

**NUCLEAR COERCION IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD:
CASE STUDIES OF RUSSIA-UNITED STATES AND
INDIA-PAKISTAN DYADS**

*Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “Nuclear Coercion in the Post-Cold War World: Case Studies of Russia-United States and India-Pakistan Dyads” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Dedicated to Family

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABM: Anti-Ballistic Missile
ACM: Advanced Cruise Missile
AEC: Atomic Energy Commission
AFB: Air Force Base
ALCM: Air-Launched Cruise Missile
APO: Adaptive Planning Capability Option
ASC: Advanced Simulation and Computing
BAO: Basic Attack Option
BCA: Budget Control Act
BMD: Ballistic Missile Defense
BTWC: Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
BWP: Basic War Plan
C3I: Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence
C4ISR: Command, Control, Computers, Communication, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
CBO: Congressional Budget Office
CD: Conference on Disarmament
CG: Command Guidance
CHISOP: Chinese Integrated Strategic Operations Plan
CINC: Commander in Chief
CMRR-NF: Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility
CONPLAN: Concept Plan
CONUS: Continental United States
CPD: Committee on the Present Danger
CTBT: Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CWC: Chemical Weapons Convention
DCA: Dual-Capable Aircraft
DDPR: Deterrence and Defence Posture Review
DoD: Department of Defense
DoE: Department of Energy
DPF: Deliberate Planning Force

DPM: Draft Presidential Memoranda
DPO: Directed Planning Capability Option
DRVN: Democratic Republic of Vietnam
ED: Extended Deterrence
EMP: Electromagnetic Pulse
EPPA: European Phased Adaptive Approach
ERO: Emergency Response Option
EWP: Emergency War Plan
FOIA: Freedom of Information Act
GICNT: Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
HEU: Highly Enriched Uranium
IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM: Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
ICJ: International Court of Justice
INF: Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
IRBM: Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile
IW: Interoperable Warhead
JCS: Joint Chiefs of Staff
JSCP: Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan
JSOP: Joint Strategic Objectives Plan
JSTPS: Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff
LAO: Limited Attack Option
LNW: Limited Nuclear War
LNO: Limited Nuclear Option
LOC: Line of Control
LOW: Launch on Warning
LRSO: Long-Range Stand-Off
LUA: Launch under Attack
MAD: Mutual Assured Destruction
MIDB: Modified Integrated Database
MIRV: Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle
MRBM: Medium-Range Ballistic Missile
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA: National Defense Authorization Act

NFU: No First Use
NNPS: NATO Nuclear Planning System
NNSA: National Nuclear Security Administration
NNWS: Non-Nuclear Weapon State
NPR: Nuclear Posture Review
NPT: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSA: Negative Security Assurance
NSAM: National Security Action Memorandum
NSC: National Security Council
NSDD: National Security Decision Directive
NSDM: National Security Decision Memorandum
NSNF: Non-Strategic Nuclear Force
NSPD: National Security Presidential Directive
NSS: Nuclear Security Summit
NTB: National Target Base
NW: Nuclear Weapon
NWS: Nuclear Weapon State
P5: The Five Permanent Members of the UN Security Council
PD: Presidential Directive
PNI: Presidential Nuclear Initiative
PoK: Pakistan Occupied Kashmir
PPD: Presidential Policy Directive
PSI: Proliferation Security Initiative
RAND: Research and Development
RNO: Regional Nuclear Option
OPLAN: Operations Plan
OSD: Office of the Secretary of Defense
QDR: Quadrennial Defense Review
SAC: Strategic Air Command
SALT: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SAO: Selective Attack Option
SDI: Strategic Defense Initiative
SDV: Strategic Delivery Vehicles
SIOP: Single Integrated Operational Plan

SLBM: Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile
SORT: Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
SPSG: Strategic Planning Study Group
SRAM: Short-Range Attack Missile
SSBN: Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
SSMP: Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan
SSP: Stockpile Stewardship Program
START: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
SWPS: Strategic War Planning System
UNSC: United Nations Security Council
UPF: Uranium Processing Facility
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USSTRATCOM: United States Strategic Command
WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction
WSJ: Wall Street Journal

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis examines the strategy of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world especially how it is working in the Russia-United States and India-Pakistan dyads. The focus of the study is on the role of working of nuclear coercion as a new and more relevant concept rather than nuclear deterrence in post-Cold War. Both the dyads of Russia-United States and India-Pakistan are important for analysis in the present age. The adoption of new strategies by these states for tackling the adversaries is redefining the concepts in the realm of strategic studies literature. For instance, the adoption of strategy of “escalate to de-escalate” by Russia and “massive retaliation” and “surgical strikes” by India, use of terrorist by Pakistan for “proxy war” under the nuclear shadow has made old concepts outdated. New concepts are being redefined through the lens of present experience. Therefore, an in-depth study needs to be done on the dynamics of nuclear coercion in the post-Cold War World. Incidents like Russia-Georgia war of 2008 and Ukraine crisis of 2014 prove that the major powers like United States and Russia are still going through rivalries. Similarly, in the case of India and Pakistan since 1947 the conflict is going on but last twenty years have modified this into sub-conventional warfare as observed in use of state sponsored terrorism by Pakistan as their new strategy to bleed India through thousand cuts. In this context the strategy of nuclear coercion by both dyads needs to be examined.

Deploying the Premise

What is the political utility of nuclear weapons in world? In Cold War the nuclear weapons were the main focus of the study of international relations literature. With the disintegration of U.S.S.R many scholars thought that the nuclear weapons have also become redundant. However, the nuclear weapons test by India and Pakistan in 1998 reminded that the nuclear weapons are still the main instrument of power play. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the United States on the premise of possibility of presence of nuclear weapons, withdrawal of North Korea from the coveted Non-proliferation treaty and that Pyongyang tested nuclear weapons in 2006 and

subsequent politics of nuclear coercion, India-Pakistan nuclear coercion dynamics and many more incidents like this, proves that nuclear weapons never left the scene of world politics. Despite the continuous presence of nuclear weapons, the critical questions remain unanswered. The main question among them is that how the nuclear weapons are shaping the dynamics of coercion in international politics. According to nuclear coercionist school nuclear weapons provides unprecedented political benefits to the states, they have special advantageous place in international politics. They help in achieving more political concessions and benefits to the possessor of nuclear weapons than the countries who do not have nuclear weapons (Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017).

Since the invention of nuclear weapons, nuclear coercion has been an issue of concern in world politics. Broadly speaking, nuclear coercion basically implies use of nuclear weapons threats to influence adversary's behavior. Historically, coercion was always present in various forms of human relations everywhere. Everyone uses coercion or is being coerced at some point in their life but in the world of international relations, coercion is not a simple term. In international relations, coercion is a complex and contested concept, and this is especially true of the concept of nuclear coercion.

With the end of Second World War, nuclear coercion became a strategy. Thomas Schelling (1966) in his book *Arms and Influence* was first to explain the concept of coercion in the context of nuclear weapons though he did not coin the term nuclear coercion. Gregory S Kavka (1987) in his book *Moral Paradoxes of Nuclear Deterrence* used the term "nuclear coercion" in chapter nine of that book. In this chapter he distinguishes nuclear deterrence from nuclear coercion and argues that nuclear coercion can be used to force another nation to do something it was not already doing. At the same time, Richard K Betts (1987) in his book *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* explained nuclear blackmail as nuclear coercion. After that, many writers like Rosemary J Foot, Edward Rhodes, Robert A. Pape and others have used the term nuclear coercion with their own understanding and varying connotation.

Since last three decades of post-Cold War era many scholars around the world have started using the term nuclear coercion, in context of usage of international nuclear threats. But even now there remains a major debate among scholars in the literature on coercion with the use of nuclear weapons. According to P. Bratton (2005:100), there are basically two schools of thought dealing with the concept of coercion. One school of thought argues that coercion comprises of deterrence and compellence. Thomas Schelling (1966:71) also argued that deterrence and compellence are two type of threat of coercion; the difference lies only in the process. Schelling (1966:80) states that once in the throes of war, the line between deterrence and compellence gets blurred and this is coercion. Lawrence Freedman, Wallace Thies, Daniel Ellsberg Daniel Byman, and Matthew Waxman share the same view. On the other hand, some scholars prefer to separate compellent threats from deterrent threats and on that basis argue that only compellent threat is coercion. For instance, scholars like Alexander George, Janice Gross Stein, and Robert Pape are part of this group.

In recent years Michael D. Cohen (2012:10) in his work *'Nuclear Proliferation and the Use of Force: Nuclear Coercion and Nuclear Learning'* has defined the term "nuclear coercion as nuclear compellence: threats to change some aspect of the status quo backed up by threats, often implicit, of nuclear escalation". According to him, "nuclear coercion by weak revisionist new nuclear powers may involve a deployment or use of force and demand for some change to the status quo; inaction will be threatened to lead to further changes to the status quo perhaps made possible by the initial fait accompli" (Cohen 2012:10).

No doubt nuclear coercion was always present throughout Cold War history, yet Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was perhaps the foremost and successful example of working of nuclear coercion. This study attempts to trace the genesis of the working of nuclear coercion in Cold War and differentiation in its working in post-Cold War period. In Cold War nuclear coercion was confined among major powers but post-Cold War world has developed various intricacies into the working of nuclear coercion. Post-Cold War world has different power dynamic, world has become multipolar. Cold War end accompanied with dangerous spread of nuclear weapons especially in Asian continent and Pacific region, dynamics of nuclear capabilities and

power have been undergoing a thorough renaissance (Cohen 2012). This calls for re-examination of nuclear strategies including strategy of nuclear coercion.

In this second nuclear age, Russia's nuclear posturing against the United States is being increasingly termed as nuclear coercion by many scholars like Matthew Kroenig, Jacek Durkalec, Harrison Menke and many more. Attempts have been made in this study to understand the puzzle as to how the threat of nuclear coercion by Russia is compelling the United States to revisit its nuclear strategies. Similarly, in the case of South Asia, Pakistan's nuclear posturing is termed as nuclear coercion by many scholars like Ashley J Tellis, Vipin Narang and so on. Subsequently in the wake of terror attacks like Uri and Pulwama in 2016 and 2019, India has also adopted the strategy of nuclear coercion in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure. It is in this context that this study attempts to explore the understanding and working of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world in USA-Russia and India-Pakistan dyads.

Russia-United States and India-Pakistan Dyads: The Comparative Dimension

Both these dyads comprise of old rivalry, as new wine in old bottle, as their rivalry has got revived in this new age. Since 1947, India and Pakistan are rivals for the possession of Kashmir, which is a disputed territory between them. Since 1945 with the end of Second World War, Russia and United States are rival for supremacy in the world. In late 1980s, major changes happened in both dyads; U.S.S.R got disintegrated in 1991 and many new small states took birth on the periphery of Russia, which were once part of U.S.S.R., taking this as opportunity, NATO started giving membership to these small states who were once part of USSR under its coveted aim of 'eastward expansion of NATO'. This kept irking Russia, and Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Putin started "Massive modernization" of its strategic forces including modernization of nuclear weapons. Russia started coercing west, intervening directly into Georgia and Ukraine to stop them from joining NATO.

On the other hand, in South Asia, after four attempts of conventional war with India in 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999 Pakistan started adopting the strategy of sub-conventional warfare by harbouring terrorist on its soil. This new tactic of Pakistan was termed as coercion through sub-conventional warfare. India was tolerating the

terrorist attacks but since the Modi regime came in power India also adopted the strategy of surgical strikes against Pakistan. This new form of coercion by both states in the shadow of nuclear umbrella is the new face of nuclear coercion.

Ashley J. Tellis (2016) argues that the nuclear weapons acquisition makes already adversarial history of South Asia more complex. As both the adversaries with their ever-increasing nuclear capabilities needs to be brought strictly into arms control norms. According to Ashley J. Tellis (2016), India and Pakistan understand the concept of nuclear weapons utility differently as per their objectives and circumstances. India being stronger economically and militarily wants rapid unhindered economic growth for achieving international super power status. Therefore, for India nuclear weapons were serving only two purposes, firstly, to deter nuclear attack by its neighbours like China and Pakistan and secondly, a modicum of prestige. Therefore, satisfying India's demands for security and status simultaneously.

For Pakistan's nuclear weapons serve more complex requirements. Although Pakistan also views nuclear weapons as deterrence against India but possibility of India attacking Pakistan is almost non-existent because India has no reason to use nuclear weapons to attack Pakistan (Tellis 2016). As Pakistan is getting weakened and also India has far superior conventional forces which unnerves Pakistan and therefore Pakistan's nuclear weapons serves the additional role of deterring Indian conventional attack (Tellis 2016) with the simultaneous role of nuclear coercion.

Another purpose of nuclear weapons for Pakistan is to carry on its target of destabilising the state of Jammu and Kashmir by using proxy methods for instance, supporting terrorist activities. This plan has the logic that India will not retaliate because of fear of nuclear escalation thus nuclear weapons for Pakistan serves the coercive purpose for carrying out sub-conventional war in the shadow of nuclear coercion. This behaviour of Pakistan made deterrence unstable in South Asian region (Tellis 2016) and converted it into mutual nuclear coercion. The presence of this dynamic is similar to United States and Russia in which India's posture is similar to United States. "Pakistan's behavior exemplifies nuclear coercion rather than simply deterrence: to that degree, it mimics Russian behavior more than it does the U.S. practice of deterrence" (Tellis 2016).

Although geo-political positioning of these dyads is different as Russia and United States do not share common border, whereas India and Pakistan share the same border at the Line of Control. But the point to note is that their geopolitical positioning makes them the regional powers with unique set of problems and prospects. These states are large and covers continents so their regional roles as well as responsibilities come predefined. However, their geopolitical positioning is also a cause of their presence into this fray of war.

Review of Literature

The review of literature will begin by looking at the conceptual and theoretical analysis of term coercion and nuclear coercion in international relations. The second part will examine the literature that deals with the history and practice of nuclear coercion in Cold War and post-Cold War world. The third part will investigate the literature of nuclear coercion between Russia and United States since the end of Cold War. The fourth part will look at the literature of nuclear coercion between India and Pakistan in post-Cold War.

Conceptual understanding of the term “Coercion”

To understand nuclear coercion, it is important to first go through the concept of coercion, how it is understood, its philosophical understanding and its applicability is important to assess. Coercion is a very old concept just like force, pressure, violence but coercion as a concept has gone through various changes and there is a major theoretical debate on the concept of coercion itself. This section deals with an in-depth understanding of the concept of coercion.

Generally, coercion is understood as a process of compelling or restraining by force or authority against individual's wishes. It means to force a person to do something against his or her own will and interest. Broadly speaking “coercion is the use of threats to influence another's behavior”¹. In law, coercion is codified as

¹ This definition is a broad synthesis of Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 2–6; Daniel Ellsberg, “The Theory and Practice of Blackmail,” in *Bargaining: Formal Theories of Negotiation*, ed. Oran Young (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1975), p. 344; Lawrence Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” *Strategic*

a duress crime and is generally considered as the polar opposite to freedom. It is composed of particular set of different types of forcing steps, which are sometimes displayed by real infliction of extreme pain, injury and psychologically harming for authenticity of threat enhancement. Philosophers like Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, and James Mill have presented traditional, canonical understanding of coercion but contemporary philosophical account of coercion has many philosophers who in the beginning of 1969 published many articles in public domain on the topic of coercion. Among them Robert Nozick's 'Coercion' was earliest. Nozick's explanation of use of threats, which is coercion that is operating through the might of the coercee, is accepted mostly among scholars.

According to Scott Anderson (2011:1), the idea of coercion has two different dimensions, "On one hand, it picks out a technique agents (coercers) can use to get other agents to do or not do something. On the other hand, it picks out a kind of reason for why agents (coercees) sometimes do or refrain from doing something". Scott Anderson (2011:1) in his article "Coercion", published in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* posits that coercion as a concept has innumerable applicability, for instance it reduces the "target agent's freedom and responsibility, and that it is a (pro tanto) wrong and/or violation of right". While on the other hand, few people believe that some authorized coercion is necessary for making a society functionable so that people who create disturbance can be curtailed. "A state's legitimacy and sovereignty, sometimes thought to depend on its ability to use coercion effectively and to monopolize its use within its territory against competitors, both internal and external" (Anderson 2011:1). Furthermore Anderson (2011:1) proclaims that "because of its usefulness and its sometimes, devastating effects, coercion is a matter of longstanding political and ethical concern".

Coercion as an academic concept has garnered less scholarly attention but recently since 1970s there is a revival in the understanding of coercion. This newly invigorated philosophical interest in coercion has been sparked by various type of social unrest. Major among them is the continuous strain between United States and USSR

Coercion: Cases and Concepts, ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), p. 15; and Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), p. 1.

throughout Cold War which was also assisted by enormous destructive power of deadly nuclear weapons race. Recently the astonishing phenomena of globalization has added another layer of interest in the concept of coercion (Anderson 2011:1). Similarly, terrorism in post-Cold War world has created new dynamics between state and non-state actors. Coercion has made them powerful too and brought equivalence among all on negotiating table. This revived interest has also led to change in the basic understanding of coercion with changing time (Anderson 2011:1).

In common connotations coercion as a term is sometimes used in a very broad sense, like sometimes coercion is understood as any social pressure like confirming unwillingly to social pressure or abiding by the wish of parents unwillingly, similarly constant advertisements, societal structure confirmation like participating in the economic structure of a country with capitalist or communist ideology etc. Sometimes any type of interpersonal infringement on personal rights is also understood as coercion (Ripstein 2004:2).

(i) Genesis of the concept "Coercion"

History has always been witnessed to various example of coercion, because coercion is just like a behavior of daily life as force, pressure, blackmail, threat and other shades of human mind. Coercion was always present like an inevitable behavior. Anderson (2011:2) states that through the realm of history, use of the concept of coercion has always been a matter of great concern for philosophers, scholars and theorists in legal studies. However, the efforts of understanding coercion in detailed way is recent process. Therefore, it becomes difficult to comprehend that historically what earlier theorist understood by the term "coercion" and whether coercion was used in similarity to "violence", "compulsion", "punishment", "force", or "interference" (Anderson 2011:2).

Study of coercion by some thinkers from past suggests that coercion was understood as a, "certain kind of power for the purpose of gaining advantages over others (including self-protection), punishing non-compliance with demands, and imposing one's will on the will of other agents" (Anderson 2011:2). This kind of coercive power in most cases is accumulated with states as entity. Therefore, it is common to

understand that most important use of coercion has been seen in “state’s enforcement of law” on its subjects, either through direct use of force or through punishments. This coercion by state, is sometimes viewed as legitimate by various scholars for maintaining peace and making peaceful coexistence possible among disagreeing people who are also not tied by affection or blood relations and weeding out disturbance, violence, coercion creating forces from the society (Anderson 2011:2).

(ii) Thomas Aquinas

Great scholar Thomas Aquinas presented a traditional, canonical understanding of the concept of coercion in which he argues that necessity means “that which must be” and “coercion is a kind of necessity in which activities of one agent makes something necessary for another agent” (Aquinas, ST, I.II Q6 A6; as cited in Anderson 2011:2). ‘The “necessity of coercion” means “a thing that must be, when someone is forced by some agent, so that he is not able to do the contrary”. This requirement is “altogether repugnant to the will,” implies that the actions that are taken what because of coercion are not the result of free will or they are not voluntarily, for Aquinas, voluntary means that comes from one’s inclination. In opposition, “coercion is linked with the notions of violence and the involuntary” (Aquinas, ST, I.II Q6 A6; as cited in Anderson 2011:2).

[F]or we call that violent which is against the inclination of a thing. ... [A] thing is called voluntary because it is according to the inclination of the will. Therefore, just as it is impossible for a thing to be at the same time violent and natural, so it is impossible for a thing to be absolutely coerced or violent, and voluntary (Aquinas, ST, I Q82 A1 as cited in Anderson 2011:2).

In a book titled, “*Consent, Coercion, and Limit: The Medieval Origins of Parliamentary Democracy*” by Arthur P. Monahan (1987:243) he states that, Thomas Aquinas handling of the concept of coercion and limit was more explicit. The ruling authority should have coercive powers and should be free to use them also. This will lead to obedience of laws. Coercive power in a state resides in its authority, which is a social or public corporate reality, not an individual person. He argues that a single person cannot make a law and coerce, because he lacks the coercive power needed for law because coercion is exercised by a political entity who has authority to make law. such coercive strength resides in the people as a corporate whole or in the public

figure who personifies them (Thomas Aquinas S.T. 1-2.90.4 ad 2 as cited in Monahan 1987:243.) He relates coercive power directly and necessarily to the lawmaking authority as “a piece of legislation or legal formulation that lacks the backing of coercive authority is simply not a law for Aquinas” (Monahan 1987:243).

(iii) Hobbes, Locke, Kant

The understanding of these three thinkers although differs on few points but mostly they agree on the coercion basic nature and its important use for state’s Judicial functioning. Hobbes gave central role to coercion “as a necessary part of state’s function” (Anderson 2011:3). Hobbes agreed with Aquinas’s views in most points. Hobbes stated that coercion is significant for both the “justification of and function of the state, in fact it is a law of nature that we seek the protection of the Leviathan’s coercive powers in order to exit the perilous conditions of the state of nature”(Anderson 2011:3). Locke also agrees with Hobbes that the “function of the state is intimately tied in securing individuals against those who would kill, injure or rob them” (Anderson 2011:3). Kant has also given importance to coercion “for guaranteeing rights of citizen, Right and authorization to use coercion therefore mean one and the same thing” (Anderson 2011:5). J.S. Mill combines the coercion with punishment power of ruling state. However, Mill has definitely expanded the understanding of coercion, he argues that there are a number of ways besides use of force, violence and threats etc. through which powerful party exercises constraining power on the weaker sections. Mill posits that “potency of legal penalties often resides more in the stigma they attach than the actual punishments they apply’, ‘despotism of custom’ as a force seemingly more potent than that of governments, in that it is able to hold back whole civilizations for centuries” (Anderson 2011:5).

(iv) Conceptual understanding of Modern discourse of “Coercion”

With the advent of 20th century, more analytical approach of philosophical concept started developing. Many theorists started more elaborate understanding of coercion and its relationship with other conceptual thoughts. Whatever the differences crept in among scholars, but the basic understanding of coercion continued with the same understanding of Aquinas, Locke, Hobbes, Kant and Mill till 1969.

However, a new understanding of coercion started gaining influence with the beginning of 1969, Robert Nozick “coercion” started gathering ground among the literature of revived understanding of coercion. This trend continued till 1980s. The articles of Robert Nozick were extremely influential, so their impact was also strong which is continuing till this date. In Nozick understanding there exist a list of necessary conditions for judging the truth of the claim that P coerces Q. Nozick (1969) postulated that P coerces Q if:

[1]. “P aims to keep Q from choosing to perform action A; 2. P communicates a claim to Q; 3. P's claim indicates that if Q performs A, then P will bring about some consequence that would make Q's A-ing less desirable to Q than Q's not A-ing; 4. P's claim is credible to Q; 5. Q does not do A; 6. Part of Q's reason for not doing A is to lessen the likelihood that P will bring about the consequence announced in (3)” (Nozick 1969:441–445).

Subsequently, this framework became the norm for subsequent discussion of coercion. Nozick’s account of coercion differs from traditional understanding of coercion in the sense that firstly it confined the logic of coercion with proposals only for instance the presence of conditional threats that is not accompanied with the direct use of force. Secondly, it explains that coercion is only in existence when and when the coercee acquiesces to it and thirdly, this makes coercion dependent on the will of the coercee to get coerced or not. These differences focus on analysis of coercion and how the adversary is affected by it (Anderson 2011:7).

Amongst recent studies Douglas Rushkoff (2000) explains coercion by giving instance of experts in the fields of marketing, advertising that how they attempt to take away our ability to make rational decisions by using psychological dynamics of coercion. Douglas Rushkoff (2000) made us recognize that everything is coercive or persuasive in some manner; whole capitalistic environment is built on persuasion or coercion.

(v) Comparison of different approaches of “coercion”

Scott Anderson (2010:1) describes the Nozick approach of coercion as “pressure” approach. According to Robert Nozick in 1969 defined coercion as the process in which “one agent can put pressure on the will of another by means of threat” (Nozick 1969:440). While the approach of coercion which existed before 1969 is termed as “enforcement” approach which identifies coercion “as a kind of activity by a powerful

agent who creates and then utilizes a significant disparity in power over another in order to constrain or alter the latter's possibilities for action"(Anderson 2010:1). This "power differential" is very useful in creating pressure on the will of coercee, and it also works by easy means by systematically disabling and disrupting the options for coercee.

The pressure approach considers coercion from the perspective of coercee and it explains that there is always a feeling that one is forced to do that which one does not want to do. The problem with this approach is that anything that is disadvantageous for the coercee's interest is considered as coercion. It relies on very simple ontology that if there is any action taken or forgone based on pressure threat than that is coercion (Anderson 2010:9). H. J. McCloskey (1980) wrote that, "the coerced person acts" thus coercion works by impacting her will. It implies that if the adversary has not taken any action means coercion has failed. On the other hand, Enforcement approach of coercion uses the logic that coercion can also happen even when the adversary does not feel it. For instance, the legal procedure for the murder will count as coercion strategy (Anderson 2010:9-10).

Conceptual Analysis of Nuclear Coercion

It is important to understand that the literature of nuclear coercion implies coercion in the shadow of nuclear weapons. In nuclear strategic studies literature, coercion is generally understood as the process of threatening through the use of nuclear weapons. Scott Anderson (2006:9) argues that it has been observed historically that philosophers of great imminence have been always concerned with the power of this concept of coercion and recently coercion has become a topic of major debate. However, the invention of nuclear weapons has drastically changed the nature and essence of coercion in form of nuclear coercion in the field of international relations.

In Cold War era Thomas Schelling introduced the term 'coercion' in international relations. In his classic work *Arms and Influence*, Schelling (1966) conceptualizes that nuclear weapons make coercion absolute and therefore much more effective than any other form of coercion. It makes bargaining much more effective because threat is more credible. The fundamental concept of coercion by nuclear weapons is based on

capabilities and credibility of nuclear weapons in terms of “power to hurt” (Schelling 1966:4). It is basically the threat of potential damage that compels adversary to comply. Latent violence is more powerful as it influences the choice of adversary. It is powerful because this violence can be withheld or upon wish can be inflicted. According to Schelling (1966), coercion by nuclear weapons lies somewhere between the actual use of nuclear weapons and the threat of use of nuclear weapons. In this nuclear age “victory is no longer a prerequisite for hurting the enemy” (Schelling 1966:22) and thus coercion by nuclear weapons works.

Robert A Pape (1996:8) differentiates “conventional coercion and nuclear coercion”. He argues that “nuclear weapons can almost always inflict more pain than any victim can withstand; if the coercer’s threat is credible, even the most determined opponents can be overwhelmed” (Jervis 1988: 80-90 as cited in Pape 1996:9). In comparison to this the conventional weapons damage is low therefore in conventional method “punishment strategies are rarely effective” therefore “nuclear coercion works better than conventional coercion” (Pape 1996:9). The most important aspect of nuclear coercion is that it “rests on threats to civilians rather than against military vulnerabilities” (Pape 1996:11).

Daniel Ellsberg argues that (1968:2), “coercion is the art of influencing the behaviour of others by threats. Like those of art, its technique, goals, requirements impose certain patterns on the behaviour of those pursuing it”. In this light of coercion, nuclear weapons role is extraordinary as “nuclear weapons have one, prominent use in politics: to support threats” (Ellsberg 1968:2). He argues that these nuclear threats are the “tools of policy” for expansionist and status quo power because they use it to “preserve an orderly world society” (Ellsberg 1968: 2). Power in international relation is a continuous conundrum, “the ability to coerce is a form of power: perhaps the most important form underlying calculations of the balance of power”. Although other modes of power are also important but in field of international politics “the power to compel by sheer, overmastering force” is the most important, “its use is limited, practically, to war”. In general coercion “is peacetime tool of diplomacy” (Ellsberg 1968:3).

In one respect the most important aspect of threat is the way in which its target perceives it. Richard K Betts (1987:4) argues that in terms of nuclear politics “deterrence sounds far more innocent than blackmail” as the “perception of whether a coercive threat represents legitimate deterrence or nasty blackmail is likely to depend on whether one is making the threat or facing it” (Betts 1987:4). That makes a curious case to explore further this debate because nuclear context makes scholars divided and perplexed on this differentiation and debates on the concept of nuclear coercion.

Similarly, according to Todd Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann (2013:175), utility of nuclear coercion has also been contested. One most common thought about nuclear weapons is that they certainly have power to shadow international affairs. Even if nations are not using them mere presence of nuclear weapons alters the political dynamics. P Bratton (2005:101) argues that coercion is dependent on two variables that are credibility and persuasiveness.

Coercion in the shadow of nuclear weapons has been studied in international relation. Daniel L Byman, Matthew C. Waxman and Eric Larson(1999:10) in their book *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument* defined coercion as, “the use of threatened force, including the limited use of actual force to back up the threat, to induce an adversary to behave differently than it otherwise would”. During the 1960s, Thomas Schelling developed the theoretical structure of coercion theory for international realm. Schelling argued that coercion as a “strategy of gradually raising the costs of resistance, which could induce an adversary, eager to avoid future costs, to concede” (Byman et al 1999:10). Similarly, Robert A Pape (1996:4) in his book *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* defines coercion as “efforts to change the behaviour of a state by manipulating costs and benefits”. Robert A Pape (1996:4) further argues that, “both coercion and deterrence focus on influencing the adversary’s calculus for decision making, but deterrence seeks to maintain the status quo by discouraging an opponent from changing its behaviour” in comparison to this “coercion seeks to force the opponent to alter its behaviour”, Pape postulates that for him “coercion is the world I use to refer to same concept as Schelling’s compellence” (Pape 1996:4).

The study of coercion by Alexander L George and William E Simons (1994:280-288), argued that, “clear objective is necessary for coercion to succeed and the precise terms of the settlement also must be specified” the assessment of “strength of motivation- both that of coercer and its adversary-is necessary”. Therefore, “coercer must recognize that perceptions are often more important than reality-the adversary must fear its costs, not just suffer them” (George and Simons 1994: 280-288).

Nuclear compellence and nuclear deterrence are parts of coercion, “compellence involves attempts to reverse an action that has already occurred or to otherwise overturn the status quo, such as evicting an aggressor from territory it has just conquered or convincing a proliferating state to abandon its existing nuclear weapons programs” (Byman et al 1999:10). On the other hand, deterrence “involves preventing an action that has not yet materialized from occurring in the first place”. Deterrence would include “dissuading an aggressor from trying to conquer a neighbouring state or convincing a country that desires nuclear weapons not to seek them” (Byman et al 1999:10). Achieving compellence is complex and it is tedious to differentiate it from deterrence because in practical application “deterrence and compellence blurs” (Byman et al 1999:10).

Similarly, Art and Greenhill (2018: 79) argue that although it seems easy to differentiate deterrence and compellence in scholarly literature, but the practical application of these concepts is very difficult. These scholars point out deep problem in application and explain two reasons for that. Firstly, as the proverb of “eye-of-the-beholder” (Art and Greenhill 2018:79) problem, in this problem the entities involved, see same action with different perspectives. The inevitable problem of “one person’s terrorist can be another person’s freedom fighter” (Art and Greenhill 2018:79) similarly deterrent posturing of one nation can be perceived by target nation as compellence posturing. For instance, the constant crises of North Korea’s nuclear weapons exemplify this operational ambiguity. The United States has failed in coercing the Kim Jong-un regime to renounce its nuclear weapons, for fear of future nuclear crisis but the dynastic regime has denied the abolition of nuclear weapons because for them nuclear weapons are currency of their survival, as they have succeeded in successfully deterring the United State efforts to thwart the regime. For United States nuclear weapons are compellent force in this example and for North

Korea nuclear weapons are acting as deterrent against the forces who are hindrance in the survival of North Korean dynastic regime (Art and Greenhill 2018:79).

The second reason according to Art and Greenhill (2018:79) that proves that differentiating between deterrence and compellence can be arduous is that, “compellent actions are often undertaken in the midst of a crisis by a coercer in order to restore the credibility of its deterrent posture.” The recent U.S. attack on Syria exemplifies this compellent action by US, Syria was doing “Khan Shaykhun chemical weapons attack in April 2017” to which US administration responded by attack on Syria this bombing of Syria was designed to “restore U.S. deterrence” for preventing Syria from using chemical weapons again (Gordon et al. New York Times 2017).

There is also an argument that nuclear coercion although being so useful can be completely useless in some circumstances. Karl Deutsch (1963) explains the term “autonomous probability” belonging to certain pattern of behaviour that a proclaimed threat is meant to prevent. For instance, even a very strong, credible and intense threats may fail to stop people’s sneeze. Dugan (2003:1) argue that according to many scholars, coercion is ultimately untenable. Jimmy Cliff (1972:1) asserts that for its effectiveness, coercive powers rely on the adversary’s acquiescence, “If I am willing to die rather than capitulate, your most sophisticated weapons and techniques are meaningless”. For cost of coercive power, Kenneth Boulding (1989) argue that coercive tactics also involving nuclear powers is a negative-sum game, which is a situation where winner’s achievements are less than the losses, made by opponent or in this game both parties can lose. According to Dugan (2003:1), threat of lambasting and backlash is a huge cost to pay for exercising nuclear coercion. Generally human beings never like to get forced for doing things without their wish, and if violence is also involved, they like it even less. These multiple views analyse nuclear coercion from various structural perspectives of Cold War and post-Cold War period.

Nuclear Coercion in Cold War

After the end of Second World War Bernard Brodie (1946) asserted in his book *The Absolute Weapon* that with the invention of nuclear weapons, war from now is not that important instrument for state policy except for state survival only. Colin S Gray

(1982a: 15-17) identified three waves of development of nuclear strategy: the First Wave, the Golden Age, and the Third Wave. The first wave writers considered to have laid down the basic ideas of nuclear politics and its various themes. Writers included Bernard Brodie, Basil Liddell Hart, Jacob Viner, and William Borden. But according to Buzan (1987:143) the work of first wave is considered unattractive because it was not addressing issues of immediate policy concerns as they were thinking ahead of time.

Second wave of scholars developed new and relevant concepts in nuclear politics. Thomas Schelling (1966) worked extensively on the concept of coercion through nuclear weapons threat i.e. nuclear coercion. That age was considered as golden age because at that point bipolarity came into the picture. Soviet Union became a nuclear state, the focus of strategic studies shifted to how to prevent war for two reasons: Firstly, nuclear monopoly of United States became redundant, which nullified the whole logic of nuclear weapons possession superiority complex. Secondly, nuclear mutuality came into picture so many scholars, e.g. Brodie argued that war would become so destructive that almost no policy objective will justify the resort of war (Buzan 1987:145). If working of deterrence has to be smooth, both of the two nuclear powers must have secure second-strike capability. This is the concept of MAD (mutually assured destruction) where because war will be suicidal both sides try to avoid the war although facing major hostilities. MAD was a concept, which appealed intellectually and politically. MAD was based on the idea of nuclear coercion by threat of punishment. Then came the logic of ED (extended deterrence), which became a “worm in the apple of Golden Age Theory” (Buzan 1987: 152). It challenged the very symmetry of the logic of MAD. Then came the third wave in the realm of development of nuclear technologies by Soviet Union. According to Colin S. Gray (1982a as cited in Buzan 1987:155) there were constant refinement in nuclear technology of Soviet military, and they made the idea of MAD redundant. Continued evolution of military technology made the defense of societies almost impossible.

Nuclear politics was and is always burdened with the search of new ways to cope with continuous refinement in these deadly weapons. Technological advancement in nuclear field was basic thrust to promote nuclear coercion logic but present

understanding of nuclear coercion at that time was not enough. Weapons modernization has fuelled further debates on refining nuclear coercion.

Nuclear Coercion in Post-Cold War World

With the end of Cold War, a perception came among scholars and strategists that the world has entered into the peace era. John J Mearshiemer (2001: xi) in the book *Tragedy of Great Power Politics* repudiated these claims of perpetual peace by stating that hopes for peace will probably will not be realized because great powers fear each other and are in constant competition for power. Many would have also dreamt of final peace during Napoleonic wars, but the world saw two World Wars in the twentieth century (Mearshiemer 2001: xii). Millions of peoples died in these wars. Even nuclear weapons were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in these wars which led to death of millions of civilians.

The international politics is a “ruthless business and it is likely to remain that way” (Mearshiemer 2001:2). John Ikenberry (1996: 79) is also of the same view that there is no such creature of peace. The world order of twentieth century is still existing with different circumstances and conditions. Samuel P Huntington (1993:22) argues that the “nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics”. Indeed, civilizational identity around the world has become the major norm.

In nuclear strategic studies literature, a fourth wave has emerged after the end of Cold War. In this world of “asymmetrical threats” (Knopf 2010:1), there is a need to adopt the broader view of nuclear weapons utility. The old concept of deterrence is not sufficient to define this new world order. Scholars like Colin Gray, Patrick Morgan, Keith Payne urged that there is a need to redefine the concept of nuclear deterrence because that is not sufficient to explain the post-Cold War World. Deterrence is “inherently imperfect” (Morgan 2003:285). Keith Payne (2001:18) argued that deterrence is based on “mirror imaging” which is the concept in which the behavior of adversary is assumed as similar to self. Deterrence literature was mainly focused of nuclear mutuality of two super powers by completely ignoring the other parts of

world. The major drawback of deterrence theory of Cold War was the assumption that the adversary will behave rationally and predictably (Payne 2001:97).

It is also important to understand that the weak adversaries in a situation of conventional conflict feels tempted to use nuclear coercion to achieve stalemate. This is done to avoid the catastrophic defeat in conventional war (Lieber and Press 2013: 4-5). Therefore, the rise of small powers combined with nuclear weapons like Pakistan and North Korea has introduced a reverse process of nuclear coercion. In Cold War big powers used nuclear coercion but post-Cold War world is the age of small powers. Now nuclear weapons have become weapons of weak.

Terrorists are difficult to deter therefore threat of use of nuclear weapons by terrorist is of major concern (Davis and Jenkins 2002: xviii). Today the face of terrorism has also changed, now there are terrorist's organization who wants to end the world for instance Aum Shinrikyo a terror cult of Japan, other like al- Qaeda and Islamic States have extraordinary political ambitions (Bunn et al 2019:33). These group of terrorists are extremely difficult to deter because they are radicalized.

Nuclear Coercion between Russia and United States

In the case of nuclear weapons, Matthew Kroenig (2016) asserts that USA along with NATO and Russia have been working at cross-purposes with each other. While United States has deemphasized nuclear weapons in its defense policy, Moscow has recently gone openly for explicit nuclear brinkmanship. Because of this the risk of nuclear war has increased now than in 1980s. After Putin came to power Russia is relying heavily on nuclear weapon for its national security and strategic purposes. Russia is modernizing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and long-range bombers, and is developing new theatre nuclear capabilities. Russia has also changed its nuclear doctrine of “no-first use” to “escalate to de-escalate” (Long 2018:3). Russia's hybrid warfare model included the use of nuclear coercion, which is a mix of opportunities and necessities (Palmer 2015:2). For United States and Russia nuclear weapons have grown in opposite direction since the end of Cold War while United States deemphasized the nuclear weapons use, Russia adopted the strategy of massive modernization of its

nuclear forces (National Intelligence Council 2012). For Russia Nuclear weapons are “equalizers to NATO’s conventional superiority (Perkovich 2010:7).

Colin Freeman (2014:1) analyses the Ukraine crisis and explains that Russia has used nuclear brinkmanship explicitly. He says that Russia’s way of war fighting is more inclined towards use of nuclear arsenals for gaining victory in war with NATO. Keith B. Payne (2015:1) asserts that Russia’s 2008 military operation against Georgia, 2014 occupation of Crimea and continuing military actions in Ukraine all reflect this vision.

During Georgia War 2008, Russia warned that it will defend its citizen at all costs (Allison 2008:1). The continuous eastward expansion of NATO has irked Russia (Mearshiemer 2014:3). In this post-Cold War world Russia has also shifted its nuclear doctrine from “no first use” to “escalate to de-escalate”, this doctrine states that Russia will “use the threat of, or even carry out, limited nuclear strikes in a conventional conflict to force its opponent to capitulate to its terms for peace” (Sokov 2014:1). According to Olga Olikier (2018:56-57), Russia’s use of nuclear ambiguity is increasing the risk of escalation instead of achieving security.

To counter the nuclear coercion by Russia, United States have also started changing its nuclear and strategic policies. *Nuclear Posture Review* of 2018 has indicated marked change from the past and renewed focus on nuclear weapons. It indicates “any use of a nuclear weapon to respond to a non-nuclear attack would constitute nuclear first-use” (Kristensen and Korda 2019 :124). United States has blamed Russia of Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) violation. In response, United States has also announced its withdrawal from INF Treaty.

Russia’s this warfare strategy is using nuclear weapons for coercion and under its disguise Russia is using lower-level coercion. Harrison Menke (2015:1) argue that the three objectives of Russia namely to deter, intimidate and coerce leads to introduction of an aggressive posture of nuclear coercion. Jeffery Rathke and Simond de Galbert (2016:1) assert “it is difficult to determine with certainty where Russia would set its threshold for employing nuclear weapons in a conflict with USA. Its exercises that simulate escalation to nuclear strikes against NATO capitals could essentially be a

bluff-a psychological manipulation aimed at weakening USA and NATO's determination and unity to resist Russian coercion".

Payne (2016:1) states that Russia's coercive use of nuclear weapons is the practical response, if Russia is successful in implementing this strategy that proves that United States and NATO's policy has failed to deter Russia successfully. As the Russian nuclear threat has revived United States should revisit its strategy of nuclear deterrence.

This study examines whether Russia has been successfully coercing United States and whether United States is changing its nuclear posture in response.

Nuclear Coercion between India and Pakistan

India and Pakistan have shifted from mutual nuclear deterrence to nuclear coercion strategy. The Uri terror attack of 2016 and Pulwama terror attack of 2019 are the case in which India retaliated through surgical strikes and Balakot strikes against Pakistan. Since the inception of nuclear weapons in Pakistan in late 1980s, Pakistan has adopted the strategy of proxy war against India through the use of terrorism. The use of nuclear weapons for both nations serves different purpose. For India nuclear weapons till 2016 were serving limited purpose of deterrence from its principal rivals China and Pakistan, otherwise in all other contingencies can be handled perfectly by India's conventional forces. Another role of nuclear weapons beyond deterrence was the "modicum of prestige" therefore for India nuclear weapons were serving the purpose of "security and status" simultaneously (Tellis 2016). On the other hand, Pakistan's use of nuclear weapons is very complex.

Pakistan also claims that it uses nuclear weapons to achieve deterrence against India, but it is to be noted that India has no major reason to attack Pakistan. However, the conventional superiority of India is a cause of fear for Pakistan, therefore Pakistan's nuclear weapons serves multiple purpose, that has led to destabilization of South Asia by Pakistan support to state sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. This line of thinking was based on the assumption that India would not be able to retaliate conventionally, "Pakistan behavior exemplifies nuclear coercion rather than simply

deterrence” (Tellis 2016). Continuous cross border terrorism by Pakistan has compelled India to change its strategy of nuclear deterrence to nuclear coercion.

According to Sumit Ganguly, Michal Smetana, Sannia Abdullah and Ales Karmazin (2018:1) the Kashmir conflict of India is the “frozen conflict”. Kashmir has become the most intractable conflicts in modern history. According to Pradeep (2019:1) Pakistan is playing the game of mutual distrust and bullying, there is frequent defection by Pakistan. Although India’s nuclear doctrine states no-first use but it also contains the policy of massive retaliation in case of any nuclear weapons attack (Cohen and Dasgupta 2013:109-10). In response to this Pakistan has adopted the strategy of ambiguous redlines that may lead to nuclear retaliation (Kampani and Gopalswamy 2017:15). Nuclear optimist argues that nuclear weapons presence on both sides has caused the caution and deliberation in both parties (Hagerty 1998:1). However, that is not the reality, concept of nuclear mutuality and nuclear balance are not workable in South Asia, it’s an extremely delicate balance. The nuclear coercion between these two states is compounded by different nuclear doctrines and asymmetries in power and different ideologies which increases the risk of nuclear escalation. This has raised the stakes very high and possibility of catastrophic war has increased (Wise 2018).

In spring of 1990s a major crisis erupted in Kashmir’s disputed region that marked the initiation of escalation strategy use by Pakistan. Pakistan was using its nascent nuclear weapon status to deter India and simultaneously sponsoring terrorism (Bhaskar 2015). There was a real possibility of war yet that was avoided because nuclear deterrence worked (Hersh 1993). Indian nuclear forces were also on alert (Burrows and Windrem (1994:506). Devin T. Hagerty (1995-96:80) also claimed that South Asia’s 1990s crisis was a perfect example of nuclear deterrence at work. India and Pakistan were deterred from war by the knowledge that the other party is possessing nuclear weapons. Pakistan supports the insurgency in India because it wants to bleed India and coerce it to agree on Kashmir settlement (Kapur 2005:138; Lancaster and Khan 2003). The leadership of Pakistan was convinced that India cannot opt for conventional war because Pakistan has nuclear weapons (Kapur 2005:143). Throughout 1990s Kashmir insurgency was a cause of concern for India but India was not able to go for war however the nuclear test by both nations in 1998 and

overconfidence of Pakistan in nuclear weapons lead to subsequent Kargil conflict of 1998. Nuclear deterrence was although working but that continuous incursion by Pakistan led to retaliation by India (Kapur 2005:145).

The nuclear test of 1998 by both nations created speculations that stability-instability paradox of South Asia will make nuclear deterrence weak (Krepon 2005:261). Prior to this nuclear test of 1998 both these nations were in the “state of non-weaponized deterrence” (Nizamani 2009:143). Ashley Tellis (2001:2) argued that this nuclear testing has resulted in highly charged atmosphere. Although the world knew that India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, but they were not formally recognized, everyone was hoping that it would be fudged. Leaders tried to keep this nuclear weapons status under wraps but the “hot summer of 1998 has finally vapourised the veil” (Mohan 1998). Vipin Narang (2009:77) argued that South Asian stability is extremely delicate because if India will retaliate to proxies of Pakistan to deal with its paralysis against continuous irk by Pakistan , this might push Pakistan for “ready deterrent” on effectively “hair-trigger alert”, such situation may lead to accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.

As Pakistan’s use of nuclear coercion through sub-conventional warfare has continuously irked India. India’s response to this as Surgical Strikes of 2016 and Balakot Strikes of 2019 by India has puzzled scholars and strategists. It has created a new retaliation option for India (Biswas 2017:7). In the wake of Uri terror attack of 2016 subsequent surgical strikes by India across border had major implication on the Indian strategy of nuclear coercion. India shifted its strategy of no response for nearly thirty decades to surgical strikes against Pakistan. This was an attempt by India to devise a strategy of response to Pakistan’s subconventional warfare with simultaneous effort of avoiding a nuclear war. These were mainly “stealth operations” which were devoid of major norms of conventional war like movement of infantry, divisions etc. these strikes however captures a new space of conflict (Biswas 2017:8) to operate nuclear coercion, to stop future terrorist infiltration and covert war of Pakistan.

Similarly, Pulwama Terror attack of 2019 flared up the India-Pakistan relations, Arka Biswas (2019:1) stated that “India needs to signal clearly its nuclear retaliatory options to counter balance Pakistan’s nuclear coercion”. India’s surgical strikes of

2016 failed because Pakistan did not take any credible action against terrorist groups (Biswas 2019:1). However, these standoff between India and Pakistan is a watershed moment in India-Pakistan nuclear relations, with this India has “finally called off Pakistan’s nuclear bluff” (Pandya 2019:66). “If a society is tolerant without limit, its ability to be tolerant is eventually seized or destroyed by the intolerant-paradox of tolerance” (Pradeep 2019:11). Kanti Bajpai (2017:76) states that new Modi regime in India has succeeded in raising the issue of cross border terrorism and making a coalition of world community against Pakistan which is a “shaming device” for increasing India’s bargaining.

Rationale and Scope of the Study

For the purpose of this study nuclear coercion is taken in its limited and precise frame of reference. This study focuses on theoretical as well as operational aspects of nuclear coercion in international relations. It specially underlines that how nuclear coercion has become prominent phenomenon after Cold War with various intricacies involved that calls for serious re-examination of this paradigm. There has been much work done on nuclear politics both at the domestic and international level but there has been limited attention devoted to working of nuclear coercion or what qualifies as a successful example of nuclear coercion. To begin with, there are gaps in theoretical understandings of nuclear coercion. So, this study attempts to examine various gaps and attempts to address them. Secondly, investigating Cold War and Post-Cold War nuclear politics through the lens of nuclear coercion makes an interesting case, because nuclear coercion is thought to be a more recent and more relevant phenomena today. It is important to look for how various state and non-state actors are involved in nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world.

Nuclear coercion in USA and Russia makes an apt and exemplary case to follow on. How Russia is using nuclear coercion for strategic gains and how and why USA is redefining its nuclear posture. Nuclear coercion in India and Pakistan has also been catching the attention in second nuclear age as this region has become very dangerous, as there is possibility of use of nuclear weapon. Major focus is on using examples of nuclear coercion between India and Pakistan.

This study of nuclear coercion from these perspectives is also important because in the second nuclear age instead of nuclear deterrence, nuclear coercion is working widely and more efficiently. So, this makes a curious case on how after the Cold War nuclear coercion has become so prominent and what are the factors that have led to this situation. Has the nuclear deterrence concept become redundant? Has post-Cold War world changed the dynamics of nuclear powers? Nuclear weapons have become currencies of power for small states and non-state actors and now everyone is getting coerced so easily and in so many ways. This is because destructive power of nuclear weapons is beyond comprehension. This study intends to find the answer to some of these questions?

In finding answers to aforementioned questions, this study has neither focused on nuclear deterrence nor on the doctrine of nuclear compellence but seeks to examine the concept of nuclear coercion, which has increasingly come to be preferred strategy among nuclear weapon states.

Research Questions

For elucidating research design of this study, the following set of research questions are selected as guidelines to carry out thematic explorations.

1. Why and how nuclear coercion worked in Cold War and how it is differently working in post-Cold War world? What are new intricacies that are creeping into the working of nuclear coercion and why they are making nuclear coercion so viable as a policy and strategy in present nuclear age?
2. Why and how nuclear coercion is working between United States and Russia in Post-Cold War world. Whether Russia is successful in coercing United States? Is United States still obsessed with Russia and does United States needs to redefine its nuclear posture to successfully survive Russian nuclear coercion.
3. How nuclear coercion working between India and Pakistan? Why nuclear coercion but not nuclear deterrence is working between India and Pakistan?
4. How under the new leadership and in the wake of terror attacks like Uri and Pulwama, India has changed its strategy?

5. How weak states and non-state actors are using nuclear coercion against major powers and whether they are gaining success or is it only a bluff?

Proposed Hypothesis

For examining of aforementioned research questions, this study aims to testify following hypothesis:

- Nuclear coercion rather than nuclear deterrence is operating in Post-Cold War world.
- Russia by using nuclear coercion is compelling USA to revisit its nuclear strategies in post-Cold War world.
- India and Pakistan have shifted from mutual nuclear deterrence to nuclear coercion strategy.

Research Methodology

This thesis is written in light of working of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world. The major premise therefore revolves around the nuclear coercion strategic use. This study has employed methodological eclecticism method because it is useful for theoretical and empirical understanding. As the main focus of the study is to trace the genesis of nuclear coercion as a concept and also as a strategy therefore this study uses the discourse analysis and genealogical method. This study traces the emergence of the concept of nuclear coercion in Cold War and its relevance and working in post-Cold War. This study looks into that how the concept of nuclear coercion has been put into strategy as a viable policy and strategy by states and other non-state actors.

The study has employed the concepts and practice of nuclear coercion in international politics and uses them to explain nuclear coercion between the two post-Cold War dyads namely Russia-United States and India- Pakistan. It has tried to trace the process of how nuclear weapons as a coercive tool is conceived and put to practice and what are the processes involved and the factors that govern the dynamics and outcome. Also, this proposed study has used both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consist of government documents like declarations, interview transcripts, memoirs, press release, joint statements, reports, and so on. Secondary

sources include books, journals, articles in the newspapers, magazines, papers presented in conferences, scholarly debates, etc. on the subject.

Chapter Scheme

Chapter 1- Introduction: The introductory chapter has outlined the *what, why and how* of this dissertation. It examined in detail conceptual and methodological framework of this study.

Chapter 2- Nuclear Coercion in Cold War World: This chapter identifies the genesis of nuclear coercion in Cold War as a concept and as a strategy. This chapter consists of two major dimension of nuclear coercion evolution as a concept in strategic studies literature and working of nuclear coercion in practical realm. Major case studies have been taken to substantiate the working of nuclear coercion in Cold War. The presence of nuclear coercion and various debates and complexities associated with it at that time that saw pre-dominance of nuclear deterrence as preferred strategy. It sets the stage for examining its two case studies in post-Cold War period.

Chapter 3- Nuclear Coercion in Post-Cold War World: This chapter examines the practice of nuclear coercion discourse in post-Cold War. It tries to explain how nuclear coercion is working in post-Cold War world and the new intricacies that has developed. The threat of nuclear weapons use by radicalized terrorists and the threat of use of nuclear weapons by a rogue states for political gains has been investigated.

Chapter 4- Nuclear Coercion between Russia and United States: This chapter tries to examine nuclear coercion dynamic between Russia and United States. In this second nuclear age how these two superpowers of Cold War have got entangled in the nuclear coercion dynamic. This chapter presents the successful use of nuclear coercion by Russia as a strategy which has compelled United States to revisit its military strategy.

Chapter 5- Nuclear Coercion between India and Pakistan: This chapter deals with the working of nuclear coercion between India and Pakistan and various complexities involved in it. This chapter seeks to explore the unique character of this dynamic.

Chapter 6- Conclusion: This chapter outlines main findings of this study. It also points at the larger implications for the evolution of the concept of nuclear coercion in international relations. The concluding section analyses the extent to which the hypothesis proposed for this study were valid as also what are new areas that need to be examined to develop a more holistic understanding of nuclear coercion strategies.

Chapter Two

Nuclear Coercion in the Cold War World

Situating Nuclear Coercion in Cold War

There is a tendency to think that “introduction of nuclear weapons created a wholly unprecedented situation rendering all previous strategic theories and concepts immediately obsolete” (Freedman 2003:3). However, it is difficult to demarcate a definite line. Literature on nuclear weapons after 1945 was mere continuation of situation prior to the war. First World War proved the efficacy of all the technological development of prior century. Their success was proportional to their industrial strength. War exhausted major capabilities and became war of attrition with losses from both sides. Even after First World War nobody wanted a repeat of such destruction (Freedman 2003:4).

Then came the use of air power by the name “strategic bombardment” (Freedman 2003:4). Use of airpower began to write its story. Italian Giulio Douhet was the one who started the use of airpower logic into a systematic theory. The air power strategy came with the logic “hit first and hit hard” (Freedman 2003:6). There was a firm belief in the privilege of “first blow” which was settled on the assumption that “this could be a war winning event, less because of the physical than the psychological consequences” (Freedman 2003:6). Vulnerable morale of civilian to air attack, the strategic planner of this strategy posited that the wanted result will come earlier because “before bomb could do any damage, the collapse of morale would lead to surrender” (Freedman 2003:6).

The attempt to achieve political targets through inflicting immense pain on the civilian population was not impressive at all. But these atrocities could only come in picture after the end of the war. In an ongoing war and the charged atmosphere, it was difficult to analyze the cause of its use because the target was always to inflict pain and create retribution for past atrocities. In such atmosphere the “early versions of the weapons that dominated post war strategic thinking were created” (Freedman

2003:12). War is the cause of great stimulus for technological advancements. There were various technological advancements going on during Second World War, two of them were the most crucial, “the ‘V’ weapons and the atomic bomb”. Their potential was enormous. Both were extremely crucial and of immense value against the civilian targets (Freedman 2003: 12).

Freedman (2003:13) states that, “the most revolutionary development of all was the atom bomb”. Scientists all over the world were in “professional ferment” over the discovery of process of uranium enrichment. Earlier the atom bomb’s utility was limited against German project but gradually as the US programme developed, officials started to think about the return of their investment, they were of the view that once the bomb became available “it would be employed against the enemies of the United States”(Freedman 2003:15). Henry Stimson who was the then “secretary of war from 1940 to 1945” stated that, “common objective throughout the war was to be the first to produce an atomic weapon and use it” (Stimson and Bundy 1948:361).

As the Second World War ended in 1945, at United Nation’s first General Assembly in London in January 1946, United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was created. United States proposed Baruch plan to eliminate the use of all nuclear weapons, but they succeeded partially only (Freedman 2003:16). Second World War gruesome end paved way to an era of psychological warfare, which was to include nuclear coercion, nuclear deterrence, brinkmanship and other nuclear psychological torturous strategies. The main aim of such strategies was to continue with the war with the difference that the battles were fought in the mind rather than on the ground.

After that nuclear coercion became a reality as Thompson stated that, “It has never been true that nuclear war is ‘unthinkable’. It has been thought and the thought has been put into effect” (E.P. Thompson as cited in Ellsberg 1981: i). The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 was a deliberate destruction. The people who formulated this plan and carried out and most of the public unfortunately considers that “the effects of the first nuclear war as marvelously successful. Such thoughts get thought again and acted on” (Ellsberg 1981: i).

The common understanding among the masses is that “no nuclear weapons have been used since Nagasaki” this notion is erroneous. Nuclear weapons are not simply getting

piled up over the years, secretly these nuclear weapons have been used for different goals by the leaders and authorities “in the precise way that a gun is used when you point it at someone’s head in a direct confrontation, whether or not the trigger is pulled” (Ellsberg 1981: i). Most of the United States presidents in Cold War have used nuclear weapons “to coerce in urgent circumstances a much weaker opponent that possessed no nuclear weapons at all” (Ellsberg 1981: vii). To intimidate the Soviets in non-nuclear conflicts. Thus, nuclear coercion started working perfectly since the inception of nuclear weapons on world stage.

The Approach

Firstly, this study deals with the genesis of nuclear coercion in Cold War. The arrival of nuclear weapons and its use in the Cold War changed the traditional understanding of war. Nuclear weapons are being used for different purposes since their invention, for instance for achieving great power status, nuclear weapons rivalry, leaders use of nuclear weapons for domestic politics like regime legitimacy and survival but the coercive use of nuclear weapons by states remains the most interesting phenomenon.

Secondly this chapter investigates the emergence of nuclear coercion literature, in majorly three waves in nuclear strategic studies literature in Cold War. This links the academic literature with real politics of Cold War. Simultaneous evolution of the concept of nuclear coercion with evolving real politics of Cold War is examined. Although the majority of literature of Cold War focuses on the term ‘nuclear deterrence’ because it was more popular. This study sticks to the term nuclear coercion which is more appropriate and more inclusive term for understanding the politics of nuclear weapons in Cold War.

Thirdly, case studies have been analysed to establish the presence of nuclear coercion in Cold War. How the nuclear weapons states succeeded in nuclear coercion of the other states according to their conditions and demands. Thus, how nuclear coercion tactics defined the power dynamics between states has been examined.

Nuclear Coercion in Three waves of Nuclear Strategic Studies literature in Cold War

Nuclear strategic studies gained momentum after the end of Second World War. The enormous presence of nuclear weapons which altered the course of wars forever, became the major interest of scholars. Various theories and concepts which were new at that time came into existence. Invention of nuclear weapons redefined the old strategic studies. Wars became war of attrition, whole concept of traditional wars changed. In the presence of nuclear weapons, the definition of winner and loser also changed. A small state with the possession of nuclear weapons and techniques is no less powerful than the most powerful state.

In the literature of nuclear strategic studies, theories and concepts on nuclear weapons utility came in three waves in Cold War. At present we are in fourth wave of nuclear strategic studies. First wave began and ended in few years after Second World War and it was not very influential. Then the second wave of nuclear strategic studies which developed in late 1950s, soon became the conventional understanding even though there was lack of validity for the propositions. The third wave constituted of continuously increasing Soviet Union supremacy over United States and their continuous advancement in nuclear weapons technology. Third wave literature asked for verification. The link between arguments and the scenario of real political situation has to fit correctly. Deterrence² and realism became the major phenomena (Jervis 1979:289).

Cold War provided the most suitable scenario for the development of military strategies, concepts such as first and second strike, surprise attack, Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), Limited Nuclear War (LNW) and many others were developed to answer the circumstantial questions. Although nuclear weapons were never used but their presence created basic understanding. According to Robert Jervis (1979:289) “when weapons cannot be used for defense, the mind is quicker to search for their

² Robert Jervis wrote that, “as Schelling has noted in *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1966), 2-18, that the theory deals with the broader category of coercion, which includes compellence as well as deterrence. I have used the term “deterrence theory” because it has such wide currency”.

alternative uses, even though many earlier weapons had those uses as well”. Nuclear coercion is applicable when the other side think that the opponent is aggressive. The nuclear strategic literature in Cold War is useful because many implications in real world follow from it.

Fourth wave of nuclear strategic studies which began after the end of Cold War is constituting new dimensions of complexities in nuclear strategic studies, for instance, nuclear terrorism, leaders use of nuclear weapons for personal gains as regime survival, threat of non-state actors possessing nuclear weapons. Scholars like Colin S. Gray (1982a:15-17), Robert Jervis (1979: 289-324), Barry Buzan (1987: 143-162) and others has also categorized the development of nuclear strategic studies in three waves till the end of Cold War period. The fourth wave is considered is in operation in Post-Cold War world and will be elaborated in next chapter.

The First Wave of Nuclear Strategic Studies

After the end of Second World War, the scholars and strategist like Arnold Wolfers, Jacob Viner, Bernard Brodie, Basil Liddle Hart, P.M.S. Blackett, William Borden, were able to visualize the implication of nuclear weapons. The first wave of writers was mainly intellectual response to the anticipation of nuclear weapons effect. These writers worked on the theoretical consequences, “they were quick to see the implications of nuclear weapons” (Jervis 1979:291). The first wave of nuclear strategic studies was not very effective because they were mainly theoretical only, nothing was there to test their nuclear theories with the Western security problems of that time, that work attracted less interest because they were not dealing with the immediate policy concerns, yet they perfectly anticipated various insights that were later reanalyzed (Buzan 1987:143).

Although they lacked systematic formulation yet if they would have been analyzed properly, they could have succeeded in laying the foundation of future research (Jervis 1979:291). According to Barry Buzan (1987:144) “the first wave of writers was thinking ahead of time when both the United States and Soviet Union would possess nuclear weapons”. In late 1940, United States had nuclear monopoly, it was seen as superior despite having few nuclear weapons. Its competition with the Soviet

Union at that time was perceived as traditional defense strategy based on the superior defense position. The first wave was not very successful not because of the ideas but because of the wrong timing (Buzan 1987:144). However later those theories were revisited.

Second Wave: The Golden Age of Nuclear Strategic Studies

For nearly ten years the concepts of first wave remained dormant. Bernard Brodie, Thomas Schelling, Albert Wohlstetter, Jack Snyder were the main strategists of Second Wave. Most of the theories at that time used the game of chicken model in which the prime choice of both the parties is to remain firm, by adopting this model actors examine its payoff and calculate the chances of the opponent's retreat. By severing communication, showing anger, irrational behavior and loss of control on militant faction's actors uses the all these tactics of coercion "to manipulate threats to harm others in order to coerce them into doing what he desires" (Jervis 1979:292). The interaction of nuclear bomb and the development of cold war was complex.

Also, there was a reluctance in United States to make the nuclear bomb the main central focus of United States strategic studies. They wanted to see nuclear weapons as just another weapon that is prepared to use according to demands. But the discord between east and west increased with time, thus nuclear weapons started to become major focus of American Strategic circles. Berlin crisis of 1948 aggravated the need of nuclear weapons. Gradually Soviet Union started to become supreme in conventional forces, "Soviet Union broke the United States atomic monopoly with a test in August 1949" (Freedman 2003:60). It dissuaded doctrines being based on completely American side, it locked United States into a nuclear rivalry. The uniqueness of nuclear weapons for United States came to an end.

"Bipolarity" became the norm in the glorified golden age, by the mid-1950s, with the possession of nuclear weapons by USSR in 1949, there came the need to redefine the concepts. This age was different from first wave of writes, many of the ideas needed to be re-invented. The inevitability of nuclear-armed rivalry became reality of day-to-day life. The prevention of war became the most urgent question for policy circles. Two crucial development happened at that time, firstly the "loss of nuclear

monopoly” by the United States which made redundant the logic of threat by possession of superior destructive powers, on which the western powers were relying. The question that came into existence is that “what use would American nuclear threats be when the Soviet Union could make nuclear counterthreats” (Buzan 1987:145). Secondly, nuclear mutuality became the reality, which made the conditions real as foreseen by Brodie and others, it was stated that “war became so destructive to fight that almost no conceivable policy objective of state would justify resort to it” (Buzan 1987: 145).

Ever-decreasing credibility of a nuclear strategy and the reliance on conventional approach was the way of Truman Administration but when Dwight Eisenhower came in power, he changed it (Freedman 2003:72). Eisenhower announced the strategy of “Massive Retaliation” in 1954 that linked academic’s strategic studies and policy strategic circles. The Massive Retaliation doctrine reflected an urge to display American superiority to “offset” the Soviet Union advantageous position in Eastern Europe for conventional forces deployment. This new policy of massive retaliation was more complex than a plain logic of believing that nuclear weapons are enough for deterrence to any Soviet Union military move. It was centered on the feeling that West is getting compelled to get into Cold War and may be forced to fight a hot war according to the conditions set by Soviet Union, “the first move was ceded to the east” (Freedman 2003:72-73).

However, this strategy was not sustainable for a long time because Soviet Union also started deploying nuclear forces. Thus, United States strategy to deal with Soviet Union with nuclear retaliation posed the possibility of losing the credibility and increasing the risk of nuclear war. The Golden Age was golden because it attracted high level of political attention (Buzan 1987:145). First wave writes theories and concepts became relevant again. The concept of massive retaliation was hazardous, “its flaws and hazards provided an ideal foil for the line of analysis opened up by the First Wave writers” (Gray 1982b).

Second Wave was witnessing massive transformation in the military strategy and capability of both the rivals Soviet Union and United States. There was rapid development of nuclear weapons technology along with delivery systems. Military

relations were also changing. In the starting of Golden Age Soviet Union did not have delivery system but by mid 1960s both developed ICBMs, fusion warheads etc. Soviet Union was capable of retaliating successfully to any United States war threat. Till this time although United States was militarily superior in some sense, but that superiority was not useful in the face of missile attacks. Thus, they became somewhat equal in threatening each other successfully (Buzan 1987: 146). For Soviet Union the nuclear bipolarity was beneficial, because it was equally successful in nuclear coercing United States. Whereas for the Western Powers the nuclear bipolarity was a threat and deterioration of their position. United States shifted from being superior to being vulnerable and first among equals.

Lawrence Freedman (2003:232) proclaimed that,

[T]he formula chosen to emphasize the disastrous nature of a general nuclear war was that of 'assured destruction'. This term is now taken to refer to a nuclear strategy based purely and simply on a threat to destroy centres of population with no alternative nuclear options contemplated at all. It is also often taken as a creation of the mid-1960s, articulated by McNamara on the rebound from an unsuccessful attempt to promote a counter-force strategy. Having first expressed a desire to avoid city destruction, he now decided to concentrate American nuclear power on little else but cities.

Central idea of Golden Age of nuclear strategic studies was based on the concept of nuclear bipolarity, the simplest premise that was developed in that age that "nuclear strategy can be analysed in terms of relations between just two major powers" (Buzan 1987:147). This premise was true to the situation of Golden Age decade. The assumptions of bipolarity, vulnerability and hostility combined with ICBMs, strike-first and second-strike concepts and the capability of striking each other was working perfectly. The effort was to make nuclear forces as invulnerable as possible (Buzan 1987: 149). This situation between them was perfectly describes as "Mutually Assured Destruction" (MAD), as both states was having secure "second-strike capability". In presence of MAD the possibility of first strike was also reduced because both sides had meaningful incentives of avoiding war despite being hostile. The controversial approach of McNamara's approach was the failure to stop the Soviet Union target achievement of assured destruction. "In fact, MAD was no more insane and a lot more sensible than many other strategic formulations" (Schilling 1973:44).

The MAD was “a neat technical fix by which a potentially unstable rivalry could be forced into a stable configuration” (Buzan 1987:149). MAD was constituting “conceptual elegance, power to dampen rivalry, and apparent practicability of MAD” was enough to elaborate its famous strategic value (Buzan 1987:150). MAD was working perfectly, it was not only a doctrine but also a situation, it opened new ways of strategic thinking, war prevention became the major focus, possibilities of co-operation emerged. Concept of MAD was sitting on massive destructive powers of nuclear weapons.

Although the concept of MAD was the perfect answer to the nuclear bipolarity but the adoption of Extended Deterrence (ED) by the United States for the Western Europe became a “worm in the apple of Golden Age theory” (Buzan 1987: 152). The main problem was that in the changed situation of nuclear bipolarity it was problematic for United States to fulfill its commitment. This became the major theme of nuclear strategic studies for next decade of 1980s of Golden Age theory (Freedman 1981: xvi).

This led to ambiguity and paralysis in the concept of MAD that how much and till when, the Extended Deterrence (ED) is applicable for protection of secondary security interests. Extended deterrence unfortunately became a gaping hole in MAD which was a reason for invitation of aggression, and this hole should be filled by the new doctrines of limited wars and deploying forces to make threat of limited war credible (Buzan 1987:153).

Captain Basil Liddell Hart was the intellectual father figure of the then contemporary theoretical literature of Limited War. His philosophy was the reason for advocacy according to which in the disrupted relations of nations, it is axiomatic that the war should be limited. The country that we see as enemy today might be needed as ally tomorrow, therefore war should be controlled affair, they should be carried out with minimal fuss and without the barbaric excess (Freedman 2003:93-94). Limited War theory was closer to the concept of nuclear coercion which also states that threat should not be direct, it should be implied only so that the relations between nation should not be severed. Henry Kissinger stated, “the more moderate the objective, the

less violent war is likely to be” selection of military weapons and the tactic of their deployment were to be watched by the contestant aim, but complexity was that the choice of means should be based on the easily present means and that means were local conventional forces which were certainly the most expensive (Freedman 2003:101).

No matter how much lucrative it was to focus on limited means of conventional forces, that would not become reality in absence of “funds available from hard-pressed and restricted national budgets (paradoxically, limited budgets did not make for limited war)” (Freedman 2003:101). Therefore, many proponents opted for “tactical” nuclear weapons because for a long time there has been interest in “use of small nuclear weapons in a tactical mode” for an “alternative to strategic bombardment as the centre-piece of Western defence” (Freedman 2003:101). Tactical nuclear weapons increased the credibility of deterrence, the Soviet Union would get deterred because the “process of being blocked would be extremely painful. The invader would be punished” (Freedman 2003: 107).

In Limited Nuclear War (LNU), deployment of nuclear strategic arsenals suitable for tactical and theatre war fighting became the necessity. But the logic of LNU was not bereft of problems; it undermined the credibility of MAD (Buzan 1987:153). The logic of LNU was also undermining the ED rather than strengthening it, it was also that LNU under some circumstances can turn into full-scale war. The logic of “flexible response” was adopted in these difficult strategic complexities. Flexible response constituted of nuclear and conventional response. These efforts were for the deterrence of aggression by denial and a forward defence if in case deterrence failed (Freedman 1981:285-286). Even then flexible response led to ambiguity and aggravated the question that how it is possible for United States to apply the logic of extended deterrence under nuclear bipolarity. Despite all the difficulties and ambiguities, the Golden age was golden because “the worm had not yet broken the skin of the apple” the nuclear superiority of United States muted to some extent the complexities of ED (Buzan 1987:154-155).

“Although the second wave proved immensely popular, it was also subject to vigorous criticism” (Jervis 1979: 292). Theory of deterrence failed to explain the

opponent's motives. These school of thought argued that if the unreasonable demands of the opponent will be accepted they will become more and more aggressive, less work was done on transforming hostile relations into peaceful ones, it supported the containment strategy of Soviet Union so that Soviet Union is contained and its expansion can be checked which will in turn make Soviet Union peaceful, this line of thought was devoid of any grounding in practical terms. It also failed in explaining that what is the process to change an opponent, it is also hard to check that if the changes have happened or not (Jervis 1979:292). This theory fails to explain that there could be alternative of deterrence theories, always hostile relationships are not the answer, to any normal state we cannot apply the deterrence logic to create unnecessary hostility, this means there is something beyond deterrence and that is coercion which is more subtle in which relations does not break off because it's not direct. It's an implied threat only.

Third Wave of Nuclear Strategic Studies

By the mid of 1960s Golden age was coming for an end, after the end of Golden age the nuclear strategic thinking needed to be shifted to the harsher realities that were unfolding in superpower competition. The most important among them was the “the relative gain of Soviet military power on the United States; and improvements in the technology of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems” (Buzan 1987:155).

There were major changes in the relation of superpowers after 1965 and were able to trigger assault on orthodoxy of MAD from different point of views. These changes have been termed as third wave (Gray 1982a: 15-17). The concept of MAD was challenged, the logic of LNW was elaborated more, defense against a nuclear attack became the priority. The Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) treaty was signed in 1972. MAD was the easy target of assault because of its conceptual vulnerability on the controversial concept of ED. Continuous magnification of Soviet military capability in relation to the United States was of great concern and was the major theme of Third Wave of nuclear strategic studies. It was a shock by 1960s the general equivalence in the size of both the superpowers was ringing alarm bell in the ears of strategic thinkers. The thoughts of superiority of United States were waning away, it also proved that Soviet Union never embraced MAD because it was continuously

increasing its nuclear capabilities. ED was already a weakness for United States, the Soviet were relying on deterrence by denial which was embraced to deny military victory to the United States, preparation for survival and to win a nuclear war (Holloway 1983: chp 3-5).

Soviet aim of military victory was uneasy for west, deterrence by denial was combined with increasing military capabilities of Soviet raised the fears among American policy circles that Soviet Union might be considering the possibility of counterforce first-strike against American ICBMs. This may destroy the MAD and may compel the United States to go for either surrender or suicidal retaliation against Soviet Union. The fear that Soviet Union may fail to stop the accumulation of nuclear arsenals instilled a fear of military inferiority in American policy strategist. Politically it was tough for United States to concede to the nuclear parity with Soviet Union, then how can it be possible for United States to accept military inferiority.

There was an increasing perception among United States strategists that Soviet Union is becoming aggressive and hostile, therefore a maintenance of superior strength for status quo was the necessity of United States. The logic of MAD combined with ED was like a confession of weakness for the United States. This situation continuously shaped the strategic theories after the Golden Age. The focus shifted from threat of punishment to threat of warfighting. United States tried to increase the ED credibility by continuously maintaining parity, to maintain an intermediate option of deterring Soviet Union between peace and declaring complete war (Buzan 1987:157). By having an “escalation dominance” to avoid parity and achieving marginal superiority at any level of nuclear fighting (Buzan 1987:158). Third wave was a departure from the simplistic MAD, threat of warfighting became the major norm.

Third wave was also going through continuous changes in military technologies, combination of nuclear weapons with ICBM made offensive nuclear coercion a reality against the defensive posture of societies. The deterrence theorists were failing to theorize continuous technological change, this implied that analyzing the result of continuous technological advancement is also the major need of conceptualizing theories. Future technology should be kept in sight while theorizing, the golden age

was marred by the basic assumption that there are only two nuclear weapons superpowers and there is rivalry between them, whole strategic studies literature was unfortunately developed on this premise only and thus that is a major limitation of the nuclear strategic studies. The concept of deterrence was so overused that other conceptual possibilities were completely ignored.

Barry Buzan (1987:159) argues that “in the last two decades since the end of the Golden Age there have been many technological developments which required that theory and doctrine be adjusted. There has been one clear view of a future technology that might overthrow the whole framework of deterrence theory”. The development of Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRVs), Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), Strategic Delivery Vehicles (SDVs) bombers, missiles cruise and ballistic reversed the previous situation. It is a fantasy to believe that acquisition of any military technology can defy “immense offensive power of nuclear weapons against societies” (Buzan 1987:160).

According to Jervis (1979:324) now we are moving into more complex world where attention should be on adjusting “military strategy to political goals”. Deterrence as a theory and in practice is problematic and needs to be more subtle and intricate for the purpose of bargaining and intimidation. Bernard Brodie (1946:52) argued that, “everything about the atomic bomb is overshadowed by the twin facts that it exists and that its destructive power is fantastically great”. All the brain storming theories of second and third wave could not answer the paradox that it is not sensible to destroy the rivals’s cities and get destructive retaliation and the always present possibility of this outcome is the most influential politics after the end of Second World War.

Debate on the Utility of Nuclear Coercion in Practice

Does nuclear superiority matter? Should it? How big must an advantage in the “balance” of nuclear power be for it to be meaningful? How it will help in achieving nuclear coercion. These questions have periodically bedeviled debate on the utility of nuclear weapons for different purposes, and they prompt impassioned responses on every sides of the political spectrum. Some politician, officials, and analysts believe that nuclear weapons were good only for preventing the Soviet Union from launching

a nuclear attack during Cold War; other asserted that they can be used effectively for political leverage and coercion.

There is a contrasting belief in strategists and policy makers about the utility of nuclear coercion. These questions though important are extraordinarily difficult to answer with confidence and precision. Prevalent views rest as often on faith or folklores as on clear evidence. Marshaling available data from declassified documents and other resources, Richard K Betts book *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* 1987 took a careful look at the role of nuclear weapons for blackmailing in Cold War crisis.

Richard K Betts (1987:7), a senior fellow in the Brookings Foreign Policy Studies program chronicled and analysed cases in which American and Soviet leaders attempted to exploit risks of nuclear weapons conflict in order to exert pressure on each other in international confrontations states that a state that is facing the nuclear threats in peacetime readily considers them as “blackmail” whereas the power that is making threat is likely to call that “deterrence”. The cases where nuclear coercion is used, there is debate among scholars about “what action should be considered as threats”, because the evidential proofs behind the threat is “fragmentary and foggy” which is filtered through analysis based on assumptions of “military and political roles” of nuclear weapons (Betts 1987:7). Nuclear signals were most of the time displayed through threats, initiatives, speeches, events and considerations but it is hard to claim which factors dominated leaders’ attention therefore researchers and policy makers use available data selectively. As a result, prevalent views have tended to overstate or understate the significance of nuclear coercion.

There are some scholars who believe that American leaders used nuclear coercion “frequently and decisively”. According to Daniel Ellsberg (1981: ii) nearly every United States president like Truman to Reagan, with few exceptions considered use of nuclear weapons for tactical gains. Harry Truman after many years of leaving office asserted that he threatened USSR with the possibility of nuclear war on the condition that Soviet forces should be withdrawn from Iran territory; similarly, Nixon claimed that he considered using nuclear weapons four times during his regime. Dwight Eisenhower’s memoir displays more clearly nuclear threats he used.

There are other scholars who completely disagree with the utility of nuclear weapons for coercive use. If the United States drew any political benefit from its early nuclear weapons advantageous development, “it is hard to see what it was” (Mandelbaum 1977:43). Robert McNamara in 1963, cautioned against excess reliance on nuclear weapons, Korean war of 1950, or Soviet adventures in Berlin were all happening which meant that nuclear threat has failed to deter them. There were also few scholars who expected nuclear threats to be relevant in revolutionary civil wars in the third world for instance the Vietnam War or other conventional war with smaller and weak states. Truman, Eisenhower and Nixon claimed the use and relevance of nuclear threat during their tenure, whereas others like McGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara and others claims that nuclear weapons played very less role during those years (Betts 1987:8).

However, Richards K Betts (1987:7) takes, ‘A middle ground’, he states that:

[n]uclear threats in practice were a tentative sort of blackmail, perhaps halfway between stark blackmail and shifty bluff. Threats were never as blatant as a direct ultimatum and were usually hesitant and elliptical. They were less often a bludgeon than a crutch, something presidents reached for when they lacked confidence in the adequacy of conventional military instruments to cope with enemy moves against disputed territory. In many cases the threats were not even the principal signal emphasized in the confrontation. They were sometimes attempting at influence on the cheap. Rhetoric of alerts of the Strategic Air Command might be dangerous, but they were less expensive and easier to turn on and off than large-scale mobilization and deployment of conventional ground forces would have been.

Thus, the coercive use of nuclear weapons was always the reality. The utility of nuclear weapons for coercive use is well understood among policy circles and strategic studies scholars.

Case Studies

Nuclear coercion was working in Cold War, the question is how and why the leaders were trying to use nuclear coercion and nuclear coercion succeeded or not. An assessment of outcome of the crisis clears the picture of use of nuclear coercion for strategic goals. However, there is a limitation of the case studies in Cold War because what leaders were thinking during the crisis is sometimes devoid of substantial proofs.

The proofs that are present are only circumstantial. Although it is well known that United States leaders in Cold War contemplated use of nuclear coercion, but open documentary sources are incomplete and cannot reveal the private thoughts of top leaders. There is also a “Rashomon effect” which means that different people remember the same even differently, public statements or recollections may distort the truth (Betts 1987: 18-19).

Leaders play the most important role in nuclear coercion, they have basically two goals of avoiding political loss and avoiding war. Their first target is to show the willingness of fight while the second target which is of avoiding war is met by being flexible, maintaining good relations or pursuing ambiguity in the threats making (Betts 1987:20). Nuclear Coercion was used in the cases for instance, in 1948 Truman’s deployment of B-29s in Britain and Germany during Berlin Blockade of 1953, Eisenhower used secret nuclear threat against China in 1950 during Korean War. Eisenhower also forced China For settling the Korean crisis 1953, Dulles the then Secretary of State offered Bidault secretly nuclear weapons deployment help in Indochina war in 1954, in Lebanon crisis in 1958 , the most famous Cuban Missile crisis of 1962, President Nixon secret nuclear coercion threat for escalation in case of Vietnam in 1969, all these are the most foremost example of use of nuclear coercion. The most important cases have been taken for elaboration which involved the assessed use of nuclear coercion, for achieving the tactical goals.

Japan 1944-1945

The first and most important example of nuclear coercion is Japan. On 15 August 1945, Japan surrendered, this was unique because the “great power surrendered its entire national territory to an opponent that had not captured any significant portion of it” (Pape 1996:87). This nuclear coercive success is considered as the phenomena which saved the lives of thousands of American and Japanese soldiers (Miles Jr. 1985:121).

Pape (1996:87) states that Japanese civilian vulnerability was the main reason of Japan getting coerced. The fear of future punishment from atomic bombing led to surrender. “It was not one atomic bomb, or two, which brought surrender, it was the

experience of what an atomic bomb will actually do to a community, plus the dread of many more, that was effective” (Compton 1946:54). It is argued that reason of Japan surrender was that it tried to avoid “risk of its population centres annihilated” (Pape 1996:87).

A Survey by United States strategic bombing proclaimed that “It was not necessary for us to burn every city, to destroy every factory, to shoot down every airplane or sink every ship, and starve the people. It was enough to demonstrate that we were capable of doing all this” (USSBS 1947:10). The moral shrinking of Japanese forces was becoming stronger which was the main reason for surrender of Japan. Military vulnerability was the prime rationale for Japan’s weakness. Leaders of Japan recognized that their strategy could not succeed, they were in doubt. Japan was ready to surrender even before the use of nuclear weapons, because America was coercing Japan successfully (Pape 1996:89). America had coercive goals and there were strategies to employ them, there was also a relationship between American coercive campaigning and subsequent change in Japan’s leaders’ will to surrender.

The Korean War 1950– 1953

The Korean War remains one of the most examined cases of nuclear blackmail and threats with varying conclusion on its efficacy. Robert A Pape (1996:137) proclaimed that “the end of Korean War represents a mixture of conventional and nuclear coercion”. United States was successful in forcing the Communists to agree on a territorial division of Korea, the reason for this success is disputed. There are views that nuclear threat by United States worked perfectly.

North Korea invaded South Korea in June 1950, and the United States rushed to the South’s defense. This was the first war since World War II to involve a nuclear-armed country. The crisis provided various reasons to use nuclear weapons as coercive tools. According to Conrad C Crane (2000:72-73) “Eisenhower had suggested using atomic weapons against North Korean forces as early as 1950”.

Although it is also argued that the role of conventional denial was also important. There are gaps in the debate on understanding of Korean War that what are the lesson that can be learned from it and how nuclear coercion worked in it? Robert A. Pape

(1996:141) stated that, “I argue that nuclear coercion, and not the other explanations, accounts for the Communist concessions on the POW issue in 1953”. The other contentions failed in explaining the Korean War, for instance, the other assertion that the starvation threat from conventional attack against dams was not possible, it was later discovered that North Korean knew the ways in which the breaches of dam can be prevented. Another claim that may be Soviet Union pressure succeeded in achieving armistice also failed because it has no evidence (Pape 1996:141). Nuclear coercion was the effective means which succeeded in achieving the Korean armistice, in the words of Robert A. Pape (1996:141):

[O]nly the nuclear explanation accounts for the timing of the final concessions. The U.S. nuclear threats were communicated to China, via several channels simultaneously, near the end of May, and the Communist negotiators accepted UN terms on 4 June. The bombing of dams likely mattered, not because it threatened starvation, but because it raised the credibility of the threat to resort to nuclear warfare. Similarly, Stalin’s death probably affected the outcome, not because it caused Soviet pressure on China, but because it called into question the Soviet commitment that the Chinese had relied on as their guarantee against American nuclear blackmail.

To achieve the Korean armistice on United Nation terms, the strategy of nuclear coercion was adopted in different ways. In 1950s conventional bombing was done on North Korean cities. The most significant strategy was of employing nuclear threats to compel an armistice, this strategy was adopted against North Korea and China, on 31 July 1950, the United States Far East Air Forces and Strategic Air Command (SAC) started adopting the procedure of bombing campaign by nuclear-armed B-29s using incendiary area bombing to debilitate the North Korean moral for war. The target was to coerce the opponent to complete surrender or to create its crumble. The plan of FEAF for bomb use was “the psychological impact of bringing the war to the people is a catalyst that destroys the morale and will to resist” the demolition of urban centres would definitely weaken the morale of public and thus will erode the servility to the communist government (Futrell 1961:42).

United States tried to control the situation with traditional warfare, but Chinese involvement made the war complex. It required the United States retreat on territorial targets that led to the consideration of nuclear weapons use against China, nuclear threat was issued in March and April 1951, but the permission was not granted (Foot 1985:114). Chinese were readying for massive ground offensive of their own in 1951

February, United Nations forces were deployed to move across Thirty-eight Parallel as the indecisiveness on method was going on for and against the use of direct military or economic pressure on China for negotiation, MacArthur took matters in his hands. He made a threat to China that if they would not withdraw from Korean war, “the U.S./ UN forces would bring China to its knees (Pape 1996:146)”. After two weeks, “Truman undertook his own brand of atomic diplomacy” (Pape 1996:146). On 6 April 1951 Truman determined “to send B-29s with complete atomic weapons aboard across the Pacific. Truman then authorized General Matthew Ridgeway (who had replaced MacArthur) to use nuclear weapons if the situation arose and let his domestic rivals know of his willingness to use the bomb” (Dingman :71-74; Roger M. Anders 1987:134, 137, 217). On April 22 Chinese started their largest offensive of the war, in response Truman advocated the use of nuclear weapons rather than subduing it. On April 28, “Truman sent a nuclear command-and-control team to Tokyo, approved a second westward movement of nuclear-configured aircraft, and authorized reconnaissance aircraft to fly over the airfields in Manchuria and Shantung to obtain the data” (Pape 1996:146).

Thereafter through a secret delegation it was communicated to China that they should not misread MacArthur’s relief and reminded them the nuclear capability of United States which can send their development efforts few centuries back (Dingman 1988-89:75-76). Unfortunately, these warnings did not work then “Truman ordered the nuclear-armed B-29s home, late in June 1951” (Pape 1996:146).

Next in a National Security Council (NSC) meeting on 11 February 1953 Eisenhower “expressed the view that we should consider the use of tactical atomic weapons on the Kaesong area, which provided a good target for this type of weapon” (U.S. Department of State, 1953e: 770). He concentrated on coercive use of nuclear weapons, this dominated in one or other form in his planning. On May 19, “Joint Chief of Staff plan was approved that included nuclear strikes against North Korea, Manchuria and the Chinese coast” (Delpech 2012:72). Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) recommended a course of action that involved the “extensive strategically and tactical use of atomic bombs” (U.S. Department of State 1953a:1062). Paul Nitze was also in favour of using nuclear weapons, Nitze claims that nuclear weapons would be

“militarily effective” would cause minor “political disadvantages” (Tannenwald 2007:141).

Mark Clark the General was allowed to “carry on the war in new ways never yet tried in Korea” (Clark 1961: 267). Shortly thereafter surprisingly, the communists got agreed for reconciliation and peace (Pape 1996:146). Scholars like Max Hastings concur with Eisenhower and states that when the Soviets and Chinese strategist got convinced that the U.S. under Eisenhower rule was willing to use nuclear weapons, they sped up armistice negotiations (Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:195).

There was an element of uncertainty for China, the question was that after the death of Stalin how Russia would respond. In July 1953, the hindered diplomatic talks were completed with a successful armistice. Mao’s viewed although that the nuclear weapons were “paper tiger” yet their role cannot be denied (Hsieh 1962:132). In Eisenhower understanding China conceded to armistice because of “danger of atomic war” (Delpech 2012:73). For the whole period of continuation of Korean War, there were mainly three places where the nuclear coercion was used: firstly, at the start of war, secondly when China intervened in the War and thirdly before the armistice. Moreover, in January 1954, Dulles in his controversial speech on the logic of massive retaliation stated that “he threatened to counter all the aggressions with nuclear weapons” (Delpech 2012:73). Thus, nuclear coercion played a major role to achieve armistice in Korean War. Shortly after Eisenhower approved the nuclear contingency plan, China agreed to U.S. conditions for an armistice agreement, and a truce was signed a month later (Sechser and Fuhrman 2017:195). Eisenhower and Dulles later made claims that, “the threat of nuclear attack coerced China into ending the war on U.S. terms” (Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:195). After a gap of many years Eisenhower also accepted that the “danger of an atomic war” was what brought China to the bargaining table (Adams 1961: 49).

The Indochina War 1954

In December 1946 in Southeast Asia, war broke out between the French Union and the Viet Minh. The Viet Minh, led by Ho Chi Minh, sought to unite all of Vietnam under an independent Communist state – the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN). France resisted this path, however, and hoped to maintain control over Vietnam and its other colonial possessions in Indochina. After seven years of fighting, the French military position began to unravel. In March 1954, the Viet Minh instigated an attack on the French garrisoned troops. Surrounded and outnumbered, French forces appeared to be on the cusp of a crushing defeat. As the French desperately tried to hold on at the region of Dien Bien Phu, representatives for relevant stakeholders – DRVN, France, State of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, China, Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States – assembled in Geneva to negotiate a politically settled outcome to the war.

U.S. nuclear coercion was evident in this war. President Eisenhower was of the view that French defeat in Indochina was the cause of concern. They were afraid of that Viet Minh success would help spread of Communism in Asia. On March 24, Admiral Arthur Radford informed Eisenhower that in Indochina we can get defeated and there can be loss of South East Asia which later can get communist (U.S. Department of Defense 2004: 155). Eisenhower said that “My god, we must not lose Asia” (Herring and Immerman 1984: 346). With worsening situation, the possibility of air strikes against Viet Minh became reality. Although United States never wanted to be a part of this but to save France and to contain Soviet Union he reluctantly agreed to help on few conditions like, firstly, the Britain and other allies should also help secondly the Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia should become three different nations and thirdly that the France would keep their forces in Indochina (Bundy 1988: 265).

US president Eisenhower was considering the possibility of carrying out the strikes covertly. He told reporters in a personal meeting in April that if in any circumstances the United States will be compelled to strike the Dien Bien Phu then, “we’d have to deny it forever” (Bundy 1988: 262). At various points during the crisis, U.S. officials privately considered the nuclear option. According to then Vice President Richard Nixon’s memoirs, Washington hatched a plan, known as Operation Vulture, to use

tactical nuclear weapons at Dien Bien Phu (Nixon 1978: 150). Three tactical A-weapons if employed with precision would be enough to destruct Dien Bien Phu (U.S. Department of State, 1954a: 1271). It is to be noted that some U.S. officials openly advocated nuclear use. Although “never implemented, this plan for a secret operation was meant to salvage the French garrison in Dien Bien Phu. The plan involved U.S. airstrikes and the dropping of three small tactical nuclear weapons on the Viet Minh forces” (Delpech 2012:73). President Eisenhower was of the view that “French forces in Dien Bien Phu were indefensible”, it was thought that “no military victory is possible in that kind of theatre” (Kaplan, Artaud and Rubin 1990:86) so they abolished the plan. The then French PM Georges Bidault, was fretful and feared the probable use of nuclear arsenal. United Kingdom was also against this they were pondering the results of nuclear weapons disastrous detonation in the region of Indochina which can compel Soviet Union to use nuclear weapons on the European countries (Delpech 2012:73).

In response to this “Dulles offered Bidault two atomic bombs for use against the Viet Minh” (Logevall 2012: 498). Although the offer was not formal, but he solicited Bidault’s view that nuclear option can be considered in that war of Indochina. This implies that United States considered the nuclear coercion also for signalling China. Robert Cutler’s the then National Security Advisor opined that the United States use of “new weapon” is a euphemism for a nuclear weapon. He stated that “failure to use the ‘new weapon’ in Vietnam would tend to increase chance of Chinese aggression in retaliation” (U.S. Department of State 1954b: 1447).

United States President like Eisenhower and Nixon were willing to transfer small number of weapons to France, the probability of using nuclear weapons stayed on the minds of U.S. officials for another week. There were at least “two notable public nuclear threats accompanied private discussions of nuclear use”, during a speech in April Dulles stated that the allies of United States should agree on the use of nuclear weapons, “whenever or wherever it would be of advantage to do so, taking account of all relevant factors”. This statement may have been intended to “keep Moscow and Beijing guessing” about how the West might respond in Indochina, but Dulles did not refer to Vietnam specifically (Logevall 2012: 499).

Overall, however, U.S. nuclear brinkmanship was mostly muted. Washington did little to publicly signal its resolve to use atomic bombs. There was no nuclear alert, and there is also absence of any proof against United States conspicuously deployed nuclear forces in a way that would have attracted attention in Beijing or Moscow. Thus, as Richard Betts points out, the American nuclear option “did not function as a coercive signal since it never surfaced in a way that might impress Moscow, Beijing, or the Vietminh” (Betts 1987: 53).

There are opinions U.S. nuclear coercion succeeded in forcing the Communist states to agree for concessions at Geneva negotiation process. As Bundy (1988: 271–73) and Trachtenberg (2013:22) agrees that “nuclear coercion ‘worked’ in 1954”, because the Communists were forced to accept an anti-Communist state in South Vietnam. China along with Soviet Union was considering possibility of nuclear weapons use by United States therefore they advised Viet Minh to agree for a suboptimal arrangement according to which Viet Minh was compelled to leave the expected territory. In short, U.S. nuclear blackmail forced the Communists to “draw in their horns and accept a political settlement in Indochina that was less advantageous to them than circumstances would otherwise have warranted” (Trachtenberg 2013: 22).

The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962

Cuban missile crisis of 1962 is considered as the most dangerous nuclear crisis of Cold War. It was a crisis that led to thirteen-day military standoff on the installation of nuclear missiles in the land of Cuba. This crisis created a fear amongst people that the world is on the brink of nuclear war. Nuclear and conventional military forces of America were placed on highest state of command readiness, this crisis was the closest possibility of war both powers have ever experience (Sagan 1985:106). In Cold War, MAD was considered as a stable doctrine because it created caution in strategic dealings, so it decreased the use of nuclear coercive threat for resolving disputes. Optimists were of the view that intentional great power war era has ended (Lieber and Press 2006:42). Cuban Missile crisis on one hand was considered as failure of deterrence on the other hand it was a success of compellence (Lebow 2007:142).

Many scholars argue that USSR tried to achieve “nuclear balance” (Delpech 2012:68) by extending deterrence capability to Cuba in a similar vein of United States efforts of extended deterrence in Berlin, West Germany. The missile got detected before installation in Cuba, the USSR leader Khrushchev lost it. The strategy was that if some confrontation happens in Berlin, then the installation of missiles in Cuba would provide nuclear coercion leverage to USSR. This situation was avoided when the U.S. leaders agreed to the demands of USSR for promise of no invasion in Cuba and also to withdraw U.S. missiles from the lands of Turkey.

There is a major contradictory literature on the nuclear weapon’s coercive utility in Cuban Missile crisis of 1962. Richard K Betts (1987:120) argues that, “some arguments about national security are never resolved because ideological differences prevent analytical agreement”. There is major contention among scholars about the role of United States nuclear coercive power in Cuban Missile crisis “but they cut across divisions between hawks and doves” (Betts 1987:120). Betts (1987:121) argues that these “subconscious recollections” perhaps faded by time are mostly “half-truths”, “danger of nuclear war was asserted at various times, especially by the president and secretaries of state and defense”. Record and recollection show the anxiety for the possibility of dangerous was present. Arthur Schlesinger (1978:529) describes the nuclear crisis situation at that time as, “one lobe of the brain had to recognize the ghastly possibility; another found it quite inconceivable”.

Betts (1987:122) proclaims that, whatever may be the realities at that time according to memoirs and other documents but “there is another interpretation that would make the disjunction between rhetoric and belief appear less disingenuous”. Just as they were ambivalent about whether there was real danger of war, the leadership during the crisis may have held both contradictory positions about U.S. nuclear superiority - that it was and was not meaningful. Betts explains that officials at that time of crisis were confronting hard choices that could no longer be avoidable. Although United States leaders may not consciously recognize and accepted the inherent advantage in “numerical nuclear superiority” but they pretended that they rely on nuclear superiority. There are three facts, according to Richard K Betts (1987:122) which shows that U.S. nuclear coercion was present, firstly the US was of the view that the

deployments of Soviet Union nuclear missile was not acceptable, secondly United States was of the view for taking advantage of its “conventional superiority in Caribbean despite the analogous Soviet option to do the same against Berlin” which could have led to major confrontation towards higher nuclear power, thirdly US prepared its nuclear striking forces for war, and the Soviets did not respond.

According to Stephen J. Cimbala (1992:252) Cuban missile crisis was the “real world test of the logic of behavior modification underlying nuclear deterrence theory and coercive diplomacy based on nuclear threat-making”, it gives an insight into the possibility of risk manipulation through nuclear coercion by compelling behavior modification of leaders. The results of Cuban Missile crises proved that nuclear brinkmanship and diplomatic accommodation are dangerous, the “fallacious psychology” of leaders that uses nuclear coercion for advantages can be dangerous.

Vietnam 1965-1972

Richard Nixon after assuming power in 1969 wanted to end Vietnam war desperately. Delpech (2012:77-78) wrote that “two National Security Council documents related to Vietnam War mentioned the option of threatening the use of nuclear weapons in order to coerce Hanoi to negotiate”. Richard Nixon in 1985 stated that other than Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Vietnam war was the most serious war that was warranting for the contemplation of nuclear weapons use (Delpech 2012:78). “Duck Hook” was the contingency military plans for targeting at least two locations of North Vietnam for the prospective use of nuclear weapon for coercing Hanoi “to negotiate a compromise settlement through a series of military blows” (Burr and Kimball 2006). This operation was meant to create a psychological threat, the target was to convince the Soviet Union and North Vietnamese that United States is committed to end the war at any cost.

Conclusion

This chapter has mapped the evolution of the concept of nuclear coercion in Cold War and its working in Cold War. From the crumbling structure of traditional understanding of strategic concept based on arms strength superiority of the nation, to

the point where mere presence of nuclear weapons nullified the concept of winner and loser in war, nuclear coercion succeeded in changing the definition and conditions of war in Cold War. Many concepts of nuclear studies kept coming and replacing the older one gradually. This chapter has argued that to understand the nuclear coercion in Cold War it has to be contextualized with the context of emergence of nuclear strategic studies literature with more focus on the term nuclear coercion which is more inclusive rather than nuclear deterrence. Some relevant case studies have been elaborated in this chapter to make the nuclear coercion working more explainable. The next chapter will focus on nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world. With the change in power structure around the world, concepts of strategic studies are also changing accordingly.

Chapter Three

Nuclear Coercion in Post-Cold War World

Firstly, this chapter will trace the emergence of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world. It will look into the dynamic of how the nuclear coercion is working in post-Cold War world rather than nuclear deterrence. Secondly, it will look into the use of nuclear coercion by states in revived world order. On one hand the old rivalries are renewed and on the other hand rise of small nuclear capable powers have changed the understanding of nuclear power dynamics between states. It will look into that how the small nuclear weapon states have larger incentives of using nuclear coercion in an escalating conventional conflict and also otherwise. The main emphasised case taken is North Korea. Thirdly it will look into the threat of use of nuclear weapons by terrorist organizations, in this new age how the rise of non-state actors and the fear of nuclear weapons detonation by them has gripped the world on a different level.

Positioning Nuclear Coercion in Post-Cold War World

John J. Mearsheimer (2001: xi) stated in the book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* that, “the twentieth century was a period of great international violence”. Millions of peoples died in World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-45) on European battlefields. As the World War ended, Cold War began and engulfed the globe. In Cold War the Soviet Union along with its allies and United States along with its allies, never confronted each other directly, the proxy war was the norm in which millions of people died in other parts of world like Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Angola and many other places. This “violence will continue into the new millennium. Hopes for peace will probably not be realized, because the great powers that shape the international system, fear each other and compete for powers as a result” (Mearshiemer 2001: xi). Although gloomy but this is the reality. It can be asserted that we can achieve peace but when we look into past many would have thought about peace in every age of war. For instance, during the French revolution in 1789, Napoleonic wars many would have dreamt of a peaceful world in future. But in

twentieth century we have seen two World Wars. By looking into past and analyzing it, it can be said that war is continuous in one form or other (Mearshiemer 2001: xii).

Mearshiemer (2001:1) also contends that “many in the West seem to believe that ‘perpetual peace’ among the great powers is finally at hand” with the end of Cold War. It is assumed that the Cold War end has changed the way of interaction among powers and instead of becoming rivals has become members of a family known as “international community”. The answer to which Mearshiemer states that “Alas, the claim that security competition and war between the great powers have been purged from the international system is wrong, promise of everlasting peace among the great powers was stillborn” (Mearshiemer 2001:1-2). Even after the disappearance of Soviet Union, United States is still maintaining its forces in many parts of world like Europe, Northeast Asia which means that United States believes that old rivalries may re-emerge, similarly every other nation is always preparing for war. “The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business, and it is likely to remain that way. Although the intensity of their competition waxes and wanes, great powers fear each other for power” (Mearshiemer 2001:2).

There is no status quo in the international politics pursuit of power is inherent in the nature of nation states. Cold War has proved that despite being nuclear powers, nation states fight each other continuously and relentlessly. John J Mearshiemer (2001:55) states that “power lies at the heart of international politics”. This power is measured through the tangible assets that a state possesses for instance an armored divisions and nuclear weapons. The claims of realist school are true because post-Cold War world is still in some ways the same world where the basic nature of human beings has not been changed.

Similarly, G John Ikenberry (1996:79) proclaims critically that “a great deal of ink has been shed in recent years describing various versions of the post-Cold War order. These attempts have all failed because there is no such creature”. The world that was in 1940s, is still continuing. However, it can be said that Cold war end saw the communism collapse, end of bipolarity but the world order that was created in 1940s persisted. The end of Cold War is in fact a myth. It is true that may be rivalry between two superpowers was suspended for some time but not ended. In this twenty first

century new challenges are born. War has dispersed itself from western lands to other parts of world with international focus also. The definition of war has changed now. Joseph Nye (1996:23) argue that “world is least prepared for the most prevalent type internal communal conflicts”. International institutions are not enough to deal with the post-Cold War conflicts. Technological, social and political changes around the world have made the reasons of conflict extremely different from the traditional one.

On the continuity of war in one form or another as inevitable fact, similarly Samuel P. Huntington (1993:22) in his most famous article “The Clash of Civilizations?” hypothesized that:

[t]he fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and group of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.

Civilizational conflict will become the new phase in the evolution of conflict of post-Cold War world. Earlier with the advent of civilizations, wars were limited to emperors, monarchs, armies then gradually formation of nation states became the lines of conflict in nineteenth century, during Cold War the war transformed itself into a struggle of power between two superpowers over ideology. These earlier wars were primarily among western civilizations. As Cold War ended this war transcended between West and non-Western civilizations. In Cold War, world was categorized as first, second and third on the basis of political and economic systems but new division in post-Cold War world is of groupings on the basis of their culture and civilization (Huntington 1993:23). “Civilizational identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilization”, this differences in civilization fundamental, world is getting smaller day by day, the interaction is getting increased which is increasing civilizational consciousness.

In this civilizational clash, the threat of nuclear weapons use has become an existential crisis. Now nation states have entered into the phase of fighting for

civilization. This unites many nations of same civilization for instance the Middle-east. There is a revival of religion phenomena going on in many parts of the world. Nations uniting on lines of civilization, getting a generation of radicalized youths. In this age of instant communication through various means, the radicalization has become easy in this internet age. In this context the threat of use of nuclear weapons is all time high.

Since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 this is the time which has become dangerous because of factors, for instance, ever-increasing regional threats combined with tensions and instability in major parts of the world. There is decline of trust in superpowers relations like United States and Russia. Also, there is a complacent view on the security of nuclear weapons. How nuclear weapons proliferation happened in many countries is an alarming situation. A nuclear weapon capable North Korea, Pakistan and other rogue states can create havoc for human civilization. There is an increased probability of accidental nuclear weapons use any miscalculations or deliberate attack. There is continuous proliferation of nuclear weapons in irresponsible states which can lead to nuclear weapons detonation by irrational leaders also acquisition of nuclear arsenals by terrorists became a possibility. The global nuclear governance is also under stress and the international strategists and policymakers are divided on the method of curbing nuclear weapons use by rogue states or non-states actors. World has entered into new age of nuclear coercion where small states and non-state actors have become capable of coercing big powers through the use of nuclear weapons for their tactical gains.

Nuclear Coercion in Fourth Wave of Nuclear Strategic Studies Literature

In the context of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War, a fourth wave of nuclear strategic literature started emerging after the end of Cold War. This reflected a change because earlier world was based on “symmetrical situation of mutual deterrence” but the new world was constituted of “asymmetrical threats”, therefore there is a need to adopt the broader view of concepts which can assimilate and explain the intricacies of new world. The earlier concept of deterrence is not sufficient in dealing with present international order. Strategist refers to this as fourth wave of strategic studies literature after the three waves of nuclear strategic studies literature which came in

Cold War (Knopf 2010:1). Nuclear coercion is the major concept of this fourth wave of literature. Scholars like Colin Gray, Patrick Morgan, Keith Payne, Robert Jervis stated the need of deterrence theory revisit according to the need of the new world. Patrick Morgan (2003:285) states that deterrence is “inherently imperfect” therefore should not be considered as “a completely reliable tool of statecraft” therefore it should be used with utmost care only as a “part of larger tool kit”. “Belief that a foe will be rational cum reasonable, and thus ultimately predictable and controllable, has been most apparent, and potentially most dangerous, in the U.S. approach to nuclear deterrence” (Payne 2001: 17).

In Cold War, the basic tautology was made by keeping in mind the United States nuclear deterrence policy. It was automatically considered that the Soviet Union or “any other sane political authority” would have the “same basic features and logic underlying the United States deterrence policy”. The uniqueness of other regimes and cultures was completely ignored, it was based on the thought process that “sane” Soviet leaders would behave just like U.S. leaders which was a concept of “mirror imaging” (Payne 2001: 18). Drawing from the theories of Thomas Schelling Cold War deterrence was based on the “mirror-imaging” methodology. As Thomas Schelling, an influential economist states that, “you can sit in your armchair and try to predict how people will behave by asking how you would behave if you had your wits about you. You get, free of charge, a lot of vicarious, empirical behavior” (Archibald 1966:150). There was “lack of empiricism” in this technique of deterrence theory for most of the period of Cold War, the Soviet Union was considered as “rational, pragmatic and reasonable (and hence predictable) image of United States” (Payne 2001:20).

Therefore, Keith B Payne (2001:97) states that “the fundamental flaw in the Cold War deterrence framework is the underlying assumption that a rational opponent will be a reasonable, predictable, and deterrable opponent, an assumption most obviously revealed in the convenient practice of mirror-imaging”. This is unfortunate that the “popular usage of the word ‘deterrence’ at this point, is anchored firmly to its Cold War mooring. There is a dilemma suggested by Keith B Payne (2001:98) that “whether to banish the term deterrence for being hopelessly tied to its Cold War usage, or to work toward a healthier understanding of the term”. There is a need to

move toward a more “empirically based approach of deterrence policy” (Payne 2001:100) and that is the need of the hour. Nuclear coercion as a term is more apt for defining this age complexities because it is more inclusive and broader.

This is important to understand that in this post-Cold War world, the weak states have “a range of incentives and options to use nuclear weapons coercively during conventional conflicts”, because military defeats are catastrophically costly for such states. Examples of Muammar Qaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Manuel Noriega and Slobodan Milosevic demonstrate this truth. Now the value of nuclear coercion strategy is well understood by leaders around the globe (Lieber and Press 2013:4-5). Contemporary nuclear dangers are difficult to solve.

Similarly, the extraordinary situation-like terrorists’ acquisition of nuclear weapons or nuclear accidents which are unintentional or rogue states who may begin an unannounced war suddenly. The point to understand here is that “none of those dangers can be effectively mitigated through nuclear deterrence strategies” (Lieber and Press 2013:8), “terrorists’ acquisition is so terrifying precisely because terrorists are difficult to deter” (Davis and Brian 2002: xviii).

Moreover, accident related to nuclear material cannot be prevented through deterrence. In an inadvertent war deterrence is irrelevant because such war does not happen by deliberately wanting to go for it. The focus of strategic studies thinkers on nuclear deterrence only throughout the literature of nuclear strategic studies is unfortunate. It is to be reminded that “detering the deterrable is fairly simple, and deterring the real dangers (terrorism, accidents, and the unintended) is impossible”. Weak states who are nuclear armed “face intense pressure during conventional wars to create a stalemate and avoid a calamitous military defeat” by using nuclear weapons (Lieber and Press 2013:8-9).

The logic of coercive nuclear escalation is helpful for countries like Pakistan, North Korea and other rogue states, who are weak in conventional term of traditional understanding of war, to save their government and regime legitimacy and their survival. Deterrence theories till now have always focused on “peace time deterrence” they do not deal with “war time deterrence” the question that remain unaddressed is

that what will happen to nuclear weapons and how they will be used “during” a conventional conflict. For instance, Pakistan, North Korea and other states who are conventionally weak can use nuclear weapon coercively to avoid conventional defeat. In this age nuclear weapons are “ultimate weapons of weak”, Post-Cold War World has increased number of possessor of nuclear weapons but their utility has also taken a reverse direction, now the weak are successful in coercing the stronger states unlike the Cold War where the opposite was true (Lieber and Press 2013: 12-13).

Nuclear Coercion in revived rivalry of United States and Russia

With the end of Cold War, major world powers started dreaming of a world free of nuclear weapons. United States started leading the world and attempted to achieve peace by reducing strategic role and number of nuclear arsenals. For this purpose, Arms Reduction Treaties were concluded, for instance

[T]he 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) set a limit of 6,000 accountable strategic nuclear warheads, a deep reduction from Cold War highs. Shorter-range nuclear weapons were almost entirely eliminated from America’s nuclear arsenal in the early 1990s. The 2002 Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty and the 2010 New START Treaty further lowered strategic nuclear force levels to 1,550 accountable warheads. During this time, the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile drew down by more than 85 percent from its Cold War high (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: I).

Although initially Russia agreed for United States efforts and accomplished major reductions in its strategic nuclear arsenals. However, again Russia is busy in reviving its strategic nuclear forces as well as its other strategic forces. More complexity comes from Russia’s adoption of military strategies and capabilities that rely on “nuclear escalation” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: I) for their success. This progress along with “Russia’s seizure of Crimea and nuclear threats against our allies”, mark Moscow’s decided return to “Great Power competition” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: I). According to Hans Morgenthau (2018:79), “It is unsound to think in conventional terms about nuclear problems and, more particularly, about nuclear disarmament”. There is a difference now in the objective conditions that we live in and that our traditional modes of theorizing.

According to Keith B Payne (2017:6), in the new world order new strategy should be made for instance it should be accepted by major powers that the perceived goals and capabilities of nations small or big adversaries keeps changing with the time and age so the strategist of big powers should be supportive of these goals of other nations. Therefore the U.S. Strategy of complete nuclear disarmament and no development of new nuclear weapons capabilities are not fit for present times (Payne 2017:6). New inventions will happen and therefore United States should also be prepared to face the new world accordingly. As renowned strategic scholar Clausewitz' (2008) [1832]:655) explains the importance of 'prudence' in defense strategies. Therefore, it is important to understand the requirement for the significant power limits to adjust and tailor prevention methodologies and capacities as quickly as possible. Since the end of Cold War major world powers are trying to introduce novel ways of countering nuclear proliferation and thus preventing new nuclear coercion dynamics.

Nuclear Coercion by China

In the Post-Cold War World, world has changed from what it was during the Cold War period. Strategic thinking of various nation states has changed with changing power equations in new world. World is now going through an unprecedented era, in which the role of nation states in nuclear coercion should be reassessed. The assessment of strategic preparation of present nuclear weapon states vis-à-vis changing power structure in New World order. For instance, according to *Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)* (2018: I):

[C]hina is modernizing and expanding its nuclear forces. Like Russia, China is pursuing entirely new nuclear capabilities tailored to advance its national security objectives while simultaneously modernizing its conventional military forces with readiness to challenge traditional U.S. military superiority in the Western Pacific. North Korea's nuclear provocations threaten regional and global peace, despite universal condemnation in the United Nations. Iran's nuclear ambitions remain an unresolved concern. Globally, nuclear terrorism remains a real danger.

Keith B. Payne argues that Chinese leaders now think that they should must resurge to counter a "century of humiliation" (Payne 2017:3) and for achieving this they are instigating other powers specially U.S. allies because China wants to resettle the existing power dynamics in Asia and other part of the world. Therefore, "it's illegal

expansionism and rapidly growing military capabilities, nuclear and non-nuclear, pose a direct threat to U.S. allies and interests” (Payne 2017:3).

According to Nuclear Posture Review (2018:11), Chinese President Xi stated at the 19th Party Congress that by 2050 China’s military power will be “fully transformed into a first-tier force”. China is constantly increasing its number, capabilities and protection of nuclear arsenal and forces. On the other hand, declaratory policy and military doctrines of China lacks transparency and have not changed.

Conditions of evolving Russian and Chinese objectives and perspectives are vital for contemplations of discouragement techniques on the grounds that psychological examinations that were not accessible in the 1960s or 1970s show that leaders normally will acknowledge more serious dangers to recoup what they see to be legitimately theirs (Scheber 2013:65). China's military modernization and desire for territorial strength have risen as an essential test in Asia.

It has received an undeniably decisive stance in the form of “assertive posture” in strife with its neighbours. It has an assortment of recorded and topographical clashes, including countries limits, contested island domain, and an island building effort in the South China Sea.

Nuclear Coercion in West Asia

Throughout history, the region we call the Middle East or West Asia has been another turbulent region. “Since the Assyrian Empire that began over 3,000 years ago, the combination of violent conflict and long periods of civilized intellectual and physical development has shaped the region” (Kane and Murauskaite 2014: 218). West Asia is also a region of strategic importance. There lies the challenges and problems as development of chemical and biological weapons in several countries, nuclear capability and opacity of Israel, attempts to create military nuclear programs in violation of NPT obligations, and sponsoring of terrorism all makes nuclear coercion as very dangerous phenomena in West Asia. Nuclear coercion nevertheless is perceived as much better option and more beneficial strategy than pursuing a sustainable regional security framework”.

According to Kane and Murauskaite (2014:218), as we can see from various incidences of Arab uprising that the systematic use of coercion is deeply ingrained in almost every walk of life. As coercion and violence became an organizing principle and solidified to become the guarding philosophical dogma for maintaining security in most West Asian countries, the debate over nuclear weapons, and their symbolism as the weapon of ultimate violence, has a relevance to ordinary people that is not so easily understood in other countries and regions. Being on the receiving end of coercive power is a different experience than feeling protected by it. As Iran is seeking hegemony in the region it is threatening major powers (Payne 2017). Leaders of Iran have correspondingly expressed hostility toward United States and its allies, most recently labelling the United States as “Iran’s number one enemy” (Hafezi 2017).

Also countries that abuse their “citizens and show no regard for human rights, may be perceived as more likely to use WMD against their own citizens as also across their borders e.g. chemical weapons use by Iraq against the Kurds and Iran during the Iran-Iraq war of 1980s, and their use in Syria in 2013. “The dogma of security through ultimate coercion will remain entrenched in the minds of governments in the West Asia unless the region can transform the old security paradigm, including the internal security practices” (Kane and Murauskaite 2014: 219).

Reverse Nuclear Coercion by Small States

In the world of asymmetric powers, the relevance of strategic superiority of old powers has become questionable in post-Cold War world. This is the age of small powers because the small states are dangerously empowered with nuclear weapons. Small states like North Korea, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Syria have become the focused energy drainers of the world from the start of 1990s. Nuclear weapons capabilities of majority of small states like Iran, Pakistan, North Korea has reversed the equation of nuclear coercion in their favor. Their asymmetric strategies have created extraordinary situations. Clandestine nuclear weapons Program in West Asia, East Asia and South Asia have complicated the nuclear power structure around the world (Delpech 2012:94). They have become capable of coercing big powers.

North Korea and Iran could not be stopped by the big powers like United States and others in acquiring unacceptable nuclear weapons capability, this means the big powers are getting coerced into the demands of small powers because of their irresponsibility. Their strategy of nuclear deterrence is getting failed in twenty-first century because there is no credibility of it. How the big powers failed in concerted efforts of not letting nuclear weapons spread around the world. The interrelation between nuclear proliferation with the nuclear terrorism is why they were not able to formulate tougher policies, credibility is also a component of nuclear deterrence which has failed certainly. North Korea and Iran are officially linked to terrorist activities and organizations (Delpech 2012:94). There are big powers like China and Russia who have not shown pressure on proliferators of nuclear weapons, temptation of weakening United States or maybe it's a strategy of using proxies to face enemies. China helped Pakistan in acquiring nuclear capabilities. The question is that whether Iran, Pakistan, North Korea can be persuaded to renounce their nuclear program. The immediate answer is no, beyond nuclear disarmament this is the problem more of "regional tension, technical readiness to test, political pressure to assert status and in some cases open defiance" (Delpech 2012:94-96).

Cold War was bereft of issue of small powers nuclear capability because the whole world was absorbed in two superpowers ideological race. The strategic studies literature was written with this perspective. Ironically with the Cold War end many strategic thinkers even started thinking that an era of peace has been ushered in world and a new world order has arrived where war has become obsolete. Cold War end has seen the beginning of return of small and medium states like North Korea, Iran, Venezuela, Brazil, Turkey for power, recognition and desire to challenge the international system. There came the new space for small states to become part of geopolitical game (Delpech 2012:96).

Therefore, on similar lines, Colin S Gray (2007:260) argued that:

[D]eterrence is much more difficult today than it was in the Cold War. The United States is not sure who to deter, or why. Moreover, the rogues, villains, messianic powers, and the rising regional hegemony that the United States may wish to deter all

probably will be more difficult for Americans to understand than was the U.S.S.R of the 1960s and 1970s.

The problem with existential nuclear deterrence literature is that it is marred by an “existential bias” of considering that if a state has achieved nuclear weapon capability it has become able to deter any adversary. This bias is developed from the process of assuming all nuclear weapons states as equivalent in their capability of deterrence. Vipin Narang (2012:478) argues that instead of focusing on the status of state as nuclear weapons states we should focus on its ability of deterrence that is, its posture “hypothesizing that different nuclear postures are distinct and generate differential deterrent power” there is “asymmetric escalation nuclear posture” which is successful in deterring conflict initiation and escalation. These small states are adopting this asymmetric escalation posture which is basically nuclear coercion. The role of asymmetric escalation posture is to deter primarily ground conventional attacks. This posture is the most aggressive because it does not require numerical superiority of nuclear weapons but on the credibility of its use, its expressed intentions are theatrical. Pakistan, North Korea and other rogue states have adopted this posture. North Korea faces an exceptional conventional imbalance against United States and South Korea, but it is successful in the veil of aggressive asymmetric escalation nuclear strategy (Narang 2015:81).

North Korea

North Korea has become a threat to the world security environment. This section deals with North Korea’s present standing in new world order and its use of nuclear coercion to extract political, economic and other benefits from the world. North Korea’s possession of nuclear arsenals along with developed delivery systems can jeopardize the security of the international system. Today the security environment has gotten worst because of continuous nuclear weapons proliferation. “North Korea has speeded up its provocative pursuit of nuclear weapons and missile capabilities and expressed explicit threats to use nuclear weapons against the United States and its allies in the region” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018:11). According to officials of North Korea they will not quit the desire for nuclear weapons because they have belief that they are very close to the ability of striking United States with nuclear missiles. It has claimed that it has developed Intercontinental-range missiles that are

able of attacking United States, has also carried out nuclear tests since 2006 (Nuclear Posture Review 2018:11-12).

“Given North Korea’s current and emerging nuclear capabilities, existing cyber, chemical, biological, and conventional capabilities, and extremely provocative rhetoric and actions, it has come to pose an urgent and unpredictable threat to the United States allies, and partners” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018:12). According to Daniel R. Coats, Director of National Intelligence, *World Threat Assessment*, “North Korea’s nuclear weapons and missile programs will continue to pose a serious threat to US interests and to the security environment in East Asia in 2017. North Korea’s export of ballistic missiles and associated materials to several countries, including Iran and Syria, and its assistance to Syria’s construction of a nuclear reactor, destroyed in 2007, proves its willingness to spread dangerous technologies” (Nuclear Posture Review 2017:12). North Korea as an irrational actor poses a threat of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

North Korea openly states that its missiles are intended to deliver nuclear strikes against U.S., South Korean, and Japanese cities. North Korean state agencies have made numerous reckless nuclear threats, such as, “Japan is no longer needed to exist near us” and Japan “should be sunken into the sea by North Korea’s nuclear bomb” and “Let’s reduce the U.S. mainland to ashes and darkness” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018:32).

A completely nuclear weapons free Korean peninsula is a necessity. It has possession of a large number of weapons capabilities. It can also go for nuclear first use to avoid escalation. According to Nuclear Posture Review (2018:32), “the Kim regime may falsely hope that nuclear weapon potential may give it choice to engage in a game of bold provocations”. In views of United States, main objective of North Korea is the survival of the Kim regime but if North Korea will ever went for nuclear detonation that would lead to the end of that regime. “There is no possibility in which the Kim regime could employ nuclear weapons and survive” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018:33).

In literature of nuclear coercion there is a debate on the coercive utility of nuclear weapons “coercive leverage of a state’s nuclear arsenal is neutralized against a nuclear-armed target, especially if the target has a second-strike capability” (Beardsley and Asal 2009b as cited in Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:49). Pape also proposes that, “nuclear coercion can work only when the coercer enjoys superiority so great that it need not fear retaliation in kind” (Pape 1996:173 as cited in Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017). According to this logic a state will abstain from using a coercive nuclear threat because using this nuclear threat can bring nuclear retaliation.

On the other hand, some relativist scholars argue that “nuclear states can coerce other nuclear powers, as long as they have larger arsenals. Nuclear superiority, then, is the key to coercive victories. In a crisis with two nuclear-armed states, the side that wins will be the one that has more nuclear forces at its disposal. The logic here is that although nuclear war would be catastrophic for both states, it would be relatively worse for the nuclear-inferior state” (Mesquita and Riker 1982; Mathew Kroenig 2013 as cited in Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:50).

In a hypothetical situation between North Korea and the United States in which United States makes a coercive demand. If North Korea despite having the capability can destroy few cities of U.S. with its small arsenals whereas U.S. can destroy complete North Korea. If such a crisis happens North Korea would suffer extremely. Similar was the case in Soviet-American crises during the Cold War because U.S. had nuclear superiority which enabled U.S. with significant coercive advantages in its dealings with the Soviets (Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:50).

Despite these theories and assumptions, Sechser and Fuhrman (2017:171) argues that, “if anyone is capable of nuclear blackmail today, it should be North Korea”. North Korea’s coercive ability comes from its unpredictable nature. For international audience North Korean leaders are irrational and madman capable of doing things which rational leaders would not even think. This unpredictable trigger ability of North Korea makes it able to bully and intimidate its enemies by increasing the possibility of nuclear war. Former U.S. presidential candidate Mitt Romney argued that North Korea can “thumb its nose at the world with impunity” because it has the bomb (Romney 2011:90).

Korean Crisis 2013

The most serious case of North Korean nuclear coercion crisis happened in 2013, when North Korea launched a satellite into space on December 2012, UN Security Council condemned the test and increased economic sanctions against North Korea. North Korea conducted a third nuclear test on February 12, 2013 with the threats to hit South Korea and United States, with “lighter and smaller nukes” (Choe 2013b). In response, UNSC passed another resolution and U.S. conducted exercises with South Korea, North Korea then dissolved the armistice of 1953 and made a threat to exercise “the right to a pre-emptive nuclear attack to destroy the strongholds of the aggressors” (Burton and Johnston 2013).

Although the sincerity of the threats is questionable because its suicidal, yet North Korea used this nuclear brinkmanship to gain credibility. For instance, “He placed military units on high alert, cut off communication with South Korea, moved missiles to North Korea’s east coast, and test-fired short-range missiles in the Sea of Japan” (Carter and Voigt 2013). They warned foreigners to evacuate North Korea because it’s on the brink of nuclear war, this behaviour of North Korea created fear, Fidel Castro said that, “the 2013 confrontation carried the most significant risk of nuclear war since the Cuban missile crisis” (Osnos 2013 as cited in Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:172).

Many thinkers argue that the threat failed because neither the sanction imposed on North Korea were lifted nor the joint military exercise of United States and South Korea were stopped, they behaved as if nothing has happened (Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:172). However other school of thought argues that, “the United States was not totally dismissive of North Korea’s nuclear threats. U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel indicated, ‘We have to take seriously every provocative, bellicose word and action from North Korea’, adding that Kim’s recent actions and rhetoric had ‘ratcheted up the danger’” (London 2013 as cited in Sechser and Fuhrmann 2017:172). The United States had calculated even before the crisis began, in the words of James Clapper that “North Korea would consider using nuclear weapons only under narrow circumstances” namely, only if “it perceived its regime to be on the verge of military defeat and risked an irretrievable loss of control” (Clapper 2012,

6-7). Because of its relatively low stakes, the 2013 crisis did not reach the point where U.S. officials believed that North Korea may launch a nuclear attack. The 2013 Korean crisis proves that nuclear blackmailing is possible but have its cost. So, through the presentation of this debate it can be considered that North Korea has certainly used nuclear coercion to coerce its adversaries to achieve its political benefits.

Nuclear Coercion by Nuclear Terrorism

Today the face of terrorism has changed. Around thirty to forty years ago terrorist wanted people to watch but not wanted them to be dead, based on the notion that their political objective would be lost or defeated if mass casualties will happen (Jenkins 2011:89). However, in post-Cold War world a few groups of terrorist want nuclear terrorism, “the most dangerous types of terrorist organizations appear to be apocalyptic groups seeking to bring about the end of the world for instance Japanese terror cult Aum Shinrikyo and other groups like al Qaeda, Islamic States, Chechen terrorist who have extraordinary political ambitions which involves the target of defeating superpowers and for that they need very powerful weapons. This is the age of unlimited terrorist ambition” (Bunn et al 2019:33). Al Qaeda who considers that acquisition of nuclear and chemical weapons as their “religious duty”, they are focusing immensely on the attempts to possesses nuclear expertise and they have succeeded in conventional explosives test in Afghanistan’s desert (Mowatt-Larsen 2010; Tenet 2007; Albright 2002).

After the 9/11, Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush declared that “our highest priority is to keep terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction” (Bush 2001: 1652). Obama also declared that nuclear terrorism is “one of the greatest threats to global security” (Smith 2016). In all these years although nuclear terrorism has not taken place but that does not mean that they will not employ nuclear weapons in future. It is also the possibility that the strengthening nuclear security structure may have probably halted their program. Leaders, strategists around the world are concerned about the possibility of nuclear terrorism and therefore trying to enhance the nuclear security structure around the globe, which is also an effect of nuclear coercion by terrorist. But the progress on the security of nuclear material around the world is not

satisfactory. “A terrorist nuclear attack ‘nuclear 9/11’- would be catastrophic, and the consequences would reverberate around the globe: hundreds of thousands of casualties, disruptions to markets and commerce, long-term implications for public health and the environment, and profound risks to our way of life” (Nuclear Threat Initiative Annual Report 2018:5).

At the time of Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) of 2016, Islamic State was controlling major areas of Iraq and Syria, this proves that nuclear security progress by world community is not keeping pace with the growing threat of nuclear terrorism. In an incident of Belgium in which a high-ranking official of Belgium’s major nuclear research center with an insider sabotaged a nuclear reactor, investigation led to the fact that cleared employees of the reactor had left to fight for terrorists in Syria (Bunn et al 2016:18-29). The 2018 Annual Report of Nuclear Threat Initiative has claimed that the nuclear terrorism catastrophe chances have been increased by the declining political stability around the world, there is an ever-increasing presence of terrorists in the countries who are possessing nuclear materials. It is also detected that “many countries remain poorly prepared to defend against rapidly expanding and evolving cyber threats to nuclear facilities” (Nuclear Threat Initiative Annual Report 2018:5).

Cyber- based threats have capability of targeting all the sectors like economic, entertainment and any other industry. Their targeting of nuclear weapons or nuclear energy systems can create havoc. What if the terrorist acquires the control of nuclear weapons? “All countries with nuclear weapons and facilities must do more-much more-to protect their nuclear weapons and related systems. A weak link anywhere can result in catastrophe” (Nuclear Threat Initiative Annual Report 2018:6).

Since 2016 Nuclear Security Summit countries are trying to improve nuclear security by taking steps to strengthening their nuclear structure, protection against cyber-attacks who can access nuclear structure of a country, these efforts are very slow which states that the leaders are not serious for the protection of nuclear material. The stockpile of nuclear weapons is growing in unstable regions of the world. These terrorist threat needs to be addressed otherwise this may lead to nuclear terrorism. If the security improvements will not keep pace with the rising dangers, then the risk of nuclear weapons use by terrorist will keep on growing. For instance, Russia has

constrained the international nuclear security cooperation by arguing that they are free to do whatever with their nuclear security because it is their business, and nobody should interfere in it. Even the United States funding for nuclear security program is declining continuously in last two years of 2017-2019 (Bunn et al. 2019:5).

Islamic state's fighters are increasing in every country around the world, this provides an uncertain scenario of future events. There is continuous growth of nuclear programs in India, Pakistan and North Korea and paradoxically they have slow nuclear security progress. This presents a murky picture with unpredictable future. Al Qaeda and Islamic State are motivated to seek desperately the ways to carry out a devastating large attack to revive their glory of becoming the leaders of global jihadist movement. Even a small number of people in those organizations may become successful in creating a nuclear weapons device (Mowatt-Larsen 2008; Bunn et al 2016 142-143 as cited in Bunn et al 2019:38). It is also to be noted that al Qaeda depends on the entities like Abdel Aziz al-Masri the al Qaeda's "nuclear CEO", Sayf al- Adl the operation chief and "Pakistani expert" in 2003 to verify that the items that they are purchasing and assembling are in reality nuclear bombs or not. They have "regional affiliates" in many of the countries which would be working in groups for creating a nuclear device (Bunn et al 2019:38). Also, to note is the speed with which things are changing in today's political world. The Islamic state recent rise is a cause of concern, they have succeeded in capturing a vast territory in Raqqa, Mosul and Sirte in three different countries with its population which have become a source of their earning. Although the world community tried to destroy the bases of terrorist organization but have not succeeded completely. There is lurking risk of nuclear weapon attack by these terrorist groups in future with little or no warning (Bunn et al 2019:38-39).

Internet has changed the speed and ways of learning similarly it has become easy for the terrorist organizations around the world to radicalize the youth easily. For instance the recent case of "Anwar Al Awlaki a Yemen based cleric" whose "entire strategy revolved around the inspiring, inciting and directing Americans to attack their own country" by employing different methods of social media with the title "how to build a bomb in the kitchen of your mom" this ideological spinning became reason of numerous terrorist plot, Major Nidal Hasan "who killed 13 people at Ford Hood in

November 2009, the most devastating terrorist attack on U.S. soil after 11 September 2001 attacks” (Neumann 2013: 431-432).

Aum Shinrikyo Japan based terrorists’ group “released sarin nerve gas in Matsumoto and in the Tokyo subway in 1995 and attempted to acquire both nuclear and biological weapons” (Danzig et al 2012; Parachini and Rosenau 2005; Kaplan and Marshall 1996 as cited in Bunn et al 2019:33). In yet another case Chechen terrorist succeeded in planting a “stolen radiological source” in a Russia’s Moscow Park for warning while making threats that to “sabotage nuclear reactors” also carried out reconnaissance at nuclear weapons storage sites and nuclear weapons transport trains (Bunn et al 2011 as cited in Bunn et al 2019:33).

It is to be noted that assembling nuclear material and making it into a bomb is not a Manhattan Project, once the stealing of required material and technicalities of detonating a nuclear device will be done by terrorists groups they will be able to make a crude nuclear device and can carry out nuclear attack. In 1986, according to estimates of U.S. National Intelligence Estimates the terrorist groups would become capable of carrying out a nuclear explosion if they become successful in stealing nuclear material (Bunn et al 2016:135-137; Bunn and Wier 2004 as cited in Bunn et al 2019:36).

Also, the “insider threat” has become the reality. What if the employee of a nuclear installation gets radicalized? “Employees are the Achilles’ heel of nuclear installations. Skilled insiders can cause more damage and steal radioactive material more easily than outsider can” (Hegghammer and Daehli 2017). Two incident of such kind explains the real threat that this world is facing right now. At Doel-4 nuclear reactor in Belgium in 2014, an “insider opened a locked valve and allowed the lubricant for the turbine to drain out, wrecking the turbine and shutting down the plant for months” investigation revealed that two years before their two employees had left to fight in Syria(Bunn et al 2016:29 as cited in Bunn et al 2019:40).

Conclusion

This chapter has two dimensions the first-dimension deals with the theoretical debate on deterrence versus coercion and shows how the deterrence as a term has become redundant in post-Cold War world and needs to be replaced by the more inclusive term of nuclear coercion. World is no longer bipolar therefore theory of deterrence which was based on mirror-imaging is no longer applicable to the new world circumstances.

Second dimension of this chapter has mapped the emergence of the concept of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world and its working. In this age of nuclear terrorism, it has become difficult to make this world a safer place. Terrorist are successful in coercing because of threat of possession of nuclear weapons. Rise of Islamic State and other cults are difficult to deter and coerce instead in reverse big powers are getting coerced by them and changing strategies accordingly. Formulation of concerted international efforts for containing the threat of nuclear terrorism has become a difficult process.

Similarly rise of nuclear empowered small states, who are capable of coercing the big powers, this reversal of power is the most important phenomena of post-Cold War world. It has changed the basic understanding of power structure, because of presence of nuclear weapons small states have become capable of coercing big powers to concede to their demand. North Korea is the perfect example of nuclear coercion in 21st century. The next chapter will discuss the case study of this thesis, dynamic of nuclear coercion between Russia and United States.

Chapter Four

Nuclear Coercion between Russia and United States

In the post-Cold War world, the military strategies of Russia and United States have been changing. The concern is that what are the triggers that are leading to such changes in the military strategies of these two superpowers. Nuclear weapons have changed the arena of war politics beyond imagination. The conventional war has come to be the medium of nuclear blackmailing simultaneously. The face of conventional war has also changed forever therefore it is important to understand the changes that these nuclear nations are going through. In this light the central theme of this chapter is to understand the operational processes of nuclear coercion between two superpowers, Russia and United States in post-Cold War world. This is an effort at looking as to how Russia is successfully able to use nuclear coercion against the United States. How nuclear coercion is getting knitted in the Russia and United States relationship after 1991. Firstly, this study focuses on the inevitable presence of nuclear coercion in the relationship of Russia and United States in the post-Cold War world. Secondly, it seeks to address the question that why Russia is using nuclear coercion against the United States and the West. What are the reasons that compelled Russia to use nuclear coercion? Thirdly it analyses the eastward expansion of NATO as a major cause of Russian provocation in post-Cold War World. Fourthly this chapter seeks to study the nuclear doctrine of Russia. Why Russia has changed its nuclear doctrine of “no-first use” to “escalate to de-escalate” or “escalate to win” (Long 2018:3). Further it seeks to establish linkage between the reasons of use of nuclear coercion and its effects, the measures that United States and NATO are taking to counter the strategy of nuclear coercion by Russia.

Situating Nuclear Coercion in Russia-United States Dynamics

According to Matthew Kroenig (2016:1) “The risk of nuclear war between NATO and Russia may be higher now than at any time since the 1980s”. As he says,

[O]ver the past decade, Russia has made nuclear weapons a predominant element of its national security strategy and military doctrine. Moscow is currently modernizing all three legs of its nuclear triad—intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and long-range bombers—and is developing new theater nuclear capabilities. Throughout the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, Russia has engaged in explicit nuclear brinkmanship, brandishing its nuclear forces at dangerously high levels; top Russian officials, including President Vladimir Putin, have issued explicit nuclear threats (Kroenig 2016:1).

Russia is also ready to use nuclear weapons if comes the necessity “to avoid losing a regional war with NATO”. NATO on the other hand since the end of Cold War planned to consciously “de-emphasize nuclear weapons” (Kroenig 2016:1). He further asserts that because of deemphasizing the nuclear weapons in its strategic policies, the NATO alliance now is devoid of viable policies for deterrence in sudden situation and response to limited nuclear strike by Russia. Matthew Kroenig argues that NATO is again facing threat from Russia since last two decades therefore it should revive its policy and capability of nuclear deterrence by modifying its “conventional and nuclear posture” (Kroenig 2016:2).

Similarly, Regina Karp, Aaron Karp and Terry Terriff (2007) also argue that, conflict since last twenty years has been mentioned as “new way of war” which is “characterized by complexity, ambiguity and asymmetry in means and stakes”. This is the age of asymmetry with complex combination of “actors, narratives, tactics and technologies-as well as the ambiguous interaction between the local, regional and international contexts in which they take place” (Regina et al 2007 as cited in Palmer 2015:1). Recent years have seen the Russia’s aggressive intervention in Ukraine’s “Crimean Peninsula in March 2014” and Donbas region proves the age of “Hybrid Warfare” (Palmer 2015:1).

Russia’s is using nuclear coercion to isolate its weak neighbors, its ever expanding hard and soft power tools that posits the greatest challenge to western policy makers to formulate strategies for Russia’s hybrid warfare model (Palmer 2015:2) Russia’s adoption of hybrid warfare that includes nuclear coercion is the result of mix opportunities and necessities. Necessity and opportunities are the mirror image of each other. These are knitted in today’s situation of “societal connectivity, fragility and vulnerability”. A fine balance is needed to maintain this because any miscalculation can lead to escalation to strategic use of nuclear weapons (Palmer 2015:2).

U.S. and Russian perspective for the “utility of nuclear weapons differ fundamentally”. According to a 2012, United States *National Intelligence Council Report*, “Nuclear ambitions in the United States and Russia over the last 20 years have evolved in opposite directions. Reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security strategy is a U.S. objective, while Russia is pursuing new concepts and capabilities for expanding the role of nuclear weapons in its security strategy” (National Intelligence Council:2012).

Russia’s reliance on the complex strategy of nuclear coercion today is primarily motivated by political visions, for instance, to revive Russia’s international rank through military power, again declare its old privileged place at the heart of Eurasia and regain its exclusive supremacy on the periphery and thirdly to build a new “Russian world” that is different from the western values (Becker et al 2015:1 as cited in Palmer 2015:3). Russia is engaged in ideological construct via reviving armed forces in post-Cold War period. Russia lessons learnt from the wars that took place since 1990s are different. The Gulf War of early 1990s, in 1999 the Kosovo, First Chechen War, exercise *Zapad 99*³, in 2008 Russia presented a spectacular performance in Georgia war, it is assumed that these few incident formed the base of increased militant narrative of nuclear coercive Russia for a resurgence on international platform (Palmer 2015:3-4).

Is it Cold War Revival through nuclear coercion?

Wales Summit of 2014 had heralded a new era of Cold War of East-West rivalry. However, assessing the relation of Russia with United States through old prism can also be deceptive. Although Cold war structure, architecture, infrastructure all has been dismantled that cannot be revived yet the concepts and practices that belonged to Cold War are still relevant today (Palmer 2015:9). Is this old Soviet wine in new Russian bottle, there are views among scholars that the Russia’s new hybrid warfare is an “updated version of a well-documented tool box that has roots that belongs to Bolshevik period and even tsarist Russia”. There is a war kit “prepare and shape the

³ *Zapad* is a series of significant theater-scale post exercises led by Soviet General Staff during the last two decades of the Cold War against NATO

battlefield” used in any war by Russia. This kit includes the concepts of “Agit Prop” which means “agitation and propaganda”, Maskirovka that designates for “concept of deception, concealment and camouflage measures and tactics, Spetsnaz they are special operation forces that are trained” for unconventional warfare operations, clandestine operatives. Several of these methods were used successfully by Russia in its war with Georgia, Crimean Peninsula, Donbas (Palmer 2015:9).

The most important aspect of hybrid warfare is ambiguity which leads to nuclear coercion by undertaking limited military aggression against adversary (Towards the next Defence and Security Review: Part 2: NATO 2014-15: 30). Diego A. Ruiz Palmer (2015:10) asserts that although this may be thought that we are into new age of hybrid warfare based on nuclear coercion, yet these strategies of limited aggression combined with a strategy of intimidation and coercion of adversaries was always present. In this age it has got revived. NATO has good experience of Cold War coercion, yet it is important to examine the NATO revived strategy and defence posture for countering Russia’s new style of warfare through nuclear coercion. At NATO Chicago Summit in 2012, a new blueprint was adopted and named as “NATO Forces 2020” (Palmer 2015:11).

Why is Russia using Nuclear Coercion Strategy?

Russian forces are proving themselves of becoming increasingly capable of nuclear coercion. Many strategists around the world think that Russia is invested in reviving and “recreating a Russian sphere of influence” and thus achieve hegemony in its periphery including European periphery (Grose 2015:1). This strategy of nuclear coercion can be observed from Russia’s aggressive intervention in Crimea, undeterred intervention in Ukraine, war in Georgia, its Transdnistria, strong intervention in Belarus, provocative military exercises against Baltic and Eastern European states (Colby and Solomon 2015:21). Some even think that Russia wants to break NATO and wants less involvement of United States and having more influence in Europe.

There is a debate over NATO nuclear posture that believes that Russia should cut down its tactical nuclear arsenals. But this is not a viable strategy. Russia’s concerns are broader, for Russia its short-range nuclear weapons act as equalizers to NATO’s

conventional military superiority (Perkovich 2010:7). As redefining conventional forces is a challenge. There is almost zero possibility that nuclear weapons could be eliminated either from Russia or NATO without analyzing the current security problems (Perkovich 2010:7).

Russia is heavily invested in its military modernization which is giving it the capability of nuclear coercion to coerce both its neighboring states (Colby and Solomon 2015:21). Russia is achieving the result of this modernization effort and is successful in creating position of military success, “advantage that extend to the ability to seize and hold territory and then to be able to deploy higher-order capabilities, ranging from anti access/ area -denial(A2/AD) system to nuclear weapons, to block, deter, negate or frighten NATO in its attempts to push these forces back” (Ioffe 2015 as cited in Colby and Solomon 2015:22).

Colby and Solomon (2015:22) argue that “Russia could focus on creating favorable conditions at lower levels of escalation and then use its higher-echelon forces to make a successful response too difficult or costly”. This strategy of nuclear coercion works by creating or exploiting favorable “circumstances for action at the lower rungs of the escalatory ladder”. The use of this condition will favour Russia to control the military escalation in such a manner which would be advantageous to it without instigating a NATO response. In such situation if NATO ever tried to respond forcefully that would be framed successfully as a response of excessive and aggression (Johnson 2015:1).

Russia is having the capability and its strategy of conducting, “Salami-slicing probes, provocation and proxy ‘insurgencies’ using intelligence operatives, special forces and paramilitaries”(Johnson 2015; Galeotti 2015; Connell and Evans 2015; Pifer 2014; Kashin and Denisentsev et al.; Freedman 2015 as cited in Colby and Solomon 2015:23). Such tactics are being used for exploiting political instability that is combined with economic instability situation, make truth opaque by blurring it and minimize the support of international system for victim. Use of irregular forces by Russia helps in creating excuse for conventional forces interventions. Such gambits are used for large conventional aggression to construct battlespace with time. Such operations can be carried out in countries where ethnic Russian minorities are present

and also in other neighbours (Colby and Solomon 2015:23). If there are no local populations to help Russian agenda most of the time their own security forces are ordered to fabricate agenda (Higgins 2015).

Everyone knows that Salami-slicing tactics cannot help in gaining a large area in the face of resistance by adversary therefore Russia has increased its investment in irregular forces and in capability of carrying “regular warfare” with lethal and decisive speed. Now Russia can deploy far more superior “conventional forces in Baltic states, Scandinavia and the Black Sea” and also much faster than NATO till the time NATO will even wake up from its slumber of deployed garrisoned forces in Europe and America (Colby and Solomon 2015:23).

Russia can also use such sharp forces to achieve its target of local conventional predominance in case of escalation of a “fabricated or ambiguous strife in Baltic states”. These forces can gain rapid gains militarily over local troops or even NATO, they provide “significant coercive leverage by providing the ability to establish faits accomplis and seize territory” that can be easily defended because defense is easier than offense in conventional warfare, in this situation Russia would transfer the blame of escalation on the NATO, thus “forcing it to mount a major counter-intervention to dislodge Russian forces”. Russia would make this “task harder to justify through covert manipulation of public debate” more dangerous is the problem that it would do so with the “higher-level A2/AD and associated forces that present a serious threat to Allied forces in all domains”. In such situation Russia would accept that NATO alliance should swallow the bitter pill of conceding to Russia’s aggression if not this then they have to do compensation instead of risking and punishing its forces (Colby and Solomon 2015:24).

Reason for Russian Nuclear Coercion: Eastward expansion of NATO

More realistic strategists of USA are paying attention to the chances of Russian blackmail strategy or aggression towards new and weak NATO members along the borders. Many strategists are of the view that 2008 conflict between Russia and

Georgia was an example of Russian aggression threat. It is important therefore to examine each of these in detail to understand Russia's nuclear coercion in operation.

Russia Georgia War 2008

Russia's military intervention in Georgia in August 2008 had led to formal recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states. This was a "watershed moment in post-Cold War" period. Russia successfully coerced Georgia to peace. Russia warned that it will defend its 'citizens' at all costs which created concerns in NATO (Allison 2008:1). This was the new nuclear coercion age. Russian five-day war in Georgia also suggested that there was a need of military modernization of Russia, Russian casualties were excessive. This was to make "Russian rhetoric became increasingly anti-western and, in particular, anti-American during Putin's second term as president" (Pallin and Westerlund 2009:400).

On Aug 7, 2008, in the night Georgian forces entered South Ossetia, which is a small region who wants independence from Georgia and was supported by Russia. Both Russia and Georgia had deployed their military forces there since 1990s. There is a disputed claim by both sides and Georgia claimed that it intervened to support the Georgian Villagers and Russia claims that Georgians were trying to recapture the land that they lost in 1992. Russia immediately mobilized its all ground, naval and air forces and thrust out Georgian forces. A ceasefire was signed on August 12, Russian military withdrew from undisputed Georgia but did not leave South Ossetia and Abkhazia and when the Conflict got over Russia recognized them and gave them the status of independent states (Perkovich 2013:12-13).

George Perkovich claims that this extended nuclear deterrence was questionable because if Georgia had been a member of NATO, Russia before intervening would have calculated in a different way because of the presence of nuclear shadow. But it is also noticeable that if Georgia had been a member of NATO, United States and its allies would have pressed it relentlessly to not get involved in a provocative conduct. There remains an ambiguity that who initiated the war similar ambiguity exists in potential situations of East Asia, Europe, Middle East where USA has extended its deterrent power (Perkovich 2013:13).

There are arguments that the resurging Russian nationalism could lead to non-nuclear military aggression against small NATO members like Estonia. The cause that could initiate the conflict may be the maltreatment of Russian minority in Estonia. Russia may mobilize its conventional forces to coerce the leaders of Estonia. In such situation if NATO subscribe for nuclear “warning shot” may be at a small “Russian naval target” for minimal causality. Then the question remains that how the Russia will response. There are moral hazards on the first use of nuclear weapons against the threat which is non-nuclear in nature and it may lead to engage in risky behaviour (Perkovich 2013:15-16).

It is believed that Ukraine crisis were result of Russian aggression. It was the result of desire for revival of the Soviet empire. However, the blame also goes to the NATO enlargement process. The desire of NATO to integrate Ukraine to NATO was the root cause of the problem. The support for democracy in Ukraine by west was also the cause. Since 1990s Russia has opposed NATO’s eastward enlargement. Vladimir Putin is believed to having overthrown the Ukrainian president and take Crimea because of the threat of it becoming the NATO naval base. This should not come as surprise because the NATO was seen threatening the very core of Russian strategic interests. Elites in West may think the theory of realism has lost its relevance and liberal principles are ruling the world which is obviously a flawed understanding. The Ukrainian crisis has shown the realpolitik which cannot be ignored (Mearshiemer 2014:1-2)

Since 1990s during Clinton administration West had begun to expand. The first round of NATO expansion happened in 1999 which brought in Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. In 2004 second round of enlargement took place it brought Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Russia became bitter but at that time Russia was too weak to destabilize NATO enlargement in east. After that NATO enlargement started further east in 2008 consideration of admission of Georgia and Ukraine started floating around. France and Germany opposed this from fear of Russia that is why a compromise was done that formal process would be done later on but a statement was issued that “These countries will become members of NATO” (Mearshiemer 2014:3). Russia took it very seriously. Russia invaded Georgia in August 2008. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili was interested in NATO

membership, Putin wanted “to keep Georgia weak and divided and out of NATO”, Russian forces took control of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Despite this NATO did not learn any lesson and continued bring Eastward nation into NATO by giving membership to Albania and Croatia in 2009 (Mearshiemer 2014:3).

Russia accused West of “trying to create a sphere of influence” in eastern Europe. West continued its march of spreading democracy and western values in Ukraine and other post-Soviet states by funding pro-western organization and supporting individuals. U.S. even invested more than 5 billion dollars since 1991 in Ukraine, United States government bankrolled the National Endowment for Democracy that funded more than 60 projects at promoting civil society and democratic institutions. Russia despised this social engineering by west. “The west’s triple package of policies-NATO enlargement, EU expansion and democracy promotion-added fuel to a fire waiting to ignite” (Mearshiemer 2014:4). Russian intervention came in Crimea and eastern Ukraine with the use of nuclear coercion and conventional force to take control which obviously posed frontal challenge to NATO (Allison 2014:1255).

Russia’s Nuclear Coercion Doctrine

Since the end of Cold War, Russia has emphasized the role of nuclear weapons instead of deemphasizing it. During Cold War USSR was maintaining “no First Use” policy which Russia renounced in 2000. The Russian coercive use of nuclear weapons is rooted in history. In Post-Cold War world Russian policy makers have supported the “de-escalatory” nuclear strikes (Sokov 2014:1). This new doctrine of “escalate to de-escalate” or “escalation control” concept stands for the understanding that “Moscow will use the threat of, or even carry out, limited nuclear strikes in a conventional conflict to force its opponent to capitulate to its terms for peace”(Sokov 2014:1). Similarly, Olga Oliker (2018:52) states that, “Talk to anybody in Washington (except, perhaps the U.S. president), and you will hear an ominous mantra: the Russians are back. Many thinks that resurging Russia would be the first to pull the nuclear trigger, a strategy of “escalate to de-escalate”.

According to Bradley A. Thayer (2018), “escalate to de-escalate” doctrine of Russia conveys the message that Russia might use nuclear arsenals to achieve the stalemate

in a conventional conflict. There are three reasons for this strategy, firstly, this tactic will compel NATO to yield, threat of use of nuclear weapons is dangerous and it encourage Russia to undertake aggression. Secondly, it amplifies the threats to United States and its allies. Thirdly, this causes a psychological predicament for NATO strategists. This strategy of Russia is considered as intimidation and coercion. Russia's nuclear doctrine triggers major debates in policy circles. The skeptics argue that Russia's nuclear weapons would never be used as predicted in its doctrine and should be discounted by everyone else also. This leads to strategic ambiguity in which skeptics argue that Russia would not actually do what it declares in its doctrine (Thayer 2018). According to Olga Olikier and Andrey Baklitskiy (2018:1) the Russian nuclear doctrine of "escalate to de-escalate" is well understood in American strategic circles, various strategists like Matthew Kroenig, Elbridge Colby, Juri Luik and Tomas Jermalavicius believes that Russia would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons in the battlefield defeat, to cover up the conventional inferiority against NATO.

Military doctrine of 2000 states that Russia will go for nuclear strikes in any situation that will be "critical to the national security" of the Russian Federation (Sokov 1999:1). Military doctrine of 2010 states that,

[T]he Russian Federation reserves the right to utilize nuclear weapons in response to utilization of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction against it and (or) its allies, and also in the event of aggression against the Russian Federation involving the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is under threat (Golts 2015).

Putin's rule is considered synonymous to the Russia's existence. The legitimacy of Putin depends on his credibility of being a strong and bold leader, if in the situation of defeat in war that would also threaten the regime of Putin, that can lead to possibly convince Putin to use nuclear weapons coercively to avoid calamitous defeat. Matthew Kroenig (2015:2) asserts that Russia being conventionally weaker than United States and NATO would consider the use of nuclear weapons in a conventional war. For a long time, strategists were assuming that Russia's reliability on nuclear arsenals was for defense purpose.

Contrast to this the recent situations of Ukraine crisis have proved that Russia is using nuclear weapons tactics as offensive campaign of nuclear coercion, Putin said in

August 2014, “I want to remind you that Russia is one of the leading nuclear powers...It’s best not to mess with us” (Freeman 2014). Russia’s physical demonstration of its threat since past decade ends with nuclear exercises (Sokov 2014:1). When Crimea crisis was going on, Vladimir Putin also claimed that he considered using nuclear weapons and stated that, “We were ready to [put nuclear forces on alert] . . . It was a frank and open position. And that is why I think no one was in the mood to start a world war” (Blandy 2015 as cited in Kroenig 2016:4). The message is clear means the western nations must not intervene in Russia’s near abroad otherwise it would lead to risk of a nuclear conflict.

Olga Oliker (2018:52) argues that “the real danger is not a new and more aggressive Russian nuclear strategy; it is the Kremlin’s failure to communicate its goals effectively to leaders in Washington and elsewhere”, its unique strategy of maintaining “deliberate ambiguity” is creating speculations in United States that is leading to a risky possibility of escalation that may heighten the chances of clash escalation. It is to be noted that in 1993, Russia dropped “no first use “ pledge, Russian military analysis in 1999 posited that, “Russia should consider using nuclear weapons in future regional conflicts to signal its resolve and thus convince its adversaries to back down – that it should , in today’s nuclear lingo” (Oliker 2018:53-54). Subsequently Russia revised its military doctrine which then allowed “nuclear escalation against conventional enemy forces”, in situation that may be necessary for their security (Oliker 2018: 53-54).

The exact purpose of strategy of nuclear ambiguity of Russia has been clearly explained by the Russian government that they are for deliberate ambiguity for increasing deterrence, but the irony is that they are increasing the risk of escalation. Paradoxically, the United States who try to highlight nuclear weapons more “in its posture, planning and rhetoric on the other hand the more Russia will come to rely on them as crucial defensive and coercive tools” (Oliker 2018:56-57).

Russia’s Nuclear Coercion Strategy in practice

In post-Cold War World Russia is busy in modernizing both its strategic and non-strategic nuclear forces. This modernization is raising concerns in western world

specially Europe and United States about Russia's intentions and nuclear strategy. In return, these intentions have become a hurdle and thus blocking the nuclear arms reduction in Western Europe and NATO. Russia has approximately 4,490 nuclear warheads. Although the New START treaty is placing some restraints on Russia's deployed strategic forces, because of this Russia is tilting towards strategic reliance on non-deployed warheads that can be loaded instantly when the situation arises. Nuclear modernization by Russia is successful in coercing the US and NATO and it presents new challenges of this new age (Kristensen and Korda 2019:73).

The question is, what has been the motivation behind the Russia's nuclear modernization? The motivation is understood by many scholars as the desire to have equality with US. There is also an understanding among Russia's leaders that the "US ballistic missile defense system constitutes a real future risk to the credibility of Russia's retaliatory capability". Therefore, there is also deep influence of military-industry complex on Russia's strategic planning" (Kristensen and Korda 2019:73-75).

Russia's nuclear strategy became extremely debatable after the *Nuclear Posture Review* of 2018 that was published by United States new administration. This *Nuclear Posture Review* of 2018 admits that the, "Russian strategy and doctrine emphasize the potential coercive and military uses of nuclear weapons. It mistakenly assesses that the threat of nuclear escalation or actual first use of nuclear weapons would serve to 'de-escalate' a conflict on terms favorable to Russia" (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: 8). According to this *Nuclear Posture Review* (2018: 30), "Moscow threatens, and exercises limited nuclear first use, suggesting a mistaken expectation that coercive nuclear threats or limited first use could paralyze the United States and NATO and thereby end a conflict on terms favorable to Russia." This so-called "escalate to deescalate" doctrine "follows from Moscow's mistaken assumption of Western capitulation on terms favorable to Moscow".

Although there are always speculations by political scientist that Russia destabilizing doctrine of "escalate to de-escalate is not a signal of use of nuclear weapons. Putin in 2018 said that "[o]ur concept is based on a reciprocal counter strike... [T]his means that we are prepared and will use nuclear weapons only when we know for certain

that some potential aggressor is attacking Russia, our territory” (Russian Federation 2018). This is also in congruence with Russia’s official military strategy of 2014 according to which Russia “shall reserve for itself the right to employ nuclear weapons in response to the use against it and/or its allies of nuclear and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, as well as in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation with use of conventional weapons when the state’s very existence has been threatened” (Russian Federation 2014). Russia has unapologetically lowered its threshold for first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict (Kristensen and Korda 2019:75)

According to Kristensen and Korda (2019: 76), today Russia is more dynamic, and offensive compared to previous decades. Their officials’ statements are claiming the “use of nuclear weapons” if situation arises but this is not written in their official published doctrines. There is a threat to use nuclear weapons in situations that do not meet the conditions describes, for instance, against ballistic missiles defense or other regional scenes that are against Russia’s survival. As Russia is modernizing its military forces. This section focuses on the precise developments in the strategic capabilities of Russia. These strategic developments have ensured Russia’s doctrine implementation.

(i) Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles

According to Kristensen and Korda (2019: 76), “Russia appears to have roughly 318 ICBMs, which we estimate can carry approximately 1,138 warheads”. Submarines and submarine-launched ballistic Missiles are also being renewed. The Russian Navy operates “10 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) of three classes: six Delta IV (Project 667BDRM), one Delta III (Project 667BRD), and three Borei (Project 955). Each submarine can carry 16 SLBMs, and each SLBM can carry several MIRVs, for a combined maximum loading of more than 700 warheads” (Kristensen and Korda (2019: 78).

(ii) New Strategic bombers

Russia is developing new strategic bombers. Russia deploys majorly “two types of nuclear-capable heavy bombers: the Tu-160 Blackjack and the Tu-95MS Bear H”. Kristensen and Korda (2019:79) posits that,

“[I]t is estimated that there are 60 to 70 bombers in the inventory, of which perhaps only 50 are counted as deployed under New START. Both bomber types can carry the nuclear AS-15 Kent (Kh-55) air-launched cruise missile⁵ and possibly gravity bombs, and upgraded versions are being equipped to carry the new AS-23B (Kh-102) cruise missile (Podvig 2005). The Tu-160 was also equipped to carry the nuclear AS-16 Kickback (Kh-15) short-range attack missile, but the status of this weapon is uncertain” (Kristensen and Korda 2019: 79).

(iii) *Nonstrategic nuclear weapons*

In this age, Russia is also reviving and updating many of its shorter-range nonstrategic nuclear weapons and introducing new variant of strategic bombers. Although this strategy is opaque than its counterpart strategy of security forces new modernization plan. In this strategy there is periodic phasing out of Soviet age weapons are replacing them with new and sharp version of weapons. There are studies which show that new systems are developing. *Nuclear Posture Review 2018* has blamed Russia of “increasing the total number of [non-strategic nuclear] weapons in its arsenal, while significantly improving its delivery capabilities” (US Defense Department 2018: 9). Although the details of such strategy are still not clear however the emerging advancement of conventional weapons may possibly add in the process of reduction and retirement of existing non-strategic fewer effective weapons (Kristensen and Korda 2019: 79).

As the United States *Nuclear Posture Review 2018* proclaims that:

“[R]ussia is modernizing an active stockpile of up to 2,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons, including those employable by ships, planes, and ground forces. These include air to- surface missiles, short range ballistic missiles, gravity bombs, and depth charges for medium-range bombers, tactical bombers, and naval aviation, as well as anti-ship, anti-submarine, and anti-aircraft missiles and torpedoes for surface ships and submarines, a nuclear ground launched cruise missile in violation of the 1987 INF Treaty, and Moscow’s antiballistic missile system” (US Defense Department 2018, 53).

According to the United States *Nuclear Posture Review* of 2018, Russia has had a having noteworthy upper hand in the production capability of nuclear arsenals and also on non-strategic nuclear forces as compared to United States and its allies. Russia is also busy in making large and varied modern non-strategic system that has both the capability of nuclear and conventional weapons. These new variety of tactical weapons are not covered in New START treaty. Russia’s continuous modernization of such weapons has increased its numbers along with the ever-increasing precise

delivery system. This is also in violation of INF treaty because it mends with the “production, possession and flight testing” of a ground launched cruise missile (Kristensen and Korda 2019:81). Russia is of the view that these modernization strategies will certainly provide it with the escalation advantage. Although in front of world Russia has also been criticizing the United States missile defense but it itself is busy in revival and recreation of its longstanding nuclear-armed ballistic missile defense system and designing a new ballistic missile defense interceptor (US Defense Department 2018: 9).

According to *Nuclear Posture Review 2018* Russia has also continuously used nuclear warheads in its air and missile defense forces, it is said that approximately 300 nuclear warheads are there for air defense today, it is also claimed by US Administration that Russia has developed and deployed a dual-capable ground launched cruise missile in clear violation of Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty” (Kristensen and Korda 2019: 81)

Impact of Russia’s Use of Nuclear Coercion on United States Strategies

This needs to be noted that in the wake of use of nuclear coercion by Russia, United States has also started changing its nuclear and strategic policies. There is new literature that supports the repudiation of earlier arms control treaties done by these two big powers. Ukrainian crisis of 2014 became as a major path altering incident which has enormously changed the security dynamics of these two powers in post-Cold War world. Here is a study of how and what changes have implemented and is under consideration by United States in the wake of the strategy of nuclear coercion by Russia.

In the beginning months of 2019, “the US department of State maintained an estimated stockpile of 3800 nuclear warheads for delivery by more than 800 ballistic missiles and aircraft” (Hans M Kristensen and Matt Korda 2019:122). Most of them are kept for situations which may arise and then sudden upload on missiles and aircraft as per necessity. Nearly “1,750 warheads are currently deployed of which 1,300 strategic warheads are deployed on ballistic missiles, 300 at strategic bomber bases in the United States, while another 150 tactical bombs are deployed at air bases

in Europe. The remaining warheads-approximately 2,050- are in storage as a so-called hedge against technical or geopolitical surprises” (Kristensen and Korda 2019:122).

There was a tradition in Obama administration of declassifying the number and size of “dismantled warheads”. However, in April 2019, the United States Defense Department denied the declassification details and numbers. This decision has voided the nuclear transparent policy of the United States. This move fabricates doubt about the number and size of US nuclear forces. These nuclear weapons are stored at approximately 24 geographical locations in United States and Europe (Kristensen and Korda 2019:122).

A formal look at New START treaty indicates that it has provided a successful frame, yet the future of this treaty remains bleak. United States entered this treaty in February 2011, “the United States has reported cutting a total of 226 deployed launchers and 435 deployed strategic warheads. The Department of Defense (DoD) has also completed the destruction of non-deployed launchers and conversion of 97 launchers to non-nuclear status, with a total of 800 deployed and non-deployed launchers remaining” (Kristensen and Korda 2019:123). According to Nuclear Posture Review 2018 the United States “will continue to implement the New START Treaty” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: 73). However, in reality there are no indications yet that the treaty will be extended by Trump administration. Jon Bolton the National Security Advisor who openly disagree with arms control agreements the chances for extension of this treaty are very dismal (Kristensen and Korda 2019:124).

The study of *Nuclear Posture Review 2018* indicates clearly that there is marked change from past and a renewed sharp focus on “increasing the types and role of US nuclear weapons” (Kristensen and Korda 2019:124). This new *Nuclear Posture Review* of 2018 has a “confrontational tone” with “assertive posture” that favors the “Great Power Competition”. The Nuclear Posture Review 2018 takes a U-turn from the agenda of nuclear arms control to the renewed focus on deterring nuclear attacks and the more emphasis on “expanding” US nuclear options and to prevail against nuclear and non-nuclear attacks. It clearly indicates “any use of a nuclear weapon to respond to a non-nuclear attack would constitute nuclear first-use” (Kristensen and Korda 2019:124).

According to *Nuclear Posture Review* (2018) United States is pursuing “a nuclear armed submarine cruise missile to provide a needed nonstrategic regional presence, an assured response capability, and [in view of] Russia’s continuing. . . violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty)”. Many strategists believe that “US pursuit of submarine launched cruise missile may” prove beneficial for the negotiation with Russia for reducing the nonstrategic nuclear weapons. In spite of these efforts United States “announced its decision to withdraw from the INF treaty” (Kristensen and Korda 2019 :124-125).

The new nuclear “supplements” are needed, to “provide a more diverse set of characteristics greatly enhancing our ability to tailor deterrence and assurance; expand the range of credible US options for responding to nuclear or non-nuclear strategic attack; and, enhance deterrence by signaling to potential adversaries that their concepts of coercive, limited nuclear escalation offer no exploitable advantage” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: 35). This proves that in Post-Cold War World the United States despite having the vision of complete nuclear disarmament as said by Obama in Prague speech is compelled to revise its nuclear policies by being coerced by new Russia.

Besides these new “supplements” the main concentration of the *Nuclear Posture Review* revives the 2010 “massive modernization program” also famous as “the program of record” to revive and modernize firstly all “nuclear delivery systems”, secondly, “the command and control systems at the US Department of Defense” and thirdly the nuclear warheads and their supporting infrastructure at the “US Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration” (NNSA) (Kristensen and Korda 2019:126). The new US Congressional Budget for all these is 494 billion dollars from 2019 to 2028 (Congressional Budget Office 2019:1). This exceeds by, “94 billion dollars” than the “CBO’s 2017 estimate for the 2016-2017 period” because the revival and modernization strategy revival cost is also increasing this leads to Nuclear Posture Review’s advocacy for more nuclear arsenals.

According to Hans M Kristensen and M Korda (2019:126), this nuclear revival will keep proceeding beyond 2018 and will consume approximately 1.2 trillion for next thirty years as estimated by CBO. According to Arms Control Association (2017) the

total cost can be 1.7 trillion dollars. Although the cost is increasing exponentially yet the *Nuclear Posture Review 2018*, labelled it as “an affordable priority” and proposed that it “is only a small portion of the overall defense budget” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018: XI).

The New Nuclear Planning

As it may seem that 2018 *Nuclear Posture Review* is revolutionary document but United States since 2013 is busy in emphasizing the importance of revival of nuclear strategies to achieve strong counter-force strategy. There are strong planning principles that have been ensued into the flexible strategic and nuclear strike plans, into the “family of plans under the Operation Plan (OPLAN) 8010-12” is able to absorb changes in the “posture” as the situation demands. The operational plan is based on the strike against Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran (Kristensen and Korda 2019:127).

There are also several other new changes going on in Land-based ballistic missiles system. There is also an ongoing Air Force revival and modernization program which is aimed at “arming, fuzing, and firing component of Mk21 re-entry vehicle” and is costing at approximately more than a billion dollars in totality.

[T]he US Air Force operates a force of 400 silo-based Minuteman III ICBMs split across three wings: the 90th Missile Wing at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming; the 91st Missile Wing at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota; and the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana. In addition to the 400 silos with missiles, another 50 silos are kept “warm” to load stored missiles if necessary. Each wing has three squadrons, each with 50 Minuteman III silos. They are collectively controlled by five launch control centers (Kristensen and Korda 2019:127).

In the 2015, the United States strategy of ICBMs, “concluded a multibillion-dollar” ten years “long modernization program” for extension of “service life of the Minuteman III to 2030”, “although the United States did not officially deploy a new ICBM, the upgraded Minuteman IIIs are basically new missiles except for the shell”(Pampe 2012). Nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines “the US Navy operates a fleet of 14 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, of which eight operate in the Pacific from their base near Bangor, Washington and six operate in the Atlantic

from their base at Kings Bay, Georgia (Kristensen and Korda 2019:128)”. Besides these “after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the Navy has started to conduct one or two foreign port visits per year. A visit to Scotland in 2015 appeared to be a warning to Russia and was described as a US Navy plan to make ballistic missile submarines more visible” (Melia 2015).

(i) New Strategic bombers

“The US Air Force currently operates a fleet of 20 B-2A bombers (all of which are nuclear-capable) and 87 B-52H bombers 46 of which are nuclear-capable”, the “New START data from February 2018 counted 49 deployed nuclear bombers (13 B-2As and 36 B-52Hs)” (State Department 2018). These bombers are arranged “into nine bomb squadrons in five bomb wings at three bases: Minot Air Force Base (AFB) in North Dakota, Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, and Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri” (Kristensen and Korda 2019:129). United States is busy in reviving its “nuclear bomber force” by improving “nuclear command and control capabilities on existing bombers”, by developing nuclear arsenals and simultaneously designing a new heavy bomber (Kristensen and Korda 2019:129). The “heavy bombers” are revived and “upgraded with improved nuclear weapons”. The Air Force is also making “new nuclear air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) known as long-range stand-off (LRSO) missile”.

(ii) New Nonstrategic nuclear weapons

The United States is attempting to command the new non-strategic nuclear weapons among them,

[o]ne type of nonstrategic nuclear weapon in its stockpile – the B61 gravity bomb. The weapon exists in two modifications: the B61-3 and the B61-4. A third version, the B61-10, was retired in September 2016. Approximately 230 tactical B61 bombs of all versions remain in the stockpile. About 150 of these (versions –3 and –4) are through to be deployed at six bases in five European countries: Aviano and Ghedi in Italy; Büchel in Germany; Incirlik in Turkey; Kleine Brogel in Belgium; and Volkel in the Netherlands. This number has declined since 2009 partly due to reduction of operational storage capacity at Aviano and Incirlik (Kristensen and Korda 2019:131).

NATO has also been focused on broad revival of its nuclear posture which includes massive upgradation of “bombs, aircraft and the weapon storage system”. The “B61-

12 will be deployed to Europe” from 2022-2024, it is said that “B61-12 will use the nuclear explosive package of B61-4” with increased accuracy and capability. This enhanced strike capability with improved accuracy will provide the same military capability as of United States strategic bombs. Some of the NATO allies are currently equipped with nuclear strike mission plan for upgradation of their bombers with US-built F-35 A. Netherland has acquired it in 2015, Belgium, Turkey are acquiring it. NATO is planning Weapon Storage System with life extension (Kristensen and Korda 2019:131).

Many strategists and scholars are alarmed by these developments, they are of the view that “low yield non-strategic nuclear weapons” are not a positive indication. Also, the “lowering of threshold for use of nuclear weapons” by Russia and United States is alarming it may lead to likelihood of nuclear war.

On the other hand, others argue that the “new capabilities will signal a greater resolve on the part of the two countries, thereby deterring aggressive actions and preventing the escalation of limited regional wars to a nuclear conflict” (Darden 2018:2).

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

INF treaty was done in Cold War. Unites States on February 1, 2019 decided to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF)Treaty, this decision is important in the sense that it make the world to understand the effect of nuclear coercion posed by Russia. The United States believed that Russia had first violated the treaty when the Ukraine crisis was going on in 2014. Russia used a missile that was banned according to the terms of INF treaty. President Obama wrote letter to Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin for the maintenance of treaty conditions, but Russia did not oblige. After five years Trump administration has scrapped the deal completely as the utility of treaty was negligible when the parties did not comply with the conditions.

Context should be mentioned. Since long time Europe knew that Russia is not following the conditions of INF treaty. Europe would have coordinated with US that how they should work to get Russia on terms of treaty instead US completely discarded the treaty. It proves that for EU United States in not a reliable partner. Most

dangerous outcome for the INF treaty dismissal is the “deterioration of U.S. Russia” relationship. In spite of good terms between Putin and Trump there are issues like Ukraine, Syria, election interference, cyberoperations and NATO expansion that leads to both sides for conflict (Bremmer 2019).

According to the conditions of INF treaty 1987 United States and the Soviet Union were required to “eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers” (Kimball 2019:1). The treaty was special because for the first time the great powers agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, to eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and utilize extensive on-site inspections for verification. Because of this treaty the two big powers United States and Russia were successful in destroying “a total of 2,692 short-medium and intermediate range missiles by the treaty’s implementation deadline which was 1st June 1991” (Kimball 2019).

In 2014 United States alleged that “Russia is violating INF Treaty obligations” of “not to possess, produce, or flight-test” a “ground-launched cruise missile” having a range of “500 to 5,500 kilometers” or “to possess or produce launchers of such missiles”. These claims were getting repeated by State Department in the year 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. In March 2017, top United States official confirmed the press reports that it is true that Russia is busy and initiated to deploy the non-compliant missile. Although Russia denied these allegations and blamed United States of noncompliance (Kimball 2019:1). On 2nd February 2019, United State announced a suspension of U.S. obligations under INF treaty and announced its wish to withdraw from the treaty in six months, similarly Russia also announced the suspension of its treaty obligations.

Treaty’s fortune started to diminish since mid-2000s when Russia claimed that there is a possibility that it may leave INF treaty given the reasons of unfair treatment. This INF treaty prevents it from having nuclear arsenals which the rivals like China is developing. The other reason is the deployment of “anti-ballistic missiles” in Europe by United States. Reports started circulating since 2013, 2014 that Russia is not complying with the treaty. On 18th March 2017, “General Paul Selva, the vice Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, confirmed press reports that

Russia had deployed a ground-launched cruise missile that ‘violates the spirit and intent of the INF Treaty’ (Kimball 2019:3).

NATO’s Nuclear Deterrence against Russia’s Nuclear Coercion

Since the end of World War II nuclear weapons are useful tools for great power’s military competition. Nuclear weapons have featured prominently in bipolar order in which NATO and Warsaw Pact were the main rivals. Recent crisis in Ukraine and the South China Sea specifies that tensions among great powers gets revived thus making nuclear weapon prominent again (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:1). In Cold War, role of nuclear weapons was the central focus of NATO’s defense strategy. But after the collapse of Soviet Union the role of nuclear weapons got minimized. After the end of Cold War, the tension between two powers receded. NATO’s main focus became terrorism, Serbia, Iraq, Libya and NATO was capable of dealing conventionally in these area, there was no reason to use nuclear threat against these non-traditional adversaries (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:2).

For nearly past two decades, nuclear weapons have been “de-emphasized” in NATO planning. In 2010 *Strategic Concept* declared that reducing the importance of nuclear weapons was a significant target for NATO nuclear strategy. According to *Strategic Concept (2010)* NATO has “dramatically reduces the number of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe and our reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO strategy”. The document stated that the NATO pledges to “create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons” (Strategic Concept 2010:1). There are debates regarding the redundancy of nuclear weapons in Post-Cold War World. Many countries are of the view that nuclear weapons should be removed from their country. Recently Germany started seeking for “the withdrawal of all U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany” (Perkovich 2010:1).

However on the other hand the ground reality apart from fiction is that, it has also been made clear that “as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.”(Strategic Concept 2010:1). This means NATO still believes in nuclear weapons strategic utility. It should be kept in mind that aspirations for nuclear weapons reduction do not mean that NATO has abandoned nuclear weapons. Recent

crisis in Ukraine and Crimea has proven that confrontation among nuclear powers is still a real possibility so wisdom of keeping nuclear weapons as a viable option is necessary.

However nuclear weapons today have reversed the role for its adversaries. They have become weapons of weak states, to achieve the parity in conventional forces, regime legitimacy and most importantly as a tool of nuclear coercion against great powers. Potential adversaries think that threat of use of nuclear weapons can successfully deter NATO from exploiting its conventional superiority. In Cold War NATO nightmare was that it could not defeat Soviet conventional attack. Russia in post-Cold War period has, “adopted a doctrine of possible use of nuclear weapons to de-escalate a conflict and would-be proliferators emphasize the potential use of nuclear weapons to make US or allied resistance to their regional ambitions too costly” (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:2).

Therefore, the renunciation of nuclear weapons is not a possibility for NATO. The recent developments in foreign policy of Russia for instance the invasion and annexation of Crimea, territorial integrity of Ukraine, the potential adversaries from Russia was always there and is still there. In fact, Russia has enhanced the role of nuclear weapons in its strategic affairs. It has started to modernize “all legs of its strategic nuclear forces”. It has also shifted from “no first use” policy to “nuclear strikes” as a possible way to “de-escalate” a conventional conflict (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:3). Even before the Ukraine crisis Russia issued veiled threats of nuclear attack in case of any nuclear attack on Russia. For instance, in 2012, “Russia threatened to attack NATO bases in Poland and Romania that host NATO missile defense assets” (Waterfield 2012:1).

According to Matthew Kroenig and Walter Slocombe (2014:3) Russian leaders remain convinced to use nuclear strike in a conventional conflict. As long as nuclear weapons have such an important role in Russian forces, politics and other areas. NATO also has to keep nuclear deterrence alive in a possible confrontation with Russia’s nuclear coercion.

[A]lways implicit in any discussion of the political utility of nuclear weapons is another element: nuclear coercion. Any alliance depends for its credibility—and ultimately for its effectiveness—on the willingness of those allies that are not immediately threatened to come to the aid of those that are. So strong is attachment to the NATO creed that an attack on one ally is to be treated as an attack on all, that it is easy to overlook how difficult it might be to fulfill that obligation in an actual crisis (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:6).

Russia has always used the options of exploiting the most distant European nation, so that they do not help their allies in need. United States always countered this policy of “divide and conquer” of Russia,

[T]his aspect of the nuclear context is very relevant today. It is by no means implausible that a nuclear-armed adversary would try to use nuclear weapons to coerce NATO members. Therefore, NATO’s nuclear doctrine—and indeed its planning generally—must recognize that the prospect of such nuclear coercion may be the most significant nuclear-related security challenge facing NATO and a principal task for deterrence (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:6).

Nuclear deterrence by NATO can deter the potential nuclear coercion by the Russia, use of nuclear arsenals to shut the nuclear blackmail is the most important aspect of extended nuclear deterrence today. Denial of coercion is the most important reason for NATO commitment to build and maintain an effective defense. The coercive threats of Russia can only be answered if traditional deterrence is maintained with strong retaliation. Therefore, nuclear weapons are “central, enduring and often controversial element of NATO policy” (Kroenig and Slocombe 2014:6).

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the Russia by using nuclear coercion has sought to compel the United States to revisit its own nuclear strategies. The use of strategy of nuclear coercion by Russia has definitely compelled United States to revisit its nuclear arsenals as well. This chapter has mapped the use of nuclear coercion by Russia against United States through the incidents that happened in post-Cold War world. It examined in detail two specific episodes of Georgia and Ukraine crisis to elucidate Russian strategy of nuclear coercion.

This chapter also dealt with the reasons that why Russia felt need of using nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world. There have been compelling reasons like massive

eastward expansion of NATO, NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, 2008 Russia-Georgia, crisis in Ukraine 2014 and Crimea 2014 and many more incidents. NATO's membership to the nations who are at periphery of Russia was also a big cause. Russia was noticing all this, and this led to major overhaul in Russian strategic forces and policies. Massive modernization of its conventional forces and nuclear weapons, leaving INF treaty, changing its nuclear doctrine from "no first use" to "escalate to de-escalate" all these changes were done by Russia first in response to the eastward expansion of NATO.

This chapter then establishes how in response to Russia NATO has also revived its policy of nuclear deterrence. It shows what specific measure United States has adopted to tackle nuclear coercion by Russia. For instance, United States also left INF treaty in February 2019 altogether. All these are gestures of massive changes in nuclear strategic policies of United States and west. The result is that both Russia and United States have unfortunately lowered the "threshold for use of nuclear weapons". They have begun developing "low yield strategic nuclear weapons" and changing their nuclear use doctrines which in result is increasing the risk of nuclear weapon use in conventional and sub conventional conflict also.

Indeed, in essence this chapter alludes to how the use of nuclear coercion strategy has become a reality in post-Cold War world. After this chapter of nuclear coercion between the two super powers that have guided much of nuclear concepts and strategies so far, next chapter leads the theme of nuclear coercion in another continent of the world, South Asia. This region has also become far more far more volatile and closer to nuclear escalation. Their proxy war is not far away in periphery keeping them safe and secure but given their physical proximity both India and Pakistan remain vulnerable to any nuclear coercion as it involves their direct confrontation. Next chapter is about the role of nuclear coercion in the dynamics of India and Pakistan, both nuclear weapon states since 1998.

Chapter Five

Nuclear Coercion between India and Pakistan

This study argues that India and Pakistan have shifted from mutual nuclear deterrence to nuclear coercion strategy. This chapter takes the case study of Uri terror attack of 2016 and subsequent surgical strikes, Pulwama terror attack of 2019 and subsequent Balakot strikes. Cross border terrorism sponsored by Pakistan has compelled India to shift its focus from status quo or tolerance to adopt a new strategy of nuclear coercion. India has under Prime Minister Narendra Modi regime changed its stance of soft punishment and decided to go for hard punishment strategy by threatening and alienating Pakistan. In midst of 2019 election campaign Prime Minister Narendra Modi chose to coerce Pakistan saying that India's nuclear weapons are not kept for Diwali (India Today 2019). In this second nuclear age of South Asian continent the strategic focus has shifted from strategic patience or tolerance to coercion.

India was attacked continuously since the inception and Pakistan has harbored terrorist since 1980s. They have been carrying out terrorist attacks all over India, but India was not able to retaliate because nuclear deterrence was working perfectly for Pakistan. Pakistan was busy in its low intensity proxy war by sponsoring terrorists to destabilize Kashmir and recently the whole India. But India, in the fear of nuclear escalation, was not able to retaliate conventionally or sub conventionally. The new Modi regime has decided to go for nuclear coercion and carried out surgical strikes and Balakot air action in 2019. This was done despite the Pakistan's capability of nuclear arsenals. This chapter shows that the concept of nuclear deterrence has failed in the South Asia and has been replaced by the new strategy of nuclear coercion from both sides.

How nuclear coercion as a strategy has come into play between India and Pakistan in recent sub conventional warfare like surgical strikes by India in the wake of 2016 Uri terrorist attack and Balakot air strikes in the wake of Pulwama terror attack? Is it nuclear coercion by India? India has challenged the Pakistan's strategy of ambiguous red lines of nuclear threshold. How has this change evolved over the years? What are

its effects and what is this strategy of nuclear coercion and how it been in play and what are its implication? India's pro-active action (the air strikes) has changed the discourse and dialogue viz-a-viz Pakistan.

The case of nuclear coercion in South Asia is unique in the sense that it also involves the Pakistan use of sponsored terrorist groups which was never the case between the United States and Russia. The possibility that always is dangling in the face of South Asian strategist with global implications is that the intentional or accidental possession or use of nuclear weapons by these brainwashed terrorist groups which may lead to nuclear escalation on both sides with irreparable damage to India, Pakistan and the entire region.

Persistent Rivalry and Window for nuclear escalation

According to Sumit Ganguly, Michal Smetana, Sannia Abdullah and Ales Karmazin (2018:1), the Kashmir Conflict of India has become one of those "frozen conflicts". Nevertheless, for them "Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan remains at the core of one of the most intractable conflicts in modern history". There have been several redefined notions of frozen conflicts. There are three transformational dynamics that are operating in this case of India and Pakistan: peaceful thawing, violent thawing and conflict withering and there is no hope of resolving the conflict peacefully anytime soon.

If we see from a lens of game theory, Siddhartha Pradeep (2019:1) argue that, "inherent instability in the game of Kashmir is due to contrasting approaches towards the game by India and Pakistan, that is, infinite versus finite respectively". Post Pulwama study of responses of both the Prime ministers of India and Pakistan suggests that "Pakistan plays the game of Mutual distrust, Chicken and Bullying while India plays the timing games" (Pradeep 2019:1). Also "frequent defection of Pakistan from mutual cooperation point in iterated prisoner's dilemma inflicts dynamics between the games-shifting it to mutual distrust and to chicken resulting in tensions" (Pradeep 2019:1). This model of nuclear coercion can only be solved through action against sub conventional warfare of Pakistan. As regards India's nuclear doctrine, it consists of "no-first use" and "minimal deterrence" but with the

“policy of massive retaliation if nuclear weapons were used against its forces or territory” (Cohen and Dasgupta 2013:109-10). In reaction of the Twin Peak crisis, at the start of 21st century Cold Start Doctrine was launched as an operational concept. And, according to this developed plan,

[t]o launch a retaliatory conventional strike against Pakistan that would inflict significant harm on the Pakistan Army before the international community could intercede, and at the same time, pursue narrow enough aims to deny Islamabad a justification to escalate the clash to the nuclear level.... Such an approach would leverage India’s modest superiority in conventional forces to respond to Pakistan’s continued provocation.

According to this Cold Start paradigm it was envisioned that within a short span of time of approximately ninety -six hours, group of eight integrated battles group will make relatively shallow territorial gains into Pakistan, which would be then able to extract concession from the Pakistan (Ladwig 2009:158). India then had plan to gain leverage of its conventional military advantage while following the limits of nuclear threshold simultaneously. This however remained dormant and shrouded in secrecy.

Doctrine of Pakistan also developed simultaneously and mentioned the importance of “minimal credible deterrence”. Pakistan adopted the concept of ambiguous redlines that may lead to nuclear response (Kampani and Gopaldaswamy 2017:15). In 2002, Lieutenant General Khalid Kidwai of Pakistan stated that:

[N]uclear weapons are aimed solely at India. In case that deterrence fails, they will be used if: a. India attacks Pakistan and conquers a large part of its territory (space threshold); b. India destroys a large part either of its land or air forces (military threshold); c. India proceeds to the economic strangling of Pakistan (economic strangling); d. India pushes Pakistan into political destabilization or creates a large-scale internal subversion in Pakistan (domestic destabilization) (Ramusino and Martinelli 2002:1).

This period has also witnessed terrorism becoming a global menace and Pakistan has started focussing more on nuclear weapons in this period and developed the, “nuclear capable short-range ballistic missile Nasr”. Feroz Khan former Brigadier stated that:

[A]s of 2001 and 2002 the country had restored the strategic balance in the region; it was disturbed by India’s military doctrine of limited war under the nuclear overhang and nuanced through the Cold Start Doctrine. Nasr, therefore, re-restores ‘the strategic balance by closing in the gap at the operational and tactical level.’ ... Nasr pours cold water to Cold Start.... It should convince India to think long before deciding to attack (Khan 2012:395).

Pakistani Battlefield nuclear weapons have potential to destabilize the region and create dilemma for the strategist on both side of border and thus the strategy of nuclear deterrence was successful at that time. According to Feroz Khan (2012:32), “Although Pakistan assumes TNWs [tactical nuclear weapons] will enhance deterrence, their deployment during a crisis would nonetheless be provocative, adding incentive for India to strike immediately to eliminate the weapon system rather than running the risks of facing its effects”.

What is the possibility of nuclear war in South Asia remains the biggest question? Nuclear optimists think that the presence of nuclear weapons on both sides increase caution and deliberation on both side (Hagerty 1998:1). However, this dream of balance of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence may not be a reality in future. Concept of nuclear mutuality and nuclear balance are not going to be easy in South Asia nuclear dynamics. This is partly because instead of a tool of deterrence nuclear weapons have become a successful tool of nuclear coercion.

India’s strategy of Cold Start doctrine in practical world remains very unclear. Pakistan’s policy makers focus more on dramatic statements and simultaneous fear of Pakistan over Indian conventional superiority is making situation more vulnerable by Pakistan. Christopher Clary posits that the chain of events can be like this,

[u]nintended escalation, a process that could terminate at full-scale war, and perhaps the use of nuclear weapons [would begin] with a major terrorist attack in India that can be traced back to Pakistan.... It is fairly easy to imagine how it might escalate vertically (in terms of severity) or horizontally (in terms of geographic scope) (Christopher Clary 2013:135).

Seven out of nine escalation scenario till 2010 have involved terrorist attack in India (Ladwig III 2015:1). The nuclear coercion competition between the two nations remains marred by different conventional capabilities and different nuclear doctrines with asymmetries which creates the risk of nuclear escalation. If India ever goes to take revenge of terrorist attack either intentionally or demonstrative only may by fault cross Pakistan’s ambiguous red lines. This situation may lead to fear in Pakistan of decapitation may lead to major nuclear escalation. The presence of nuclear weapons

on both sides has raised the chances of nuclear weapons involvement that has raised the stakes too high and has increased the possibility of catastrophic war (Wise 2018).

The 1990 Indo-Pakistan Nuclear Crisis

In 1980s a new era was dawning in South Asia, the Indo-Pak rivalry was intensified by various global, regional and domestic developments. In spring of 1990s a major crisis erupted in disputed territory of Kashmir, it marked the dawn of an escalation tactic by Pakistan's "covert support to terrorism in the state of Jammu and Kashmir", Pakistan was "using its nascent nuclear weapon capability to create a firewall to 'deter' India while simultaneously sponsoring terrorism, this marked the beginning of a state actor "engaging in nuclear weapon-enabled terror (NWET)" (Bhaskar 2015). C Uday Bhaskar (2015) stated that in May 1990, George H. W. Bush the then President of United States was "convinced that Pakistan was poised to use a covert nuclear weapon capability against India. The impending Apocalypse-which would have dwarfed Hiroshima and Nagasaki- had to be prevented at all costs".

There was a real possibility of war, yet the war was avoided because nuclear deterrence worked. In 1990, during the insurgency in Kashmir, Seymour M. Hersh (1993) claims that India and Pakistan were on the verge of nuclear war. William E. Burrows and Robert Windrem (1994:506) claimed that "Indian nuclear forces were also on alert". However Devin T. Hagerty (1995-96:80) claims that South Asia's 1990s crisis was a perfect example of deterrence working in India and Pakistan, he argues that, "India and Pakistan were deterred from war in 1990 by each side's knowledge that the other was nuclear-capable and therefore that any military hostilities could have escalated to the nuclear level". Under condition of opaqueness the role of existential deterrence is important as Bernard Brodie wrote that "military victory in a nuclear war was not possible". "In 1990, two opaque proliferants made preparations for war over a territory that had already caused two of the three wars between them" (Hagerty 1995-96:91). Pakistan was keeping Bangladesh war in sight because in that war it tasted defeat.

Pakistan “supports the insurgency, the Pakistan seek to ‘bleed’ India and coerce the Indian into negotiation a diplomatic settlement on Kashmir” (Kapur 2005:138; Lancaster and Khan 2003). According to Shireen Mazari (1999) and Paul S Kapur (2005:143), top officials in Pakistan were convinced that India “could not resort to conventional war” in retaliation for the Pakistani insurgency and provocations because “we had nuclear deterrence”. Pakistan army was convinced that India knows that “if they resorted to conventional war and we suffered a setback, we could use the nuclear response” (Kapur 2005:143). In the most of 1990s, Pakistan although controlled the Kashmir insurgency to some extent but after the 1998 nuclear test by both nations Pakistan started exceeding previous boundaries (Kapur 2005:144). Subsequently Pakistan armed forces crossed LoC at Kargil, they thought that they enjoyed a tactical advantage over India, Pakistan’s acquisition of overt nuclear capacity was the reason that Pakistan was feeling less threatened (Kapur 2005:145).

It was said that “the thinking of traditional security studies views nuclear weapons primarily as a political tool and sees deterrence weapons as an effective way to prevent war between India and Pakistan” those who want to use them should outline the specific conditions for that (Nizamani 2009 in Abraham 2009:143). During Lahore declaration in February 1999 both countries “simultaneously engaging in active multi-pronged diplomacy for peace! Clearly this is a peace that the two governments are proudly negotiating while basking in the glory of successful nuclear deterrence” (Durrani 2009:93). But subsequent Kargil debacle repudiated the successful working of nuclear deterrence.

Nuclear Tests of 1998

With the nuclear tests in 1998, strategist around the world had started guessing that nuclear deterrence in this region would now fail. Michael Krepon (2005:261) argued that deterrence stability in South Asia is getting weak because of stability-instability paradox and lack of efficient escalation control mechanisms. Paul Kapur (2007) contends that nuclear weapons made Pakistan which is a revisionist power more secure in the thought that India will now not retaliate because of the presence of nuclear weapons.

Vipin Narang asserted that Pakistan's shift from catalytic posture to asymmetric escalation has spoiled India's assured retaliation posture. India had failed to stop Pakistan's use of terrorism as proxies which successfully fulfills the revisionist agenda of Pakistan, India Pakistan deterrence stability is highly unstable which is not nuclear deterrence but nuclear coercion. The situation between India and Pakistan was seen to "allow Pakistan to more aggressively pursue revisionist aims against India with little fear of retaliation, more frequently triggering precisely the crisis scenarios that magnify the risks of intentional or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons." (Narang 2009:76). Vipin Narang argued that South Asian stability is very fragile if India retaliates to Pakistan's proxies,

[o]nly be intensified if India – to readdress its current perceived paralysis against persistent Pakistani provocations – progresses toward a Cold Start conventional posture, which might then push the Pakistani Army toward a ready deterrent on effectively hair-trigger alert. Such a combination could spawn intolerable risks of accidental or unauthorized nuclear use" (Narang 2009: 77).

Pakistan's introduction of tactical nuclear weapons into battlefield to deter India low scale conventional war has made nuclear coercion more viable as a policy by India also. Indian response to Pakistan's subconventional warfare has always puzzled scholars and strategist. The question remains that whether India's response has undermined the nuclear deterrence stability in India Pakistan dyad. If India goes by Cold Start doctrine, then what would happen to Pakistan's commitment to use tactical nuclear weapons first. Surgical strikes of September 2016 have changed the dynamics of deterrence to coercion in the subcontinent. It has created a new military retaliatory option for India (Biswas 2017:7).

However, Nizamani (2009:143) argues that prior to the 1998 testing, India and Pakistan were in "the state of non-weaponized deterrence". "The resumption of nuclear testing in South Asia in May 1998 came as a surprise to many in the United States. In the aftermath of these tests, India declared itself to be a "nuclear weapon state" and formally announced its intention to develop a nuclear deterrent. These events have significant implications both for regional security and for the future of the evolving international order" (Tellis 2001: v).

This was done after a gap of nearly 24 years India conducted nuclear tests on 11 and 13 May 1998, subsequently Pakistan also conducted nuclear test on 28 May. This “nuclear testing resulted in highly charged regional atmosphere” (Tellis 2001:2).

[T]he world knew for quite some time that both India and Pakistan have been in possession of atomic weapons, although they were not formally recognized as nuclear weapon powers. The great powers have hoped that the anomalous nuclear standing of India and Pakistan in the international nuclear system could be fudged. They have striven hard to keep the Indian and Pakistani nuclear capabilities under wraps forever. But the hot summer of 1998 has finally vapourised [sic] the veil of nuclear ambiguity in the Indian subcontinent. As a consequence, the security situation in the subcontinent and the global nuclear order are unlikely to be the same ever again (Mohan 1998).

The nuclear test by India brought an end to the “three decades of nuclear debate, self-denial and fence-sitting”, India now was seeking to play the game as a nuclear weapon power at the world stage by ending the ambiguity (Gupta 1998).

Nuclear Coercion through Nuclear Terrorism

India continued to focus on the terrorist activities carried out by Pakistan sponsored terrorist. Brainwashed terrorists have become a major threat to the security and peace of the sub-continent. In any case of nuclear weapon possession by terrorist groups of Pakistan the war may become nuclear leading to major catastrophe throughout the South Asian region and even affecting major parts of the world. Pakistan had tried to gain Kashmir in 1947 -49 for the first time, by conventional war. In 1965 it tried again but was outnumbered by India and lost these wars (Bahl 2007). Then in 1971, 1999 it also suffered defeat. By having defeat in all the wars against India Pakistan has adopted the strategy of sub-conventional warfare game. This tactic includes the harbouring of terrorist groups for carrying out terrorist activities in Kashmir Valley. Subconventional warfare is also known as “cheap talk”, by some experts and this strategy was adopted by Pakistan (Asthana 2010:1).

Starting from 1980, by 2002 Pakistan was the breeding ground for terrorist groups with Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed being the major groups among them (Hussein 2007). These groups have carried out a number of terrorist activities in India since their inception. Major among them were the 2001 Parliament attack, 2008

Mumbai terror attacks, “2016 Pathankot airbase”, “2016 Uri army base attacks and February 2019 Pulwama attacks”, Siddhartha Pradeep (2019:4) laments that “this region is the laboratory for these terrorist organizations, who experiment their acts here before exporting it to the rest of the world”.

There are incidents that prove this contention right for instance, 1999 hijacking of Indian airplane that was diverted to Kandhar, 1985 incident, 1993 multiple bomb attacks all types of test happen first in the subcontinent and then exported to other parts of world (Chellany 2002). Mumbai terror attack is also an example, in 2019 similar ghastly terror attack were carried out in Sri Lanka in 2019. The point is that instead of having such heinous experience Pakistan has made it a, “proxy fighting force for the Pakistan Army” (Dickerson 2011). Sumit Ganguly (2010) also asserted that militants are being used as proxy because they are integral to army of Pakistan. “These militant organizations were not clandestine, nor had they sprouted surreptitiously. Their growth, if not actually sponsored, had certainly been look upon with the favour by the state” (Hussain 2007).

It began with the support to Mujahedeen for occupying Kashmir that has translated into the aim of destabilising whole of India. At the porous border and specially on the line of control (LoC) the “ISI conducts its operations and sends insurgents with arms and ammunition to the Indian territory to spread terror” (Pradeep 2019:5).

Uri Attack

The Uri attack was a terrorist attack in which Pakistan handlers exploited the opportunity to inflict casualties on Indian forces. The Indian government decided to retaliate in the form of calibrated surgical strikes against terrorist launch pads across Line of Control. Simultaneously a diplomatic campaign was initiated by India to isolate Pakistan in South Asia and in world. India for instance refused to attend the SAARC summit in Islamabad and decided to call BIMSTEC national leaders, instead of SAARC leaders for outreach with leaders of the 2016 Goa BRICS summit.

Surgical Strikes and Nuclear Coercion by India

Surgical strikes across border by India have had major implication on India's strategy of nuclear coercion. It was an action by India to devise a strategy of response to Pakistan's sub-conventional warfare and avoiding the possibility of escalation to a nuclear war. A terrorist attack was done on Indian Army headquarters in Uri on September 18, 2016 which caused 19 soldiers' death (Times of India 2016). On September 28, 2016, the Indian army conducted a series of stealth attacks on terror launch-pads across Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) (Indian Express 2016). The "surgical strikes were conducted in the early morning of September 28, 2016" (Economic Times 2016). Operation started at 12:30 am, commandos were air-dropped at the LoC, they entered 500 meters to two kilometers into the Pak Occupied Kashmir (PoK) to conduct strikes in the sectors of Bhimber, Hotspring, Kel and Lipa. Operation ended at 4:30 am and they returned on Indian side of border (Biswas 2017:7).

The detailed explanation of these operations suggests that these were well below the levels of even a low-scale conventional attack. These surgical strikes were mainly "stealth operations" operated in the night by Indian Army's specially trained commandos. This operation was devoid of norms of conventional warfare like movement of infantry, armored divisions. Moreover, the acknowledgement by Indian government that it has sanctioned the surgical strikes this cannot be called as "sub-conventional attack". Sub conventional attack is attributed to militancy, insurgency, proxy war and terrorism therefore it is argued that these "surgical strike captures a new space of conflict between India and Pakistan, which could perhaps be labelled as asymmetric conventional conflict" (Biswas2017:8). Indian objective for these surgical strikes were to stop the terrorist activities from the Pakistani side by eliminating future terrorist infiltration from Pakistan for covert war, and also to coerce Pakistan's sub-conventional war.

In 1998 both nations conducted nuclear test, since then India has been deterred successfully by Pakistan to not cross the nuclear redlines. Thus, nuclear deterrence was seen succeeding at that time. In 2004, with the conceptualisation of Cold Start doctrine which involved low and swift conventional attack suggests that Pakistan

succeeded in nuclear deterrence against India. To further reduce India's conventional military options Pakistan has reduced its "nuclear threshold" by introducing "tactical nuclear weapons", which indicated clearly its intention of using low-yield, short-range nuclear weapons even in the low-scale conventional attack by India (Biswas 2017:2).

Although Pakistan succeeded in nuclear deterrence against India but itself got involved in nuclear coercion by continuing its proxy war, supporting militancy in Kashmir. This nuclear deterrence status quo which was continuing in South Asia was thought to be highly unstable by various international experts. There are concerns started floating on the nuclear coercion policy of Pakistan against India which included continuous efforts by Pakistan "to bleed India through thousand cuts". With the strategy of keeping nuclear threshold as low of using "tactical nuclear weapons" in "a low scale conventional" conflict and the strategy of massive retaliation by India against any level of nuclear first use, it is feared that any action can escalate the continent into a nuclear war (Biswas 2017:2-3), this has proved that nuclear deterrence has failed and nuclear coercion strategy is on the rise.

The question remains as to how these strikes heralded strategy of nuclear coercion by India. It challenged openly the Pakistan redlines of use of nuclear weapons, can there be nuclear escalation are the questions which needs to be answered. India's response under Modi regime to Pakistan's subconventional warfare has questioned the credibility of nuclear deterrence-stability in South Asia. As it has introduced nuclear coercion from Indian side. This was till now only a one-way process but has become two-way process. It is the question that whether nuclear coercion strategy of India on Pakistan will succeed in stopping Pakistan from using terrorism as a weapon of covert proxy war against India.

Pulwama Terror Attack

On 14th February 2019, a convoy of 78 vehicles carrying more than 2500 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) security personnel on the National Highway 44 was travelling from Jammu to Srinagar at 3:30 IST. That convoy was attacked by a "vehicle-borne suicide bomber at Lethpora in Pulwama district" of Jammu and

Kashmir, India. 40 “CRPF personnel” died in the attack. Jaish-e-Mohammed the Pakistan based militant group claimed the responsibility of the attack. Adil Ahmad Dar, a local youth who was a member of Jaish-e-Mohammed was the attacker and a member of Jaish-e- mohammed (Economic Times 2019). As Abhinav Pande wrote “In informal murmurings in Indian security circles, this Fidayeen attack has been branded as ‘na bhuto, na bhavishyati’ (something that is unprecedented and is not likely to repeat itself ever)” (Pandya 2019:65).

Pulwama terror attack led to flare-up between India and Pakistan, and India carried out air strikes in Pakistan at JeM training camp in Balakot which is in Pakistan. Unexpected chain of events followed suit with the downing of Pakistan F-16, unconditional release of Indian Pilot by Pakistan and the efforts by Pakistan Prime Minister for peace prevented the escalation of the conflict. (Pandya 2019:65). Pakistan’s lack of efforts to control the groups like “Lashkar-e-Taiba or Jaish-e-Mohammad” and Pakistan’s continuous support to these groups is unfortunate. Arka Biswas (2019:1) postulates that “Pakistan’s nuclear threshold and deterrence are not constants; they feed off the developments in the India-Pakistan dyad, in particular the actions taken by India”. More inaction by India will reinforce Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence. India needs to signal clearly its nuclear retaliatory options to counter balance Pakistan’s nuclear coercion. This will enable India to consider military retaliation as tools of coercion.

Arka Biswas (2019:1) further contends that surgical strikes on 2016 did not succeeded as tools of coercion because Pakistan has not taken any credible action against its terrorist camps and secondly cross-border firing has continued. In surgical strikes “India didn’t crossed Pakistan’s declared redline for the first use of tactical nuclear weapons or call Pakistan’s nuclear bluff”, the surgical strike scale was below the military retaliation of Cold Start doctrine. There was no army intervention into Pakistan.

However, other scholars like Pandya states that this standoff between India and Pakistan is a game-changing event in South Asia. The days of status quo and classic strategic restraint have gone. Therefore, this unique standoff should be analyzed in depth so that future geopolitical events can be guessed (Pandya 2019:65). Although

Indian response still was of strategic restraint there was clearly a fear looming that in the event of escalation or even a limited retaliation, Pakistan may go for a nuclear strike. India was also not able to go for a "weak-kneed gesture" because the elections were around, and Prime minister Modi was expected to have a tough and powerful approach against Pakistan and China (Pandya 2019:66). The point of importance is that "with the post-Pulwama standoff between India and Pakistan, India has finally called off Pakistan's nuclear bluff" (Pandya 2019:66). It is clear that India will now not tolerate Pakistan's harboring of terrorist against India as a strategic asset. Indian threshold on terrorism has hit rock bottom. "Any misadventure from Pakistani side is most likely to result in gruesome retaliation, indeed, with a likelihood of escalating into a nuclear face-off" (Pandya 2019:66). Indian strike in Balakot is a sign of Indian capabilities to strike deep into mainland Pakistan not in the disputed Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK). It is the display of assertive force-posture.

Since last two decades Pakistan was using nuclear card, but surgical strikes and Balakot strikes enabled India "to call off Pakistan's nuclear bluff" it also exposed the loopholes in Pakistan's nuclear card. India has made it clear that, "even in the event of a limited attack by tactical nuclear weapons, India will respond with massive retaliation." India is also reviewing its nuclear doctrine. If Pakistan uses nuclear weapons against India in retaliation Pakistan would be annihilated, Parvez Musharraf the former President of Pakistan admitted it (Pandya 2019:66).

"The Prime Minister of India Mr. Modi said that the time for talks is now over" (ET Online 2019). However, Imran Khan the Pakistan counterpart denied the Pakistan's hand. He said that he is ready to talk on the issue of terrorism but if India will attack Pakistan, "then they will retaliate strongly because they will have no other choice" (Pradeep 2019:8). After this Pakistan's foreign minister wrote to UNSC and blamed India of belligerence practice and threat to regional security (Hussain 2019 as cited in Pradeep 2019:8). Siddhartha Pradeep further contends that

[T]here are two types of games- finite and infinite games. Finite games are the games with agreed-upon rules and boundaries and end with a winner and a loser. Therefore the players involved in such games see the short term and immediate implications since they play with the objective to win. On the other hand, infinite games have no end. The players or rules might change but the game shall go on. So the players involved in such games play with the objective to continue the game. They look at

the long term objectives. Since the game is infinite, the only way a player can win is if the other players lose the strength to continue to play. These games though might sound simple but have kept several world leaders and nations in its trap, one example being the nations of India and Pakistan. A game is stable if a finite player plays against a finite player or an infinite player plays against an infinite player. However, the problem arises when a finite player plays against an infinite player. This is one of the destabilizing reason behind the game between India and Pakistan over Kashmir (Pradeep 2019:8).

A player who has short term aim of destabilizing the region like Pakistan via terrorism will have intention to betray. It will provide instant payoff in the form of Kashmir destabilisation. Frequent and continuous betrayal by Pakistan is a proof that Pakistan is interested in finite game (Pradeep 2019:10). According to Ashley Tellis “Pakistan aims to revise the status quo, it also sees India as an existential threat to its survival and perceives itself to be India’s genuine peer competitor. Pakistan continues to use force, as well as jihadi terrorism to achieve its strategic objectives of weakening India and securing political concessions” (Tellis 2017).

Fear and greed have often been cited as the reasons of defection by a party (Coombs 1973, John Orbell 1991, C.A. al.1990 as cited in Pradeep 2019:10). In this case Pakistan is seen to defect. On the other hand, India is busy in becoming the superpower and is an infinite player. Ashley Tellis believes that, “India has rejected any compromise regarding Kashmir since it is an integral part of India”, India is satisfied with the status quo because it has many other things to do, even it is agreed to allow LoC as the international border (Tellis 2017 as cited in Pradeep 2019:11). It is important to understand that what both of the countries perceives in this game. Every time when the status quo is achieved somehow Pakistan starts “a newer game with the short-term objective to disturb India in a newer way” (Pradeep 2019:11).

In the same vein Ashley J Tellis (2019:1) argues that Pakistani terrorism remains the real threat to stability in the continent. The Indian Air Force strikes were inevitable given Pakistan’s “extant strategy of employing proxies to wage war against its neighbours, Afghanistan and, especially India”. The chain of events that happened are part of simulation exercise in war games in Washington, New Delhi, Pakistan or anywhere else.

For avoiding such outcome of sub conventional warfare and for the peace of South Asia it is necessary for Pakistan to stop support to terrorist group against its neighbours. After initial attack in Pulwama if Pakistan would have responded in a mature way. Jaish-e-Muhammed group based in Pakistan took the responsibility of attack, India demanded that Pakistan should stop supporting terrorist groups, Pakistan denied the Indian entreaty on the basis that “JeM remains a proscribed entity in Pakistan since 2002 and Pakistan is implementing its obligations on sanctions implementation” (Tellis 2019:2) Pakistan claim is meaningless and fraudulent. Pakistan military’s diplomacy only “added fuel to fire” by stating the same repeated hoary tradition that Pulwama terror attack was “some sort of [a] staged incident” by India to embarrass Pakistan. There was a refusal to accept the responsibility of action of terrorist groups who enjoys military and intelligence services support in their “covert war” against India which remains a major cause of repeated crisis in South Asia (Tellis 2019:3).

Regarding this present crisis Tellis (2019:3) posits that

[R]awalpindi’s strategy of attempting to bleed India through such “subconventional” conflicts represents an insidious form of nuclear coercion, in which Pakistan’s nuclear weapons are “employed” to protect it against any Indian conventional retaliation that might ensue as a riposte to terrorist attacks carried out by its proxies.

Pakistan’s nuclear weapons are being used as a “license” for “open-ended terrorism against India and as a deterrent against any Indian conventional retaliation that might follow”. If India decides to challenge Pakistan, then Pakistan’s nuclear weapons start serving the function of “catalytic device to compel international (mainly U.S.) intervention aimed at restraining Indian retribution during a crisis provoked by Pakistan”. This strategy of “intimidation” has most of the time been successful in last thirty years because it has stopped India from taking any direct action against the enemies terrorist and Pakistan as well (Tellis 2019:3). The possibility of conventional war escalation into nuclear use has always subsided India from striking Pakistan, thus exercising itself a “resilient form of Indian self-deterrence. This policy of self-deterrence made Pakistan unaccountable for bearing the result of terrorist proxies on India “Pakistan enjoyed immunity to Indian retaliation because of New Delhi’s fears of provoking a larger crisis” (Tellis 2019:3).

The effectiveness of India's airstrike is that it has "finally exorcised the ghost of self-deterrence", which was preventing India for retaliation. Beyond the ambiguity of that success of Indian air strikes or even in case of failure, "the fact that Indian Government for the first time chose to attack sites in what is recognizably Pakistan's national territory represents the erosion of a major psychological barriers-namely India's reluctance to frontally challenge Pakistan's nuclear coercion -and opens the door to future punitive actions that may be far more painful than those witnessed in this initial salvo" (Tellis 2019:3). Although Pakistan is using nuclear coercion, but the Indian action of retaliation depends on the character of government in power and circumstances. For India, no permanent strategy can be derived from the Balakot strike. Also, Indian policymaker should refrain now from advising repeat of Balakot because that would create "unnecessary and unhelpful tests of Indian credibility" (Tellis 2019:3). Now more deliberate efforts are required by India to "induce uncertainty about the severity of its future military responses". This ambiguity would be more effective in adjusting with the continuous threat of Pakistan "nuclear-shadowed terrorism" (Tellis 2019:4).

India's response to Pulwama Terror Attack

Experts believe that, "If a society is tolerant without limit, its ability to be tolerant is eventually seized or destroyed by the intolerant- Paradox of tolerance" (Pradeep 2019:11). So what can be devised as a strategy for sustaining the game at the mutual cooperation point as Pakistan always tries to defect, what should be the strategy of India for creating a win-win situation for both the players, the folk theorem replies that in the infinitely repeated game the players should be patient and cooperate on equilibrium path. He states that a proper punishment strategy by India will bring Pakistan into ambit of cooperation, rather than going for a soft punishment strategy India should opt for grim trigger strategy i.e. harsh and maximal punishment for a single defection. If the soft punishment strategy is adopted again then again Pakistan would betray and deviate from the co-operation point which is the norm since last many years (Pradeep 2019:12-14).

Shyam Saran (2015) former diplomat argued that Modi's external policies have built on past the only difference is a matter of energy and style. Whereas, C. Raja Mohan

(2015:1) argued that Modi's rule as presaging the start of a 'Third Republic' and a new foreign policy. According to Kanti Bajpai (2017:69) argued that Indian foreign policy under Modi regime "towards Pakistan and China have moved from a stance of 'normal', slow-to-anger bilateral diplomacy and non-alignment to a harder, more outspoken bilateral diplomacy and a more explicit coalition diplomacy (what might be called 'Acting West', 'Acting East' and 'Acting South')".

Bajpai (2017:69-70) further contends that till now this harder bilateral diplomacy featuring a cooperation-defection dynamic was absent from foreign policy of India. Until Modi regime the foreign policy of India was focused more on "permanent, protracted negotiations". Now in Modi's tenure "India is shedding its cautious prudence as well as aversion to alignment, Indian foreign policy has responded to a domestic and global changes periodically shifting from cautiousness in respect of its neighbours to more hard-nosed, pragmatic, even interventionary behavior" (Bajpai 2017:70).

For Kanti Bajpai "Modi's Pakistan policy entails constructing a series of international pressure points on Islamabad in a way that his predecessors were hesitant to do, fearing that this would allow outside powers to intrude into regional affairs" (Bajpai 2017:76) Modi has succeeded in building a coalition against cross border terrorism. The coalition is mainly a "shaming device" for enhancing India's bargaining hand with Pakistan. At UN General Assembly Modi asked for UN convention on terrorism and for global cooperation. India also insisted for putting Jaish-e Mohammed (JeM) leader Masood Azhar on a sanction list in which he succeeded (Full text of PM Narendra Modi address at UNGA, NDTV, 27th September 2014). Kanti Bajpai explains that,

[T]o get Pakistan to change its approach to terrorism, New Delhi has 'defected' from talks and negotiations when Islamabad has forced the Kashmir issue or when there have been terrorist strikes and surges in cross border artillery fire. For the longer term, Modi is attempting to build an international coalition including key Gulf countries that will bring pressures to bear on Islamabad to rein in terrorist activities from its soil and to bring to book those involved in organizing cross-border attacks. Modi's approach has departed from India's Pakistan policy 'script' in two ways: he has sought to change the terms of engagement by focusing on terrorism to the exclusion of the Kashmir dispute; and he has gone beyond India's insistence on bilateralism in dispute resolution by embracing a coalition strategy. (Bajpai 2017:78).

Future of nuclear coercion in South Asia

Presence of nuclear weapons and movement of both nations from deterrence to nuclear coercion remains vulnerable to the risk of the actual nuclear war. Nuclear coercion is not a viable strategy in ambiguous military doctrines of both emotionally charged nations. As Jay Wise (2018:6) wrote in his *Special Report* of United States Institute of Peace, “the factors that drive India-Pakistan security competition and heighten its nuclear risks are likely to intensify over time”. India in future also would be conventionally and politically superior to its counterpart Pakistan. Pakistan on the other hand is facing set backs on international forum for instance, that recent case of Financial Action Task Force setback proves the vulnerability of Pakistan to international isolation.

After the incident of Uri 2016, India is boycotting Pakistan in SAARC and even Modi’s swearing ceremony which under the “neighborhood first” policy invited all head of States under BIMSTEC rather than SAARC which constitutes Pakistan. This may encourage Pakistan to stop supporting its militant for terrorist activity under the umbrella of covert war against India. Cross-border incursions and terrorist activities have amplified the anti-Pakistan emotions in India. Impatience is on the rise in India because Pakistan’s lack of will against terrorist on its soil (Jay Wise 2018:6). The surgical strikes of 2016 were although were stealth operation that was “below the levels of even a low- scale conventional attack”, but that was unusual for India’s public. The coming time in the wake of policy of nuclear coercion in which both nations are pursuing nuclear weapons and technologies will advance the nuclear war even, by compressing response time, more dangerous deployments with extreme escalation risks.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that India and Pakistan have shifted from mutual nuclear deterrence to mutual nuclear coercion. This has been contextualized in the terrorist attacks since Uri 2016 to Pulwama terror attack of 2019. Cross border terrorism supported by Pakistan has compelled India to adopt the strategy of coercion against Pakistan instead of maintaining status quo and tolerating terrorist attacks.

Situated in this context the role of Modi regime cannot be denied. Role of leaders in adopting nuclear strategy of nations has always been a norm since the inception of nuclear weapons. Use of threat of use of nuclear weapons have become a norm these days in which leaders of state in their political campaign are issuing threat of use of nuclear weapons which is a clear case of nuclear coercion. Thus, it can be said with the present contextual understanding that nuclear coercion rather the nuclear deterrence is playing the role in South Asian war dynamics.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Comparative Analysis and Findings

With the rise of non-state actors and relatively smaller states aspirant of nuclear weapons the concept of nuclear coercion aptly explains the present day happenings in the evolution of nuclear strategies and nuclear arsenals. At the most visible level in recent times, the power of North Korea's ruler Kim Jong-un, his threats of use of nuclear weapons i.e. nuclear coercion, have come to be seen as a successful strategy for regime survival and even enhanced international standing. This has made United States President Donald Trump travel all the way to Asia to host two summit meetings in Singapore and Hanoi even when United States and North Korea have no diplomatic ties. Many strategists believe that if North Korea would not have possessed nuclear weapons, they may have suffered the fate of Saddam Hussein of Iraq and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya. North Korean regime would not have survived without nuclear weapons. Thus, nuclear weapons utility has gone beyond the traditional understanding of deterrence, mutually assured destruction, nuclear mutuality and other related concepts to this new assertion conceptualised in nuclear coercion that defines nuclear behaviour of nuclear possessing states in post-Cold War era.

Although nuclear coercion was present since the inception of nuclear weapons after second World War, yet the concept of nuclear deterrence was the major axiom during its first half a century. The major strategic literature till the end of Cold War thought and talked primarily about nuclear deterrence. But with the end of Cold War and especially as result of the expanding horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, the concept of nuclear deterrence has become relatively redundant. Instead more apt concept of nuclear coercion has emerged as the more viable frame for understanding nuclear weapons possessing states' behaviour in this changed context. In Cold War nuclear weapons were majorly limited to major powers but nuclear proliferation since has changed the definitions and concepts in nuclear strategic field. Some experts had

begun to fathom that change ever earlier. Richard K Betts in 1987 wrote a book *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* which saw the nuclear strategies from the lens of nuclear blackmail specifically rather than nuclear deterrence only.

This study accordingly is an attempt to understand nuclear equations of two nuclear dyads -- the United States and Russia as also India and Pakistan -- using this frame of 'nuclear coercion' which preceding chapters show aptly explains their changed equations. A number of questions are outlined at the beginning of this study to make sense of the concept of 'nuclear coercion' in present age equations of these two nuclear dyads as also in the discourse that underpins these. The broad theme was to look at how nuclear coercion is a more apt strategy as also concept in the post-Cold War world rather than read their equations in the dated nuclear deterrence parlance. Having first examined the concept and its changed context in the post-Cold War era, the two case studies of Russia-United States and India-Pakistan are taken, and here are some of the important findings made on the basis of this study.

First one is the conceptual understanding of the working of nuclear coercion in Cold War. How Cold War can be revisited through the lens of nuclear coercion rather than nuclear deterrence was the major question of the study? Therefore, this thesis focused on the evolution of nuclear strategic studies and in that how the concept of nuclear coercion evolved and whether it can explain nuclear equations of the Cold War era. There are periodic phases in the evolution of nuclear strategic studies literature. The major observation in this study is that nuclear deterrence was the term that was widely used in the Cold War literature. During the latter part of the Cold War era, various scholars like Barry Buzan, Robert Jervis, Lawrence Freedman argue that the Golden Age of nuclear strategic studies was obsessed with the term “deterrence” which was not suitable for the continuous military technological advancement of nuclear weapons.

The major limitation of the Cold War strategic studies literature was its intense focus on two nuclear superpowers only, and how the deterrence as a concept was seen fitting into that. Strategic studies theories it is increasingly felt should be reconceptualized with changing times. Robert Jervis (1979) also wrote that deterrence is widely used as a popular currency among strategic circles, that is the reason he used

the term deterrence in his article “Deterrence Theory Revisited” in which he confessed that he meant to say 'coercion' which he believed to be more accurate but he used concept of deterrence as a term in his article because it's more famous and well-understood in contemporary nuclear discourses. Conceptual precision it was stressed should be followed with the changing times in strategic studies. No doubt, sometimes nuclear deterrence was working perfectly also but it is important to understand that nuclear deterrence is a part of nuclear coercion only.

Nuclear deterrence indeed worked in majority of cases in Cold War because nuclear mutuality or nuclear bipolarity was combined with continuous nuclear competition. There was symmetry of power unlike the nuclear asymmetries that had defined the nature of nuclear equations in more recent times. The two nuclear superpowers of initial Cold War years were perfect for the working of nuclear deterrence. The ideological war between East and West was the major norm in those days. But that perfect situation did not continue through whole Cold War, that was short lived. Extended deterrence by United States and continuous technological evolution of delivery vehicles were continuously changing the strategic scenes during whole Cold War period. It was not a static war and time was not static also.

There is a major debate on the concept of coercion and therefore it is a contested concept in the literature of international relations. It is also observed that the literature of nuclear strategic studies, theories and concepts on nuclear weapons utility came in three waves in Cold War. At present we are in fourth wave of nuclear strategic studies. First wave came and went in few years after Second World War, was not very influential. Then the second wave of nuclear strategic studies which developed in late 1950s, soon became the conventional wisdom even though there was little evidence for the validity of the propositions. Third wave constituted of Soviet Union supremacy over United States and their advancement in nuclear weapons technology. Fourth wave of nuclear strategic studies which began after the end of Cold War is constituting new dimensions of complexities in nuclear strategic studies, for instance, nuclear terrorism, leaders use of nuclear weapons for personal gains as regime survival, threat of non-state actors possessing nuclear weapons.

It is claimed by many scholars that first wave of writers was way ahead of their time thus although they anticipated theoretical consequences correctly but that was not the reality at that time. United States and Russia were not at par in nuclear weapon terms. United States was the sole possessor of nuclear weapons. After the end of Second World War in 1945, strategist like Bernard Brodie, Albert Wohlstetter, Jacob Viner, Basil Liddle Hart laid down the basic foundation of the nuclear strategic studies that later became the core of nuclear strategic theories (Ken Booth 1975:34). These writers gave an intellectual response to the advent of nuclear weapons, that was completely theoretical, major deployment of nuclear weapons was not the reality at that time. First wave of writes failed to initiate a noteworthy debate. Rivalry between United States and Russia was seen as more traditional policy for superior strength (Buzan 1987:144).

After the nuclear test of Soviet Union by the 1950s, nuclear arms race became a reality. Western superiority in military technology was getting challenged. United States “nuclear monopoly” was lost which eroded the whole concept of superiority, “nuclear mutuality” became the truth which verified the theoretical situation foreseen by first wave writers. The doctrine of “Massive Retaliation” was proposed by Eisenhower which linked the academics and policy circles together. As Soviet Union was also a nuclear state the concept of massive retaliation was not viable. It was also observed that this concept can threaten the credibility and could lead to nuclear war. Golden age of nuclear strategic studies attracted immense attention from political, academic and policy circles (Barry Buzan 1987:146).

By 1960s Soviet Union also developed ICBMs like United States. Both powers nearly became equal in capability of destroying each other. The transformation of nuclear monopoly into nuclear mutuality was the main reason which made this age golden. For Soviet Union nuclear bipolarity was a success whereas for West it was a failure. Bipolarity demanded new protective technologies. The concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) was perfect for the situation. This helped in achieving a “stable configuration” (Barry Buzan 1987: 149). Problem of “extended deterrence” became a worm in the apple of Golden Age theory (Buzan 1987: 152). The United States efforts and commitment to provide Extended Deterrence (ED) to Western Europe made the nuclear bipolarity complex and inapplicable. This dilemma was the

major theme of whole evolution of nuclear strategy right through to the 1980s (Freedman 1981: xvi).

Third wave of strategic studies literature was focused on the continuously increasing Soviet Union supremacy in military technological advancement and changes in nuclear weapons and their delivery systems military technology. This led to United States attempts for nuclear parity to avoid military inferiority. Soviet Union rejected the concept of MAD which was infected by ED and this was the major characteristic of third wave. Threat of warfighting became the major norm. Union of ICBMs with nuclear weapons became the other major feature of third wave.

Third wave presented the need of changes in the concepts of strategic studies, deterrence at that time was getting redundant. It was not enough to reconceptualize the continuous changing contours of nuclear military technology. There was a need of other concepts but the strategic studies literature obsession with deterrence was proving costly. Another drawback that is observed of Cold War strategic literature was that it focused only on two superpowers and their rivalry by completely ignoring the nuclear weapons development in other parts of world.

This study finds out that nuclear coercion is more apt term to redefine the situations of Cold War as after the failure of the concept MAD because of extended deterrence it was tough to keep deterrence going. There is a need to revisit the literature of Cold War from the lens of nuclear coercion theory rather than nuclear deterrence. Therefore this study in first chapter has taken a relook to locate the coercion in the major nuclear crisis of Cold War and found out that nuclear coercion worked more aptly rather than nuclear deterrence.

Secondly, the major question was that how and why nuclear coercion is the more viable as a concept and strategy in post-Cold War world. It has been observed that as the world scholars dreamt of inevitable peace with the end of Cold War, that peace never became a reality. War is inherent in the nature of nation states and is continued in one form or other therefore the post-Cold War World is no more different than the Cold War world. The realist school of thought scholars John J Mearshiemer(2001:xi) in his book the *Tragedy of Great Power Politics* states that twentieth century was

filled with violence, many people died in war, in Cold War proxy war continued instead of direct war, this violence will continue in new millennium also because the great powers compete for powers and fear each other. Many would also have dreamt inevitable peace during Napoleonic Wars but after that we saw two world wars and nuclear weapons detonation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. G. John Ikenberry (1996:79) stated that although a lot of ink has been shed to prove that we have achieved perpetual peace, but the reality is that there is no such creature. Now in this new world the war is continuing but the conditions and circumstances have changed to different extent. As Samuel P Huntington wrote in (1993:22) that the prime cause of conflict would not be ideological or economic albeit “the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural”, this civilizational clash has indeed taken the centre stage in post-Cold war. These civilizational clashes combined with the nuclear weapons have become a major threat to world security.

As this study stated that nuclear coercion rather than nuclear deterrence is working in post-Cold War world. During the study of this, this has been observed that many scholars of fourth wave of nuclear strategic literature like Jefferey Knopf, Keith Payne, Patrick Morgan although doing critical studies of the failure of deterrence in post-Cold War world, keep on emphasizing the need of revising the concept of deterrence. It is the major finding in the study that nuclear coercion should replace the term nuclear deterrence in post-Cold War world. The reasons that came out are, horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons have taken place now there are no two superpowers. World has become multipolar and rise of small powers has taken place. Even the States who were in bipolar world were relying on nuclear deterrence has revised their strategy and have adopted the nuclear coercion concept. Russia and United States, China and other powers have adopted the strategy of nuclear coercion.

With the rise of small powers in post-Cold War world, the states which were ignored in Cold War have become the centre stage of world theatre. They are vying for attention and showing the world their capability of coercion the superpowers by the use of nuclear coercion. North Korea has been taken as perfect example of nuclear coercion in post-Cold War world. Even writes like Sechser and Fuhrmann (2017) claimed in their study that if there is a perfect example of nuclear coercion today it is North Korea. North Korea with the use of nuclear coercion has succeeded in coercing

the United States to concede to its demands, as Edwards Rhodes (1989) wrote that although it is madness yet there is a method in it. It is not like some small powers have gone mad and irrational, in this irrationality there is rationality. This study finds out that they are looking at the example of Libya, Iraq, and other states whose leaders were executed publicly. These small states now are on the line of thought that nuclear weapons are the currency that can save them from catastrophic defeat in conventional conflict. It is the perfect weapons to achieve stalemate in an escalating war. So nuclear weapons have become the currency of their survival.

Terrorist are difficult to deter because in any case they are ready to die. The radicalization of youth in the internet age has become easy. These brainwashed terrorists are also technologically fluent, so they are a threat to cyber security of nations also. The face of terrorism has changed in post-Cold War world. Earlier they only wanted attention not mass casualties but now they want mass casualties, there are terrorist organizations around the world like Japan's Aum Shinrikyo who want to bring an end to the world similarly the al Qaeda, Islamic States, Chechen terrorist have become threat to world security. They have high political ambition for instance Islamic state has even succeeded in capturing a vast territory in Raqqa, Mosul and Sirte, they have regional affiliates. Threat of nuclear weapons by these small states has become an everyday reality. This threat of nuclear weapon use is nuclear coercion therefore this thesis agrees with the proposed hypothesis in the beginning of the study that nuclear coercion is working in post-Cold War world rather than nuclear deterrence.

Thirdly, while this thesis has looked at the process of nuclear coercion in post- Cold War world, another crucial factor that is dealt in chapter four of this study is the Russia by using nuclear coercion is compelling United States to revisit its nuclear strategies in post-Cold War world. The end of Cold War has however changed the nature of rivalry among major powers. Russia and United States since the end of Cold war are entangled in very different power rivalry. Many scholars around the world assume that with the end of Cold War and disintegration of Soviet Union should have put an end to the rivalry between Russia and United States. But that proved to be wrong assumption, Russia's leadership under President Vladimir Putin has again revived the rivalry with the West. Russia has again invested itself in "massive

modernization” of its strategic forces especially nuclear strategic forces. Eastward expansion of relentless NATO has irked Russia continuously. When NATO started giving membership to Ukraine and Georgia then Russia got cautious and that led to Russia Georgia war of 2008 and Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Russia started using nuclear coercion against western forces, supported the separatist in Ukraine and Georgia and used threat of nuclear war that led to the NATO’s backward stepping.

Russia’s intense modernization of nuclear forces, adoption of new nuclear doctrines especially its strategy of “escalate to de-escalate”, and withdrawal from the INF treaty have compelled West to revise their nuclear strategies. Conflict since last twenty years between Russia and United States has been termed as new way of war which is characterized by complexity, ambiguity and asymmetry in means and stakes. Many authors also define it the strategy of “hybrid warfare” (Palmer 2015:1). Nuclear ambitions of both powers after the end of Cold War has evolved in opposite direction. Russia has adopted aggressive nuclear posture whereas the west has sought for deemphasizing nuclear weapons (Kroenig 2016:1). The main argument which was proposed in the beginning of the study was that Russia by using nuclear coercion is compelling United States to revisit its nuclear strategies in the post-Cold War world. United States had also started modernizing its nuclear forces, replacing old nuclear weapons with the new more efficient nuclear weapons, Withdrawal from the INF treaty in response to Russian withdrawal thus getting nuclear coerced by Russia. Furthermore, the Russia’s illegal intervention in Ukraine’s Crimea Peninsula and Georgia war has shown that Russia is using nuclear coercion to isolate its weak neighbours, Russia use of nuclear coercion as a hybrid warfare model is mix of necessities and opportunities that are mirror image of each other (Palmer 2015:2).

Fourthly, this thesis has also looked at the working of nuclear coercion in India and Pakistan in their present setting. India and Pakistan have remained entangled on the issue of Kashmir since the inception of liberated India and Pakistan in 1947. From late 1980s Pakistan started supporting terrorist for proxy war against India, for the strategy of thousand cuts to bleed India. After Pakistan got defeated in every war against India, 1947, 1965, 1971, 1999 Pakistan further strengthened its strategy of sub-conventional warfare. In this strategy Pakistan started harboring terrorist since late 1980s to destabilize Kashmir and whole of India. Jaish-e Mohammed and

Lashkar-e- Taiba are terrorist organization that have carried out a number of terrorist attack throughout India in last thirty years. The case of nuclear coercion in South Asia is different from the Russia-United States dynamic in the sense that use of terrorist for continuous proxy war is unique and different. The possibility of nuclear accident or theft of nuclear weapons by terrorist is always dangling in the face of South Asia.

The accidental theft of nuclear weapons may cause irreparable damage to the South Asian continent with global implications. According to authors like Sumit Ganguly, Michal Smetana, Sannia Abdullah and Ales Karmazin the Kashmir conflict of India and Pakistan has become the “frozen conflict” (Ganguly et al 2018:1). Kashmir has become the most intractable conflict of human history. Pakistan is playing the game of mutual distrust. The concept of nuclear mutuality and nuclear balance are not going to be easy in South Asian nuclear dynamics. The nuclear coercion competition between the two nations remains marred by different conventional capabilities and different nuclear doctrines with asymmetries which creates the risk of nuclear escalation.

Since 1980s a new method of war was beginning in South Asia, the dawn of covert support to terrorist by Pakistan to create instability in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan was using its new found capability of nuclear weapons to create a firewall to deter India despite sponsoring terrorism. There was always a possibility of nuclear weapons use by Pakistan, but the war was avoided because nuclear deterrence worked although not perfectly. Pakistan was completely convinced that India in any case will never use nuclear weapons and would not retaliate. Pakistan forces were enjoying the tactical advantage over India. Pakistan acquisition of nuclear weapons was the reason that Pakistan started feeling less threatened. Both the nations were getting deterred from full conventional war.

With the nuclear test of 1998, nuclear deterrence in the region started getting failed. Nuclear weapons test made Pakistan more confident that India would not retaliate in any case now. India clearly failed in stopping Pakistan to use terrorist as proxies which in turn was successfully fulfilling the revanchist agenda of Pakistan. Pakistan who was getting defeated in conventional war against India since 1947, nuclear weapons have given them the capability of sub-conventional warfare game. Since

1980 to 2002 Pakistan became home country of more than twenty-four terrorists' organizations, for instance Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed being the major among them. These groups have conducted a large number of terrorist activities in India for instance Parliament attack of 2001, Mumbai Terror Attack of 2008, border skirmishes 2016-2019, ghastly terror attack of Uri and Pulwama and lately in Sri Lanka. This region is like a laboratory for terrorist organization. Instead of having such heinous experience Pakistan has made terrorists a political force for proxy fight for the Pakistan Army.

This study has analyzed the response of India to the sub conventional warfare strategy of Pakistan. This study finds out that in response to Pakistan's strategy of nuclear coercion against India, India has also adopted the strategy of responding in nuclear coercion terms only. India has devised the game plan of responding clearly by intruding in Pakistan and acknowledging it publicly. India has started the adoption of coercive strategy of tough punishment to Pakistan to stop it from supporting terrorist on its soil. India has also started alienating Pakistan at the international level. In the swearing ceremony of Indian Prime Minister Modi 2014, all the SAARC members were invited including Pakistan but in 2019 swearing ceremony of Prime Minister Modi, Pakistan is excluded, and the invitation only went to BIMSTEC opposed to SAARC, to avoid Pakistan. Thus, both nations have shifted from mutual nuclear deterrence to nuclear coercion strategy. In which at sub conventional level they both are now poking each other under the umbrella of nuclear weapons.

In response to Uri Terror Attack of 2016, India conducted surgical strikes against Pakistan, this adoption of nuclear coercion tactic by India had major implication in the current strategic understanding of war between two nuclear weapons states. It was an experiment by India to devise a strategy of response to Pakistan's sub-conventional warfare with simultaneous efforts for avoidance of nuclear war. The question that became important is that how these strikes heralded a strategy of nuclear coercion by India. It challenged openly the Pakistan redlines of use of nuclear weapons, can there be possibility of nuclear escalation are the questions which needs answer. India's response under Modi regime has questioned the credibility of nuclear deterrence stability in continent. Till recently it was a one-way process but now has become two-way process.

This study finds that there are various similarities and dissimilarities in both the case studies. Like Russia and United States, India and Pakistan are also old enemies. Both of these dyads are engaged in war for long time. The only thing that is changing between them is the mode and strategies of war. As in the presence of nuclear weapons they both are not fighting directly but proxy wars are going on with the guise of nuclear coercion threatening to use nuclear weapons while simultaneously carrying out sub conventional warfare. However, these cases are dissimilar in the sense that Russia and United States do not share common boundaries and they are situated on different continent. Whereas India and Pakistan share one common border. Religious issues are not the main cause of their war. Whereas in India-Pakistan dynamics the terrorist are the main instigator of violence and they could also instigate a nuclear war or nuclear attack. Terrorists are radicalized and nuclear weapons going in the hand of terrorist can bring doom to the whole region. Being one of the most volatile borders in the world the nature of conflict is very difficult to solve. Historical past of India and Pakistan is tied together but Pakistan's Islamic ideology tied with nuclear weapons proliferation is perilous. This threat of religious war compounded by nuclear weapons is the main burden of this region.

Limitation of the study

The attempt in this thesis is to broaden the debate on the nuclear coercion strategy as also narrating the process itself. It is important to see the nuclear strategies of nuclear nations from the lens of nuclear coercion rather than limiting it to the narrow focus of nuclear deterrence. The case studies of Russia-United States and India-Pakistan dyads reveal that how nations have changed their policies and approach for nuclear weapons use for blackmailing and coercion in post- Cold War world. However, in seeking to do that many other dimensions have been compromised. Genealogical mapping has been given focus for nuclear coercion discourse.

The intention initially was to focus primarily on the states only, the Russia-United States and India-Pakistan dynamics and their dealing. However, it was realized that given their positions the leaders not only reflected but also shaped the opinion of the country. Leaders also play the vital role in maintaining nuclear weapons and using it strategically for sometimes their personal gains. For instance, North Korea is using

nuclear weapons for its regime legitimacy and survival on domestic front. Leaders like Vladimir Putin and Narendra Modi who comes with the electoral promises of reviving the glory of their nation use the nuclear coercion to create fear in enemy state. Nuclear coercion is mainly the strategy of leaders. These were some of the main findings in the study.

The main element in the study of strategic studies has been the role of nuclear weapons, nuclear armament, proliferation, strategic role of nuclear weapons in war preparation and diplomacy. Every research in nuclear strategies has involved making some informed choices and this study has chosen to focus on nuclear coercion as a viable strategy in post-Cold War world. This is not to suggest that other strategic concepts are less important, but the broad mandate of this work as outlined in the beginning was to investigate the strategic role of the concept of nuclear coercion strategy in the post-Cold War world.

Present Relevance

In terms of present relevance of this thesis, a few observations should also be made. The narrative of nuclear coercion strategy in post-Cold War world has explicitly sought to redefine the utility of nuclear weapons for state and non-state actors in today's time. In this phase nations like Russia, United States, India, Pakistan have moved from the strategy of deterrence via nuclear weapons to a more nuanced strategy of coercion via nuclear weapon. Nuclear weapons have once again have become the major decider of the outcome of conventional, sub-conventional, proxy, overt or nay type of war. Shadow of nuclear weapons looms large on every decision made strategically in the defense or offense plan of any nation now. While Cold War was passed in the deterrence strategy, the new world order is more complex and the threats of use of nuclear weapons by small states and non-state actors have redefined the notion of security studies. Today the major threat to survival is less from the enemy state attack, but from the radicalized elements in possession of nuclear weapons, or small revisionist state that may be adamant on the survival of their regime. The historical framework of nuclear strategic studies mostly neglects the possibility of nuclear weapon use by non-state actors. Its major focus on the states especially United States and Russia throughout the Cold War caused major limitation on the theoretical understanding of nuclear strategies and their implications.

Therefore, this study contributes in the historical approach itself, in which it relooks the Cold War from the perspective of nuclear coercion rather than nuclear deterrence. It explains what shifts have been implemented since 1991 and what are the areas where Cold War legacies still exist. This study highlights the interests and concerns that remain hidden in the prospective use of nuclear coercion strategy. Thus, it explains a clear understanding of nuclear coercion in Cold War. The strategic aspect of nuclear coercion is examined thoroughly; this dissertation demonstrates the linkages between different levels of nuclear policy and highlights the major players and their way of using nuclear weapons for coercive use.

Scope for Future Research

Despite locating itself in a second nuclear age and especially the post-Cold War period for reading of nuclear weapons strategic relevance, this study only discusses broad contours of nuclear coercion paradigm. This was done to situate the study within a broad theoretical structure of the available strategic literature. However, this paradigm is not yet fully developed, and several contours of this concept remain seriously contested. Partly, because for the specific purpose of this study that was not the requirement and the more nuanced understanding of nuclear coercion is still in budding stage. For instance, the new way of surgical strike by India in Pakistan is the new mode of retaliation which needs to be further examined and observed with the time. This thesis also stipulates the possibilities of future work in this regard and new findings can be made on this nuclear coercion strategy debate.

Other part of the study that would be another potential area for future research and that can make new contribution in the literature of strategic studies can be the role of individual leaders in defining the utility of nuclear weapons for personal gains or for blackmailing other states or for other purposes. This thesis takes some preliminary explorations in detailing the story of nuclear coercion strategy of the respective leaders. The more on the use of nuclear terrorism as a tool of nuclear coercion needs to be elaborated and studied deeply.

In conclusion, therefore, the point worth restating is that with all its limitations the nuclear coercion remains the reality of nuclear equations amongst nuclear possessing states of our present world. More specifically, this is the concept which is more apt in

explaining the present dynamics of equations between these two dyads of Russia-United States and India-Pakistan. Mainstream theories of strategic studies literature are already seen moving their focus from the narrow understanding of the concept of nuclear deterrence to the broader understanding of the concept of nuclear coercion.

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