Despite this rigidity in India's stance, the Carter Administration decided to authorise the shipment of 39 tonnes of uranium. In fact, the Administration was forced by two very strong considerations to take such a liberal view of the Tarapur fuel supply issue. First it was very anxious not to queer the pitch of Indo-US relations in the wake of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. Secondly, it had to contend with the likelihood that US refusal to supply uranium to India may compel India to terminate the agreement itself. In a message to the Congress, President Carter, justified his action as follows:

The export will avoid a risk of a claim by India that the United States has broken an existing agreement between the two governments and has thereby relieved India of its obligation to refrain from reprocessing the fuel previously supplied by the United States.²²

After much lobbying in the both Houses of the Congress, the Carter Administration finally succeeded in getting the shipment of 38 tonnes of uranium approved. This was to be done in two phases. In the first phase,

21. Quoted in Palmer, n.8, p.230.

22. Ibid., p.231.

19 tonnes of fuel was to be despatched immediately, followed by another consignment of 19 tonnes after the Administration had presented a favourable report to the Congress on the progress of negotiations with India on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation.

III

When President Reagan came to assume office in 1981, his priorities were quite different from those of his predecessors. He did not treat the issues of non-proliferation with the same zeal as Carter. For him, non-proliferation became subordinate to the US strategic interests and as such he was prepared to ignore Pakistan's nuclear activities in the region and to take tough measures against India which did not fit into the United States' scheme of things.

In order to break the deadlock over the Tarapur issue, H.N. Sethna, the Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, led a delegation to Washington and held talks with the US leaders on April 16-17, 1981. Reporting to the Lok Sabha about the result of these talks, P.V. Narsimha Rao stated:

During these discussions the Indian side indicated that they would like continued implementation of the 1963 agreement provided no extraneous considerations were permitted to interfere in its performance. The United States side indicated that they could not hold out any such hope for further fuel supplies as they were bound by their existing laws and suggested that we might consider as one possibility an amicable termination of the agreement.²³

It was clear that a virtual impasse had been reached over the Tarapur fuel issue after Reagan's election as the US President. Equally clearly, following the US-Pak strategic collaboration, the US attitude towards the sale of nuclear fuel to India was likely to remain unchanged.

Although two more rounds of talks between the two countries took place between July and November 1981 in New Delhi and Washington respectively, no tangible solution emerged. The only solution that seemed practicable during these negotiations was to terminate the 1963 treaty itself. However, this impasse was finally broken during Mrs. Gandhi's state visit to the United States in July 1982 in the course of which the two countries reached an understanding on the question of fuel supply for TAPS. This understanding basically envisaged the substitution of the United States by France as the source of an alternative fuel supplier

23. India, Lok Sabha Debates, Series 7, Vol.16, no.50, 29 April 1981, col.304.

within the framework of the 1963 Indo-US agreement and the 1971 Trilateral Agreement.²⁴

During the visit of ^{the} French Foreign Minister, Claude Cheysson to New Delhi on 1982, after France was chosen as the alternative supplier of fuel, India received an assurance from France that the latter would not insist on any safeguards not incorporated in the 1963 agreement. This convinced India that since France had not signed the NPT, it could keep up its assurances and negotiate bilateral safeguards rather than insist on IAEA imposed full-scope safeguards which India opposed.²⁵

But it needs to be pointed out here that the powerful non-proliferation lobby in the United States was closely monitoring the Indo-French talks on supply of enriched uranium for the Tarapur plant hoping that France also would stand firm on the safeguard issue. In course of time, to India's great dismay, the new Indo-US-French arrangement got converted into a vortex of uncertainties again. The French Foreign Minister pointed out that France's readiness to render assistance to India without attaching additional strings would have to be viewed in the wider context of

24. Government of India, Reports, Ministry of External Affairs, 1982-83, p.25.

25. National Herald (New Delhi), 1 September 1982.

growing political and economic relations between the two countries. The French side also made it clear that it would not be a substitute for the United States under the 1963 Indo-US agreement and it would not be a party to any past pact. It was clear that the supply of enriched uranium would be rendered possible only under a fresh agreement with France.²⁶

To India's disappointment, France insisted on the acceptance of the "pursuit" and "perpetuity" clauses as conditions for uranium supply. The "pursuit" clause implied the application of safeguards by the IAEA not only to Tarapur but also prohibited the use of by-products, especially the spent fuel, which could be reprocessed and used in atomic plants as fresh fuel. The "perpetuity" clause extended the application of safeguards to Tarapur beyond the expiry of the agreement in 1993.²⁷ This was quite disconcerting for India which perceived the US pressure and also the pressure of the London Fuel Suppliers Club on France not to dilute the safeguard conditions.²⁸ However, an agreement was reached on

26. Financial Express (Bombay), 11 September 1982.

27. Tribune (Chandigarh), 8 November 1982.

28. Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 23 October 1982.

27 November 1982 in New Delhi, when France decided to drop the demand of perpetual control of the Tarapur fuel. But even this third party arrangement failed to resolve the issue of Tarapur fuel supply because no fuel shipment was made available to India from France. Memories of United States highhandedness on the nuclear issue thus remained etched on the Indian mind.

IV

Another impasse in Indo-US relations cropped up on the question of US supply of spare parts for its American-built nuclear power reactor at Tarapur. The Tarapur Power Plant was facing a shut down because of the lack of availability of spare parts. As a matter of fact, just as in case of uranium supply to India, the United States again sought to put pressure on India to comply with its non proliferation policies in return for supply of spare parts for Tarapur. At the meeting of Indo-US Joint Commission in 1982, India had clearly stated to the United States that the issue of spare parts was a commercial one and hence had no connection with the supply of fuel to Tarapur.

At a breakfast meeting held in Washington on 19 July, 1983 by the Congressional non-proliferation Task-Force,

some US legislators maintained that the United States could use its leverage to secure India's compliance with the US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act in the event "India was unable to obtain the spare parts from a third country and could only get them from the United States".²⁹ It was thus that the proposed sale of spare parts to India by Reagan Administration met with severe opposition in some US circles. The Washington Post described Reagan Administration's decision to supply spare parts for Tarapur as a "Caving into India".³⁰

When the American Secretary of State, George Schultz, visited India in 1983, the issue of spare parts came up again for discussion. He assured that the United States was committed to supply the spare parts for Tarapur in time, but, this move was bitterly opposed by a number of the members of the US Congress, who were against the supply of spare parts for Tarapur unless and until the Indian Government was willing to adopt some strong non-proliferation measures. These measures included among other things, the Indian pledge not to manufacture nuclear weapons and acceptance of safeguards in perpetuity. In the meanwhile,

29. R.R. Subramaniam, "Indo-US Nuclear Relations: Stalemate on Tarapur Spare Parts," Strategic Analysis (New Delhi) Vol.75, no.5, August 1983, p.344.

30. Quoted in Ibid..

the United States clarified that it was trying to ask France to supply the much needed spare parts for Tarapur. But France refused to accept this responsibility on the ground that the issue of spare parts was strictly a bilateral matter between India and the United States. The net outcome was that India received no spare parts either from France or from the United States. The future of Tarapur atomic power station continued to be bleak because it was neither assured of future fuel shipments nor spare parts for its reactors. This proved yet another hurdle in Indo-US relations.

V

India also felt dismayed with the adoption of entirely different set of standards by the United States vis-a-vis Pakistan's nuclear capability and programme. To be more precise, while the United States has tended to take a very liberal view of Pakistan's clandestine nuclear activities, it has been extremely harsh on India's nuclear programme.

After the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, the US Senate exempted Pakistan from the Symington Amendment which prohibited the United States from assisting nations that pursued nuclear programmes without adequate safeguards.

This proviso was waived in case of Pakistan and a massive \$3.2 billion aid package was granted to Pakistan by the United States. What irked India more was the fact that the Senate Committee exempted Pakistan from the operation of the Symington Amendment even in the face of strong evidences that Pakistan was clandestinely pursuing a nuclear programme.³¹ This was in direct contrast to the US policy with regard to the sale of nuclear fuel to Tarapur. Addressing a Press Conference, Rajiv Gandhi made a categorical statement on the issue: "we are worried that the United States which can do more in stopping Pakistan from developing nuclear weapon is not doing so".³²

Meanwhile the United States pressure on Rajiv Gandhi's government to sign the NPT became more discernible. According to a diplomatic observer, the Reagan Administration, after Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Washington, assumed that "perhaps Rajiv Gandhi on account of his deep internal problems would be more amenable to pressure on the nuclear non-proliferation and other issues than the strong-willed Mrs. Gandhi".³³

31. P.K.S. Namboodiri, "Pakistan's Nuclear Posture," in K.Subrahmanyam (ed.), Nuclear Myths and Realities: India's Dilemmas (New Delhi, 1980), pp.167-89.

32. Statesman (New Delhi), 23 May 1985.

33. Statesman, 6 November 1985.

On the other hand, even though Pakistan did not sign the NPT, it was never penalised for its intransigence in view of its crucial role in the region in the post-Afghanistan crisis period. It was argued by some policy makers that Pakistani progress towards acquiring nuclear weapons provided a golden opportunity to kill two birds with one stone - using US aid to restrain the Pakistanis and using the Pakistani nuclear threat to blackmail India into accepting full-scope safeguards or mutual inspection with Pakistan.³⁴ According to US analysts Pakistani nuclear weapon capability would "neutralise an assumed Indian nuclear umbrella under which Pakistan could reopen the Kashmir issue; a Pakistani nuclear capability paralyses not only the Indian nuclear decision but also Indian conventional forces and a brashbold Pakistani strike to liberate Kashmir might go unchallenged if the Indian leadership was weak and indecisive".³⁵

The US policy to put pressures on India remained unchanged despite the evidence of a clear anti-India orientation in Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme. An eminent nuclear analyst observed that, "after 1979, the trends in Pakistani behaviour were to develop the nuclear option in

34. Ibid.

35. Patriot (New Delhi), 20 November 1986.

order to internationalise Pakistan's demand for a regional solution at India's expense and in concert with the United States".³⁶ He further argued that the aim of the US Government was to bring about a situation in India's neighbourhood which would force India to the negotiating table.³⁷

At one point the United States itself seemed to encourage the controlled development of Pakistan's nuclear weapon capability up to a point - viz. short of a weapon test. It did so partly because it could pressurize India to get into a bilateral nuclear deal with Pakistan. As such although one can hardly argue that United States was the cause of Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme, it is clear that it ^{used} / the latter's programme to pressurise India, while maintaining a posture of nuclear non-proliferation.³⁸ Seen against the above background, the United States' full backing of the much-publicised Pakistani offer of mutual inspection of each others' nuclear facilities to India was nothing but an attempt to "coerce India to accept fullscope safeguards through mutual inspection".³⁹ A leading Indian

36. Ashok Kapur, Pakistan's Nuclear Development (London, 1987), p.191.

37. *Ibid.*, p.202.

38. *Ibid.*

39. K.Subrahmanyam, "Our Nuclear Predicament," Strategic Analysis, Vol.9, No.7, October 1985, p.654.

defence analyst argues that Pakistan was playing the Trojan Horse of the nuclear weapon Powers.⁴⁰ Therefore, when the United States talks of a bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan on the nuclear issue, its prime motive is to trap India into full scope safeguards via Pakistan. India has so far steadfastly refused to be trapped into this US-Pak machination. Rajiv Gandhi declared unequivocally at a Press Conference on 7 July 1985, that, "Pakistan's proposal for joint inspection of nuclear installations is unacceptable to India".⁴¹ In keeping with its policy to keep its nuclear option open, India refused inspection of its facilities till such time as the nuclear weapon Powers agreed to stop proliferation and accept universal safeguards. India also refused to succumb to the US pressures in neutralising of India's nuclear power by ignoring Pakistani nuclear activities. This also demonstrated very clearly the extent to which the United States was determined to prevent India from emerging as an independent nuclear Power and India's continued stakes in retaining its nuclear initiative.

40. Ibid.

41. The Times of India, 8 July 1985.

VI

Yet another issue on which India and the United States could not see eye to eye was the Pakistani proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia. When India conducted a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) at Pokharan on 18 May 1974, it alarmed not only the Western countries but also Pakistan, which perceived it as a direct threat to its security. Hence, Pakistan lost no time in launching a diplomatic offensive to prevent India from going nuclear by initiating a proposal for the creation of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) in South Asia. In October 1974, Pakistan introduced a resolution to this effect in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. India denounced it categorically and equated the concept of NWFZ with the NPT. To India, it meant, in effect, bringing NPT through back door. India argued that both the NWFZ and NPT sought to deny a nuclear status to the non-nuclear countries and legitimise nuclear weapons in the hands of the nuclear weapon Powers by projecting them as guarantors of security against nuclear threat.⁴²

On the question of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, the Janata government endorsed the views held by the earlier government. The External Affairs Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, made a very categorical remark:

42. P.S. Jayaramu, "Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, NPT and South Asia," IDSJ Journal, (New Delhi), Vol. 13, no. 11, July-September 1980, p. 170.

In our view, nuclear disarmament, like disarmament in other forms must be a global and universal phenomenon. The whole world should be rendered free of nuclear weapons. Nuclear Weapon Free Zones of a merely regional character will not diminish the nuclear threat to the world; on the contrary, such a step would provide an advantage to the nuclear weapon states, particularly as these weapons with their delivery systems are intercontinental in nature. Therefore, we now remain, as in the past, opposed to the declaration of South Asia, or for that matter, any artificially restricted area, being declared as Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.⁴³

Prime Minister Morarji Desai also reacted very strongly to the Pakistani proposal for NWFZ: "It is idle to talk of regional nuclear weapon free zones when there would still be zones which could continue to be endangered by nuclear weapons".⁴⁴

India also pointed out that by excluding China which is a nuclear weapon state, and which is contiguous to South Asia, the NWFZ concept would be rendered into a farce. Also, it could hardly be a party to a proposal that would close its nuclear option which it had retained despite heavy pressures from the NPT regime.

But the United States saw in the Pakistani proposal for NWFZ in South Asia an opportunity to pressurize India to commit itself to the NPT albeit, indirectly. By lending

43. Foreign Affairs Record, Vol.24, no.3, March 1978, p.131.

44. Quoted in S.D. Muni, "Indo-US Relations: The Pakistan Factor," Main Stream (New Delhi), Vol.25, no.23, February 21, 1987, p.25.

its support to the Pakistani proposal, the United States clearly intended to bind India to non-proliferation concepts. Though the United States had initially abstained from voting in the UN General Assembly on the Pakistani proposal, it voted in favour of the Pakistani proposal in December 1977. Two years later, it moved its own proposal on the same subject which in, effect, endorsed the Pakistani stand.⁴⁵

Explaining its vote supporting the Pakistani nuclear weapon free zone proposal for South Asia in the United Nations in December 1977, the US delegate had said: "The US does not regard this draft resolution as being directed against any state in the region and would not have been able to support it had we thought otherwise." Further, the US explained: "We believe that the actual provisions governing the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia, as in any other area, must be negotiated and agreed on among the appropriate parties before states be expected to undertake commitment regarding the zone."⁴⁶

The US argument that the NWFZ resolution was not directed against any state in the region was entirely untenable for India, since, it was clear that India was the

45. Jayaramu, n.42, p.273.

46. Muni, n.44, p.26.

only country with proven nuclear capability and as such, to be adversely affected by the move.

An Indian member of the Indo-US Task Force on Indian Ocean in fact called the whole idea of nuclear free zones as "neo-colonialism"⁴⁷. The nuclear weapon free zone idea in the way it has emerged amounts to non-nuclear countries accepting the guarantee of the existing nuclear weapon powers, accepting the legitimacy of their existing nuclear weapon arsenal.

India thus perceived the US support for the South Asian nuclear free zone as nothing but a ploy to force India to submit to the unjust nuclear world order and conform to the reigning orthodoxy.⁴⁸ Pakistan, the main proponent of the NWFZ in South Asia not only aims at helping the US in binding India to the NPT in a veiled manner, but also using it as a 'smoke screen' for its own nuclear weapon efforts.⁴⁹

On 17 November 1986 when Pakistan again put forward a resolution on the NWFZ issue in the UN General Assembly committee urging the States of South Asia and such other neighbouring non-nuclear weapon states as may be interested

47. Report of the Joint Indo-US Task-Force on the Indian Ocean (Washington, D.C.), p.57.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

to continue efforts to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia and to refrain in the mean time, from any action contrary to this objective,⁵⁰ the United States joined in supporting the Pakistani proposal. It was clear that the United States knowing fully well that Pakistan was almost on the threshold of nuclear weapon capability was backing its NWFZ proposal only to embarrass India. This move was strongly resented by India. The Indian Delegate, Dr. Teja maintained that a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia can be established if and only when all the states of the region have successfully and freely arrived at arrangements for that. He further said, "any such zone must be conceived as part of a nuclear disarmament programme, since nuclear weapons have reduced the entire world to a single military theatre."⁵¹

Viewed from the above perspective, the issue of NWFZ in South Asia, just as the NPT issue, highlighted the divergent policies of India and the United States. In this case, as in many other cases, the United States tried to thwart India's efforts to assert an independent posture. This only added a sour note to Indo-US relations.

50. Times of India, 18 November 1986.

51. Ibid.

Thus, as seen above, India and the United States have found themselves most of the time pitted against each other, on a number of issues such as the nuclear non-proliferation and safeguards, NWFZ in South Asia as well as the more specific cases relating to Tarapur (e.g. fuel supply, spare parts). It may be useful to note here that the nuclear irritant is also a manifestation of the global Power-middle Power syndrome that has bedevilled the overall course of India-United States relations. The United States, determined to ^{prevent} India from emerging as an important actor in world affairs by acquiring the status of a regional Power, sought to impose a number of restrictions on its nuclear programme. On its part, India continued to assert notwithstanding the sustained pressure tactics adopted by the United States. This only highlighted the divergent policies of India and the United States in the nuclear field.

CHAPTER-IV

C O N C L U S I O N

Independent India's relations with ^{the} United States have undergone so many ups and downs that it has become common to term them as a 'love-hate' relationship, in which the element of hate has predominated the scene most of the time. This love-hate relationship can be accounted for by a number of factors that determine its contours. If national interest is a major guide in the shaping of a country's foreign policy, then India and the United States perceive their national interests quite differently. The divergences of perception over political, strategic and economic issues at global, regional and bilateral levels have often come to preclude the possibility of deep understanding and trust of each other. These divergences have arisen chiefly because the US, being a global Power, has always sought to pursue a foreign policy that would help maintain its dominant political, economic and military strengths as well as acquire strategic superiority over the Soviet Union. On the other hand, India, due to its sheer size, historical traditions and experiences, set out, under Nehru's leadership, on a course of foreign policy which sought maximum freedom of action in international affairs and unhindered economic development of the country. This

policy was reflected in non-alignment as also the strategy of a 'mixed economy' with emphasis on the public sector.

In other words, serious politico-strategic differences have characterized Indo-US relations since their inception. — At the root of these differences lies a basic fact, viz., incompatibility of interests between the two countries commanding disparate power status. While the United States has acquired the status of a Super Power by virtue of immense economic and military power at its disposal, India can also be rightly termed as a rising "Middle Power" on the basis of its size and location, resources and industrial base as well as military and diplomatic capabilities. This status enables India to aspire for a high-profile role in international politics, and at the same time, assert itself vis-a-vis the Super Powers, especially the United States whose strategic policies have often run counter to its interests. Despite strong pressures India has maintained a defiant posture vis-a-vis the United States on a number of important issues.

The United States - a global Power seeking to implement global policies - has had to often confront India's opposition on many of its moves in the South Asian

region. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, the US policy has not been to "contain" India per se, but to ignore its vital interests while pursuing its own global policies in the region. In early 1950s, the United States brought the Cold War to the Indian sub-continent by incorporating Pakistan, India's chief adversary state, into military alliances (SEATO and CENTO). This was followed by a US-Pak mutual defence agreement in 1954 which marked the beginning of Pakistan's strong arms relationship with the United States which has continued ever since excepting for a short period in the mid 60s. Thus began an unavoidable Indo-Pakistan arms race, which was, in India's perception, largely a consequence of the US policies in the region. Even if the United States may ^{not} have intended to arm Pakistan against India, what was more important from India's point of view was that it had ignored India's argument that these arms could be used against her. When the Indo-Pakistan war broke out ^{in 1965,} India's worst fears came true. Most of the lethal weaponry supplied to Pakistan by the United States were used against India. Despite written assurances to India the United States did not prevent Pakistan from using those deadly weapons. This only confirmed India's deep distrust of the United States' commitment to India.

When the Bangladesh crisis erupted in 1971., India saw itself pitted against the formidable Washington-Peking-Islamabad axis. The US policy during the entire Bangladesh crisis was demonstrative of the fact that the US just did not care for Indian interests while pursuing its global strategic policies in the region. The United States support to Pakistan in 1971 was in effect a reward for the latter's role in facilitating US rapprochement with China. The central occupation of the Nixon Administration at that time was to improve relations with China which had drifted apart from the Soviet Union. Pakistan, due to its close relations with China, was in a position to help the United States in its attempts to normalise relations with China. But it was India which had to bear the adverse consequences of the US designs in the region. When China threatened India with diversionary measures during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, the United States made it clear to India that it would not be able to restrain China in those circumstances. Thus, the US intentions in the region became quite manifest during the Bangladesh crisis. Finding itself extremely isolated, India responded to the reality of the grave situation by concluding a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, a reliable and time-tested friendly country. Thus the Indo-US relations touched an all time low during the Bangladesh crisis in 1971.

It is clear that the Indo-US relations, right from the very beginning, were determined by the US preoccupation with the Soviet Union and China in the region. It is in this context that Pakistan was accorded a higher priority than India by the United States. For, unlike India, Pakistan was willing to promote United States' interests in the region.

In the post-72 period, the myth of military parity between India and Pakistan exploded right in the face of the United States, and Nixon admitted that India was the dominant regional Power in South Asia. This revived hopes of a better Indo-US understanding. But the basic mutual distrust of each other was never far from the surface and when India exploded its peaceful nuclear device in 1974, it received the most scathing criticism from the United States. The basic dilemma that had bedevilled the Indo-US relations in the past remained unresolved. This dilemma was essentially the US reluctance to accommodate India's vital and legitimate interests at most of the crucial junctures.

When the Janata Party came to power in 1977, which roughly coincided with Carter's election as the US President, new hopes were generated on both sides for a better understanding of each other. However, fruitful relations could not mature even under these new leaderships in both the countries because of lack of compatibility of views on the

basic security issues, particularly the nuclear issue. Contrary to ^{the}US expectations, the Janata government maintained India's special relations with the Soviet Union and adhered to the basic policies followed by the previous government. Consequently, the divergence of perceptions remained as wide as ever.

The beginning of 1980s witnessed some attempts by India under Mrs. Gandhi's leadership to forge closer ties with the West. There grew a feeling in India that over-dependence on the Soviet Union for diplomatic, military and economic support was fraught with inherent dangers. There were many factors that accounted for this assessment. First, it was felt that the Soviet Union could not help India in its process of industrialization and diversification of the economic base beyond a limit and therefore, there was a need to look to the West, especially the United States, for the latest technology - both for defence as well as developmental purposes. Second, India had its own apprehensions about the continued Soviet presence in Afghanistan in terms of its regional security. Further, the Soviet Union had also begun to sort out its differences with China in the early '80s. The Soviet friendship, it was felt, could not be taken for granted for all time to come.

Guided by the above considerations, India did take fresh initiatives to put Indo-US relations on a new keel as demonstrated by Mrs. Gandhi's 1982 state visit to Washington. But the basic differences remained unresolved. On Afghanistan, Indian and US approaches continued to remain divergent. India also did not share the US paranoia that the Soviets were out to advance to the Gulf oil-fields and find access to the Indian Ocean. On the contrary, India stuck firmly to its regional approach to the Afghanistan problem. For India, it was essentially not the Soviet Union's presence that threatened its security, but the US over-reaction to the crisis that posed major security problems. The US assumption that Pakistan could become a crucial strategic asset in South-West Asia and the Indian Ocean and thereby offer a strong resistance to the Soviet moves in the region was also not acceptable to India. Hence, the United States' massive military build-up of Pakistan was perceived by India as a threat to the existing balance of power in the region. The United States once again was repeating the 1950s scenario when it had first begun to arm Pakistan against the 'so-called' threat of communism. In the 1980s, however, the situation, from India's point of view, was much more worse. Unlike the 1950s, India did not even receive assurances from Washington that these arms would not be used against it. India

objected strongly to the second massive US aid package to Pakistan consisting of 4.2 billion dollars. What was worse, the US Congress waived once again the Glenn-Symington amendment for another six years so that this package could be carried through.

Additionally, the United States also tremendously increased its naval-build up in the Indian Ocean after the Afghanistan crisis. The creation of CENTCOM and drastically upgrading facilities in Diego Garcia were steps in this direction. These US moves in the Indian Ocean only frustrated India's persistent efforts to establish a 'zone of peace' in the Indian Ocean.

Thus, the US strategic policies in the region during the period under study, i.e. 1977-86, have had serious bearings on India's security. In other words, an increased US presence in the region have posed serious challenges to India's security. Of these challenges, the most formidable one is the continued US arms to Pakistan. On the other hand, the United States did not make its latest arms available to India despite serious negotiations in the 1980s. The United States was not willing to transfer either weapons or weapon-related technology to India for the fear that they might be leaked out to the Soviet Union. Also, it attached many terms and conditions to the sale of US weapons, making

it impossible for India to meet them. All these only further estranged New Delhi from Washington.

On the nuclear issue also, India was subjected to tremendous US pressure to open all its nuclear facilities for international inspection and accept full-scope safeguards. India's refusal to comply ^{with} the provisions of the NNPA of 1978 led to the US stoppage of supply of nuclear fuel for Tarapur. Though ultimately a way out was devised in 1982 during Mrs. Gandhi's Washington visit by making France an alternative source of supply, India did not really receive any shipments of fuel thereafter, thus, leaving the future of Tarapur precariously hanging in balance. Much worse, the US sought to pressurize India into accepting full-scope safeguards indirectly by advising her to sign a nuclear agreement with Pakistan. Besides, the US support for the Pakistani proposal of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia also served as a ploy to catch India into the discriminatory NPT trap by other means. The United States has exhibited clear-cut double standards in dealing with Indian and Pakistani nuclear programmes. While it has frantically attempted to prevent India from pursuing an independent, peaceful nuclear programme, it has not done much to discourage a clandestine Pakistani nuclear programme having a military-orientation which has caused dismay in the Indian circles.

The serious perceptual differences between India and the United States on security and nuclear matters as discussed in the present study are manifestations of the deep strategic cleavage that has underlined the Indo-US relations. In turn, these strategic cleavages have occurred on account of the demands of realpolitik. The United States, a global Power, has sought to influence India in terms of its regional interests in South Asia. But India, as a preeminent power in the region, has always asserted itself against US pressures and tried to retain autonomy of action in international politics. If the present is any indication, in future also these differences are going to persist. It would be pertinent to note here, however, that despite these differences, the two largest democracies have been able to seek a working relationship with each other. In fact, the present trend in the Indo-US relations is to emphasize on cooperative areas and agree to disagree on the conflictive issues. It is clear that in order to find broader compatibility of interests, the United States would have to accommodate India much more liberally than it has done ^{till} now. As far as India is concerned, its policy vis-a-vis the United States remained basically a reactive one. And viewed from this perspective, it did not have much leverage to drastically change the situation.

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