Chapter - V

DOMESTIC INPUTS OF RELATIONSHIP

The foreign policy of a country, far from being an independent variable, depends on a number of factors, which especially include domestic concerns and institutions of that country. It is the domestic context out of which a country's foreign policy arises. For, the domestic context pertains to those important aspects such as the geo-strategic location, historical, socio-cultural and politico-economic environment of the country, which prescribes the parameters within which the foreign policy makers of a country have to shape its foreign policy. India's relationship with the US is not an exception to this truism.

On the contrary, the US and India being democratic political systems, the leaders of the two countries cannot afford to ignore the respective domestic pressures that influence their foreign policies towards each other. This significance of the internal milieu in the shaping of Indo-US relations notwithstanding, policy convergences or divergences between two democracies have often been explained mainly in the context of external environment. A more comprehensive analysis of various domestic inputs is, therefore, necessary to correct misplaced priorities. It will further facilitate an improved understanding of Indo-US
relations after the Cold War in general and during the Clinton Presidency in particular. The present chapter, therefore, attempts to examine US-India relations during the period under review in the light of the domestic environment of both the countries.

The United States as a Factor in Indian Politics

While India’s US policy rarely becomes an issue in the US domestic politics, the US’s India policies often generate spontaneous and emotional debate in India, bringing the political forces to the forefront. This is largely due to the part played by the US in India’s domestic as well as foreign policies.

The US, being a sole superpower, quite naturally has diverse and multiple compulsions, while India as a regional power has its compulsions on a limited scale. And further, a Super power’s domestic compulsions may not be directly related to its relation to any one regional power, while a regional power’s approach to international politics is invariably linked to the role of the global power in its internal and neighborhood politics. It is, therefore, quite logical that the US perceives its national interest in global context while India’s immediate concern often hinges around preserving its internal autonomy.

Domestic concerns apart, the anti-Americanism in India’s domestic politics also stems from the adoption of Parliamentary form of
government, which has ensured a system whereby political parties engage themselves in a fierce show of one-upmanship for political gains. Due to widespread poverty and lack of education among a vast chunk of the electorate, finding foreign scapegoats and excessive use of rhetorics have played an important part in India's domestic politics. And undoubtedly, it is the US which has most often come under heavy criticism generating emotional debate both inside and outside Parliament, due to the dominance of Left-of-Centre in Indian polity. Further, anti-imperialism in India has always revolved around anti-Americanism. Quite understandably, this sentiment has found its way to India's the US policy.¹

Similarly, the educated Indian elite, while striving for educational and economic linkage with the US, finds it expedient to attack the US on public platform. This symptom is most glaring in the Indian Press, which is controlled by the educated and economic elite in the country. Sensationalism has been the hallmark of the Indian Press so far as the issues regarding Indo-US tensions are concerned. The issues are often blown out of proportion creating unnecessary tension between the two

¹ For a study of anti-Americanism in India. See, Partha S. Ghosh, "Domestic Sources of India's Policy of Non-Aligment", India Quarterly (New Delhi), vol.36, no.3, July-December 1980. Also see, Nalini Kant Jha, Indo-American Relations: Love-Hate Syndrome", Détente (New Delhi), vol.8, no.4, November-December 1989, pp.11-17.
countries. It may be thus argued that the domestic political culture and the democratic system in India complicated Indo-US tensions.

The American Political System

Though unlike the US, India is not a significant factor in American politics due to obvious reasons, yet the American political system has influenced Indo-US ties, albeit indirectly. The US is known for its presidential form of government and its loose party system, which encourages and entertains the practice of lobbying. The lobby groups in the US are immensely powerful with long reach in the actual process of decision making that gets reflected in both the country's domestic and foreign policies.

The highly liberal political and social mindset of the American society adds fuel to the fire by way of allowing vested anti-India interest groups to flourish and mould public opinion in the US. Understandably, this has an effect both on Congress and the administration in taking anti-India stance. The Congress remains particularly prone to such lobbying, where the politics of vote bank based on ethnicity plays an important role.

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4 *India Today* (New Delhi), 30 September, 1992, p.179.
The Post Cold War Equation

During the Cold War rapprochement between two countries took a fair amount of time due to both internal and external compulsions. In reality, the situation in the post Cold War era did not change as much as was anticipated by many. In fact, the US still maintained same relations with Pakistan, whereas it came down heavily on India on the questions of human rights, Kashmir, nuclear non-proliferation, missile technology control regime and trade issues. These irritants in Indo-US relations can hardly be understood without reference to domestic imperatives.

The American economic compulsion in the form of growing fiscal and trade deficit, for instance, forced the Clinton administration to shift focus from the traditional 'high politics' to trade, seeking new market abroad for American exports. The need to draw larger investments at home and greater market access abroad resulted in considerable policy and organizational changes in America’s post Cold War policy. This urge to look for new market share abroad coincided with India’s own liberalization programme that opened the doors to foreign investments abroad.

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From the Indian point of view, the tenure of Clinton's presidency could be seen as a new dawn in the history of India's domestic and foreign policy. The dispensability of the Nehru-Gandhi clan in Indian polity, the dominance of caste politics, the phenomenal rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the successive coalition governments, far reaching economic reforms, the demolition of the Babri structure and last but not the least, the seemingly unending insurgency in Kashmir, all have had their influence on India's foreign policy, particularly on India's US policy. The political opposition within the country was like never before, and ruling coalition, had to face considerable resistance in its domestic and foreign policy pursuits. The pressures from the opposition and the press indeed forced Prime Ministers to stick to their guns on almost all the issues pertaining to Indo-US tensions. We, therefore, now propose to discuss certain specific issues that illustrate the significance of domestic milieu in the shaping of India-US relations during Clinton administration.

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The Politics of Human Rights

One of the most burning issues that bedeviled Indo-US relations during the Clinton era was the issue of human rights. The end of the Cold War brought an unprecedented concern over any violation of human rights worldwide.\(^8\) And much of this concern was raised and spread by the US under the stewardship of President Clinton, who minced no words in laying his priority on the promotion of human rights among other matters in his foreign policy.

Undoubtedly, Clinton’s offensive on the issue of human rights found a most suitable casualty in India for its alleged human rights violations in Punjab and Kashmir highlighted by such watchdogs like Amnesty International and Asia Watch. The US offensive against India on the issue of human rights involved a series of sensitive utterances and actions by the US officials including the President himself, which sent shockwaves in India as political parties and the press reacted sharply, taking Indo-US relations to a new height of rhetoric’s. It took a fair amount of time for the tempers to cool down that saw a couple of damage limitation talks, culminating in Prime Minister Narasimha Rao’s visit to the US in May 1994.

\(^8\) Jha, n.2, p.1038.
The fact that the Clinton administration would be more sensitive to the issue of human rights than the Bush-administration became obvious even before the inauguration of the former the Presidential candidate, Bill Clinton's new emphasis on human rights was a clear deviation from President Bush's established policies became evident during the 1992 elections, when Clinton argued for a tough stand against China, linking Most Favoured Nations (MFN) status with compliance of human rights standards, as against Bush's policy of patience and persuasion. A radical shift of this nature was surely a product of structural changes, both internationally and in the domestic context. If the end of the Cold War prompted the American people to turn inward and the administration and the Congress to understand the dispensability of despotic regimes that proved useful in the earlier containment policy towards the Soviet Union, it also altered grass roots politics in the US and encouraged pressure groups within the country to press for human rights abroad. Similarly, if India's alleged violation of human rights in Punjab and Kashmir was conspicuous to draw world attention, including

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that of the US, it was also true that vested interests in the US, lobbied hard to get India censured on the issue of human rights.\footnote{For details, see, Nalini Kant Jha, "India and the United States: The Human Rights Dimension", in V.K. Malhotra, ed., \textit{Indo-US Relations in Nineties} (New Delhi: Anmol Publishers, 1995), pp.104-05.}

The US allegation on human rights was thus an eye opener that clearly revealed the inherent and genuine opposition and sensitivity to American pressure tactics in the country. This opposition and sensitivity reflected the typical political conditioning in the country that compelled the Indian government to talk tough on issues that contributed to tensions in Indo-US relations. At times the compulsions were so strong that India’s US policy, which largely remained reactive in nature, acquired a rhetorical pitch, threatening to derail the spirit of cooperation between the two countries.

Clinton’s approach to the issue of human rights was to a large extent influenced by the societal pressure. It is against this background of societal pressure that Clinton’s priority on human rights could be understood in its correct perspective. New powerful activist groups in the United States raised a number of human rights related issues like environment, humanitarian relief and women’s rights. These pressure groups played the role of opinion leaders in both American domestic
politics and its foreign policy. In fact, President Clinton's remarks on human rights violations in different parts of the world were aimed at the American voters, particularly the younger generation who really remained concerned on the issue of human rights. Clinton felt that to be successful for a second term, he needed the support of the younger generation to back him. Quite naturally, the domestic compulsions of the vote bank as also the growing consensus among the pressure groups played a role in promoting President Clinton to come out with provocative statements on human rights violation in Punjab and Kashmir.

One of the significant factors aggravating Indo-US tensions over the issue of human rights was the role of anti-India lobbies within the United States. These anti-India forces played a major role in persuading the Clinton administration to censure India. Clinton's statements, his declarations along with that of the US Assistant Secretary of State, Robin Raphel, cannot be understood without reference to anti-India forces within the US. It is to be noted that one of the most potent sources of American misperceptions towards India was the professional lobbies employed by the pro-Pakistan elements and the pro-Pakistan Congressmen, the Press and even the academicians. Some of the notable

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12 Clough, n.10, p.4.

13 Jha, n. 11, p.104.

14 Jha, n. 2, p.1038.
anti-India and pro-Pakistan lobbies included Charles Wilson, a Congressmen, Dan Burton, a Democrats from Texas, a Republican from Indiana and from California, who left no stone unturned to turn US policy against India. The anti-India lobby was quite successful in the academic community that influenced even the India friendly American scholars to come out with statements that deplored human rights condition in India. All these clearly indicate the role of lobbyists and pressure groups in shaping Washington’s India policy in general and human rights in particular.

It is true that emotive issues such as human rights were not the only predominant domestic concerns. There were in fact, significant pressures arising from health care reforms, restoring economic prosperity and others. Yet, the significance of the issue of human rights in influencing Clinton’s foreign policy in general and India policy in particular cannot be gainsaid. The relevance of this issue in Clinton’s domestic as well as foreign policy stance gained all the more importance in view of the fact that while performance in health care or in economic front required time and resources issuing statements concerning human rights did not.

Not surprisingly, President Clinton’s remarks on alleged human rights violation in India invited sharp reactions from India, which clearly revealed the domestic pressure that the Indian leaders had to encounter in framing India’s US policies. The Indian anti-pathy to American diplomacy was portrayed by the opposition and the Indian press that ultimately had a profound impact on the government. The entire Indian reaction to the utterances of President Clinton and Robin Raphel in particular created storms in New Delhi, while the Media reaction was also hysterical. Therefore in view of this development the political parties and Parliament took it as their national duty to impress upon the government to come out with severe denouncements of such statements by the US leaders. The Indian overreaction to Clinton administration’s remarks clearly revealed the domestic pressures that the leaders in this country had to encounter in framing India’s US policies. In response to India’s reaction, the US Secretary of Commerce, Ronald H. Brown, during his visit to India in January 1995, pointed out:

The United States is concerned with human rights and improvements in human rights all over the world. The United States does not just point a finger at India, or point a finger at China, we have a policy, which speaks to the issue of human rights all over the world.

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In reality, however, India was singled out in a rather blatant manner by the Clinton administration through a series of sensitive utterances and actions, which resulted in a temporary setback in Indo-US relations. Of late, however, the Clinton administration acknowledged the domestic compulsions in India’s approach towards the issue of human rights. This American pragmatism coupled with economic factor and Indian government’s attempt to curb human rights abuses and the employment of pro-Indian lobby at the Capitol-Hill, induced the two governments towards not to raising this issue ever since Prime Minister Rao visit to the US in May 1994.18

On its part, New Delhi too showed tremendous maturity and wisdom in handling the American charges and abuses in India. Rightly, India resisted the temptations to join China against refusing Washington’s charges in this regard. India was able to clearly distinguish between its accidental violation of human rights while dealing with the forces of subversion and terrorism and Beijing’s deliberate suppression of democratic aspirations of its own population.19 Thus the USA’s policy and India’s-US policy with reference to this issue of human rights, to a

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18 Interview with Dr. Christoper Raj, Professor, Center for American Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, during his visit to Indian Association for Canadian Studies, held at Hyderabad on 24th February, 2005.

19 Interview with Dr. Swaran Singh, during his visit to Stella Maris College, Chennai, On 7th January 2005.
large extent, was conditioned by the domestic pressures on both the sides.

The Nuclear Issue

The linkages between domestic politics and foreign policy postures of the US and India regarding the issue of nuclear and missile proliferation during the Clinton regime were not very different from that of the issue of human rights discussed earlier. If one could find sharp differences in approach towards nuclear issues, it was because of certain unavoidable domestic consensus and pressures in both the countries.

The differences between the two countries over nuclear issues apparently seemed to be the fallout of the international politics. In reality, however, the divergence was closely related to domestic politics in the two countries. For example, Washington constantly faced the Congressional pressure with reference to non-proliferation measures, while New Delhi was obliged to maintain its nuclear autonomy under internal pressures.

The American 'public's desire to maintain their country's superpower status compelled the successive administration to perceive American security in global context. It is in this context that the US was so keen on capping the nuclear capabilities of both India and Pakistan. There was also an added concern that nuclear build up in South Asia
could lead to destability in other areas of the World, where the US had vital economic and political interests.  

The Congress on many occasions during both the terms of the Clinton administration imposed restrictions on the administration in determining its nuclear policy. The most notable example was the Pressler Amendment, which caused considerable friction between the Congress and the administration over the resuming of aid to Pakistan. Besides, there were individual and isolated attempts to censure India for its nuclear policy. A well known example was the pressure exerted by the US on Russia with reference to the issue of transfer of Cryogenic technology to India.

The Indian opposition to the US offensive on the issue of nuclear and missile proliferation was quite predictable. The US coercive diplomacy was denounced by all sections in the country. In fact, due to political pressures on Prime Minister Rao, he had to issue a firm message

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21 These attempts were mainly a result of pro-Pakistan and anti-India lobbies' constant effort to corner India. These lobbies through some Congressmen pointed out that Pakistan was been unjustly singled out through Pressler Amendment while India had not come under severe scrutiny despite having exploded a nuclear device in 1974. Alex Wagner, “Bush Waives Nuclear Related Sanctions on India, Pakistan”, Arms Control Today, October 2001.

that under no circumstances should he give in to the US pressure during his summit meeting with President Clinton in May 1994. Similarly, the domestic pressure concerning nuclear and missile issue in 1994-1996 forced Rao to harden his stand on CTBT. There was a widespread acknowledgement among the political parties and press in the country of India’s status as a regional power taking into consideration India’s strategic location, natural resources, its ancient proud culture, democratic polity, leadership, ideals of the freedom struggle and, of course, its technological capability. Therefore, the Indian policy makers had to take into account not only the different regional equations, especially nuclear capabilities of both China and Pakistan in keeping her nuclear option opened.23 This was a matter of solid domestic consensus that no government in India could ignore.24 Understandably, the consensus reached its height when the pressures were the most. Consequently, the domestic pressures in India’s nuclear policy and its US policy were most vivid during Rao’s visit to the US.

It was because of the pressure from Parliament that time and again the government claimed that at no point of time, India’s nuclear policy was at stake. The government also claimed that it was committed to

23 Malhotra, n.11, pp.28-29.

Rajiv Gandhi’s plan for global and non-discriminatory non-proliferation. Apart from Parliament, opposition to India’s nuclear policy and the US policy were also arising from the domestic press. It is to be noted that the press in India kept a close vigil on the statements, declarations and actions of the government as well as the Opposition on the issues of vital interest to the country. The wide coverage that press gave to the issue of nuclear and missile proliferation prior to Rao’s visit to the US went on to prove that the fourth estate in India played a key role in cautioning and restraining the government.

The core security concerns emanating from the respective domestic capabilities of the two countries remained at the heart of India’s nuclear policy during non-Congress regime as well. Even before the formation of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the BJP President, L.K. Advani, in an attempt to caution the government declared on 30th April 1994 at Cochin that even if official India succumbed to the US pressure, the people of India would not.

There were two key domestic political issues that unsettled Indo-US talks and any resulting agreement during the non-Congress regimes


in India co-inciding with the Clinton Presidency. The most important issue was whether the anti-Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) sentiment, built up so assiduously by those who opposed India’s signing of the treaty in 1996, would permit any Indian government to reverse its stand. The left and left-of-the center parties in India still saw New Delhi’s rejection of the treaty as part of an anti-hegemonistic, anti-imperialist fight against the US power and preferences in the new world order. These parties publicly accused the BJP-led government of “selling out” to the United States. The Congress Party had been far more cautious on the talks with the United States, but it was by no means certain that the party would support a change of policies on the test ban.28

To get a deal with the United States through, the BJP needed the support of the Congress Party. However, the Congress Party was in a dilemma. If it supported a deal with the United States, it could be accused of a sellout by the various parties particularly the left and left-of-the center parties—whose backing it needed to return to power. Worse, if the BJP government succeeded in getting a deal, India’s newfound nuclear status would be credited to its policies and political courage and not to the Congress Party. If, on the other hand, the Congress party did

not support the deal, the BJP would be able to accuse it of having sabotaged relations with India's most important interlocutor and of losing the country a profitable deal. The way out for the Congress and the BJP was to persuade the left and left-of-the center parties to come around on the CTBT. But this would be a no mean feat, given the depth of feeling on the CTBT and the animosity of those parties towards the BJP. A second and related domestic political factor, which was vital to an agreement with the US, was the longevity of the BJP-led coalition.²⁹

Similarly the gradual shift in the US policy towards India from hostility in the aftermath of Pokhran-II tests (1998) to the extension of unprecedented support to India during the Kargil conflict cannot be explained without reference to the dynamics of the American domestic politics.³⁰ The US being the sole surviving Superpower in the post Cold War period wanted to preserve its global status, while India, being an aspiring regional power, wanted to keep its nuclear options open to deter other aspiring powers. It was this vital security concern that made compromises difficult for both the countries. It was also the reason why the US Congress and the Indian Parliament played a significant role in determining nuclear policy of the two countries.

²⁹ Interview with Ambassador K. Sibal, India's former Foreign Secretary during his visit to Pondicherry University on March 22, 2004.

The most important factor that drew the US strategic interest towards India was the non-proliferation drive in the US Post Cold-War approach to world order. The United States felt India was firmly consistent in defending its search for global non-proliferation regime be it through NPT, CTBT or through any regime. Therefore in the post Pokhran -II phase, negotiations between the two countries continued between Strobe Talbott and Jaswant Singh, which to a considerable level, reduced the gap in perception, so far as the nuclear issue was concerned. This resulted in President Clinton's visit to New Delhi in March 2000, which facilitated the broadening of Indo-US dialogue in the diverse areas of fighting terrorism, economic cooperation, science and technological policies and environment.

In fact, internal pressures in India's US policy were more effective as American politics vitally affects India, some times even the diet of an ordinary Indian. Therefore, the US often became an issue in Indian politics. The Indian reaction to American activism was justified in view of the fact the US could not resort to coercive diplomacy in the sub-continent. However, both the countries perhaps understood that a few compromises were inevitable and desirable in the context of foreign policy.
Economic Issues

If the issues of human rights and nuclear non-proliferation proved to be a major irritant and a source of tension between India and the United States during the Clinton regime, economic factors proved to be a countervailing force inducing positive dynamics in Indo-US relationship. The end of the Cold War coincided with the realization that economics was as important as 'high politics' in international relations. Even though, the US won the Cold War due to its superior economy, this superiority was fading away due to a vast array of domestic economic problems. From the Indian point of view, the Indian economy was found shaky in 1991 when the Chandrasekhar government pledged gold outside. Consequently, when the Rao government took charge, the first priority was to revive the Indian economy through far reaching economic reforms. In fact, the domestic economic problems forced both the countries to reach out to each other, the US in search of new markets for its exports and India to seek soft loans and foreign investments in various sectors of its economy. This positive approach adopted by the two countries was as much a matter of choice as it was of compulsions.

With the end of Cold War the emphasis shifted to the domestic agenda, primarily to the sphere of economy, where the US was fast losing its competitive edge in the new world order. With a trillion dollar fiscal deficit and a growing trade deficit, it was felt that the time had
come to set the house in order, which would revive American competitive edge over others and raise the quality of life at home. Consequently, it was felt that the US should turn inward and withdraw from earlier international commitments, which was a major burden on the American exchequer. This view was most forcefully put forward by Pat Buchanan, the Republican challenger of President Bush, who propounded his concept of America first. Among the Democrats, Jerry Brown, Senator Tom Harkin and Senator Robert Kerry also expressed similar views.

Not surprisingly, Clinton adopted an electoral strategy that from the very beginning aimed at drawing the attention of the American voters to the economy. In the opening lecture at Georgetown University, Clinton said, "Given the problems we face at home, we do have to take care of our own people and their needs first". On another occasion, Clinton called for a "comprehensive national strategy" to promote economic growth, focusing on public investments, emphasizing on training and education of work force and modernisation of infrastructure.

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33 Garten, n. 31, p.17.
Thus Clinton’s coming to power proved to be a major catalyst for a new domestic and foreign policy. The primacy of economics in President Clinton’s domestic and foreign policy was amply reflected in his federal appointments. In fact, the Clinton administration saw a definite link between commercial, political and foreign policies. This wholesome approach was aimed at improving the country’s economic competitiveness and productivity in industry and agriculture and the reduction of trade deficit, which consequently needed markets for American exports.34

The US business lobby too constantly pressed the Clinton Administration to adopt a more meaningful approach that would not hurt American business interests in the process of pursuing other foreign policy goals even though, the successive US administrations have banned the export of the so-called dual-use technology to countries, which follow independent foreign and security policies.35 This trend came to be reversed under the pressure from the business lobby, which sought commercial benefits from these exports.

34 Mahapatra, n.24, p. 1534.

This need to look for markets was given a concrete shape when the US Commerce Department identified the Big Emerging Markets that included China, India, Taiwan, Hongkong, South Korea, Indonesia, Turkey, South Africa, Poland, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. It was felt that the US could increase its market share in these countries substantially in the years to come. No doubt, therefore, that the Clinton Administration identified trade as an important feature in Indo-US relations in the 1990's. This was much in tune with the Carnegie Report, which suggested that the "greatest potential for a rapid improvement of Indo-American relations lies in the economic sphere....".36

While the new economic pragmatism played a vital role in determining Washington's India policy under President Clinton, India's own economic liberalization programme acted as a catalyst for the Clinton Administration to take a close look at India. The coming of Narasimha Rao to power ushered in a new era in India's economic history. There was an emerging consensus among the intellectuals and the Press in India that radical economic reforms were needed to get rid of the ills that afflicted India so far. There was a growing realization that the Indian economy should liberalise both internally and externally.37 There

36 Interview with Prof. Brahma Challeney of Center for Policy Research, New Delhi, during his visit to Pondicherry on March 22, 2004.

also emerged a broad consensus among the political parties over certain economic reforms like internal liberalization through greater freedom for private industry. There was a sense of urgency and need that facilitated the launching of the economic reforms programme by the Rao government.

It was under this new context of liberalization programme that India’s US policy came to acquire a pragmatic and a pro-US face. Truly, the responses from the United States and other industrial countries to India’s reforms were crucial. This explains why despite a widespread apprehension in India that the then Prime Minister, Narasimaha Rao’s trip to the US in 1994 would be by and large be unproductive in view of the US offensive on the issue of human rights and nuclear non-proliferation, the thrust on economic matters reached during Rao’s visit to the US helped in bridging the divides between the two countries to an extent. Rao’s strategic trip to the United States with Foreign Minister and business delegates who visited New York, Houston and Boston, proved to be a high point in Indo-US trade partnership resulting in agreements on American investments in India to the tune of $25 billion for the next few years.

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The visit of the then Commerce Secretary, Ronald H. Brown, to India in 1995 proved to be another high point of Indo-US relations. It not only facilitated American investment in India to the tune of $1.4 billion, but also saw doubling of the US exports to India in five years from $2.8 billion in 1994 to $46 billion in 2000 AD.40

It is to be noted that ever since the 1990's there has been a broad consensus in the country that the economic reforms are irreversible and that foreign investments necessary.41 If at all there are differences it is essentially due to political compulsions and ideological baggage and as such does not really mark a strict division of opinion in the country. Therefore, in the context of India’s US policy this broad consensus facilitated improvement in India-US ties.

Even though certain minor irritants plagued in Indo-US trade relations like that of the US ban on Indian rayon skirts which sent jitters in certain quarters in India, the Rao’s government not only reacted in a matured way, but also dispatched an expert group to the US to promptly sort out the issue. This marked the new pragmatism that came to stay in India’s US policy so far as trade was concerned. Similarly, another substantial issue that threatened to disrupt the Indo-US trade ties was the

40 Mahapatra, n. 24, p.1533.

41 India Today, 15 April, 1995, p.85.
issue of intellectual property rights, which again was handled by Rao’s government deftly exhibiting a spirit of moderation and compromise while trying to change its own patent laws in tune with the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade despite strong opposition at home.\footnote{At the time of writing the new Patent Bill was already passed in the Lok Sabha. Discussions were going on with the Opposition to get it passed in the Rajya Sabha where the Congress (I) was in minority.}

On being elected for the second term, President Clinton made several changes not only in his foreign policy establishment, but also foreign policy as such, which was conditioned to a large extent by the domestic pulls and pressures. It was, therefore, not surprising to find both the countries trying to come closer in spite of their divergences on certain crucial areas. In fact, there was a series of high level meetings between the Indian and American officials, which included meeting between the Indian Prime Minister Gujral and President Clinton in New York in September 1997\footnote{The Hindu (Madras), 18 October, 1997.} followed by the visit of Assistant Secretary of State, Karl Inderfurth, and thereafter by Under Secretary, Thomas Pickering, as a prelude to the proposed visit by the Secretary of State, Madeline Albright and thereafter by President Clinton in 2000.

It is clear from the above exposition that the economy has proved to be a catalyst for growth and amity in the relations between the two countries. This closeness was mainly the result of the compulsion of an
aid-dependent Indian economy, and therefore there was a reciprocity of interests as both the countries faced economic problems at home and needed each other's help in tiding over these problems. The pragmatism in the realms of economy stemmed from the fact that economics involved a certain amount of practical necessity that could not be easily overruled by opposition politics.

**Summing up**

The foreign policy making in the US and India in respect to each other thus depended to a great extent, on the domestic political and economic pressures within the two countries. These pressures were not new in Indo-US relations. Yet, the end of the Cold War, which in itself had been a result of changing domestic conditions in the erst-while Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in many ways, brought domestic compulsion to the forefront.

The clash between the priorities of the pressure groups that sought to change and correct policies and living conditions and those of the American economy that desperately needed markets abroad for exports resulted in considerable confusion in American foreign policy in the 1990’s.

On the Indian side, the most significant change in the domestic context has been the launching of far-reaching economic reforms which
had its most visible effect on the country's foreign policy. The ideological baggage was conveniently dropped and a new pragmatic approach was initiated with economic and trade matters getting a priority over high politics.

There is a definite linkage between domestic capability and foreign policy. Economic and political capability are two essential pillars for the successful conduct of a country’s foreign policy, as once instability sets in, more effort has to be devoted in overcoming the instability itself and consequently the country has to make concessions in its foreign policy.

In recent times, the discussion on the issue of human rights and its fallout on Indo-US relations shows again that the domestic pressures in the two countries played a significant role in conditioning Indo-American ties. The Clinton administration's emphasis on human rights was a manifestation of changed domestic environment in the US whereby pressure groups involving young Americans devoted to the cause world-wide. While striving to promote human rights abroad, Clinton had to keep his eyes on the 1996 election, when he needed considerable support from young American voters to come back for the second term. The American offensive on India’s alleged violation of human rights through provocative statements had been, to a large extent,
the result of concerted efforts by anti-India and pro-Pakistan lobbies in the US. These lobbies influenced Congressmen, the Press and even academicians to further their cause.

From the Indian point of view, the study reveals that the reaction to American pressure was unduly emotional. In fact, the Indian reaction was so surcharged that the US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, had to came down to India for a series of damage limitation talks.

Human rights apart, the manifestation of domestic concerns, could also be seen in the approach of the two countries towards the twin issue of nuclear non-proliferation and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which proved to be equally irritating, if not more in Indo-US relation in the recent past. The core security concerns of the two countries dictated their respective policies on nuclear non-proliferation and MTCR. The US being the only Superpower in the post Cold-War era wanted to preserve its status global status, while India being an aspiring regional power, wanted to keep its nuclear option open to deter other aspiring powers. It is this vital security concern that built up a solid domestic consensus in the two countries via-a-vis the NPT and MTCR, which no leader could ignore.

From the US side, the US Congress has always had a significant say in the US’s nuclear policy. From India’s perspective, it has been
generally assumed that Parliament plays a minor role in the making of India's foreign policy and consequently India's US policy. However the study shows that the London talks had to be abrogated midway primarily due to Parliament's strong disapproval. In fact, the Parliamentary opposition reached such scale that the Prime Minister himself had to appear before it and clarify his position.

Therefore, it is erroneous, to believe that the Indian Parliament has always been ineffective in the making of the country's foreign policy. As compared to the American Congress, the Indian Parliament may be less effective in the making of foreign policy. This reduced stature comes from the fact that the US follows a system of checks and balances where the Executive and the legislature are clearly separated with specified powers, while in India Parliament plays the role of restraining, reinforcing and compelling the government on matters of public policy. This is especially true both in the context of the human rights and nuclear non-proliferation. The democratic politics in the two countries, therefore, create inherent compulsions which have really shaped the foreign policies of the both the countries.

Political pressures apart, economic pressures also played a key role in determining Indo-US relations. Contrary to political pressures that often aggravated the tensions in Indo-US relations, economic pressures
proved to be a source of convergence between the two countries. As illustrated in this study, the American economic compulsion in the form of a growing fiscal deficit and trade deficit forced the Clinton administration to shift focus from traditional high politics to trade, seeking new markets abroad for American exports. This urge to look for new market share coincided with India’s own liberalization programme that opened the doors to foreign investments and imports.

In the context of Indo-US relations, the economic relationship between the two countries thus seems to be acting as a positive force and foundation for co-operation, in spite of divergent political views and domestic political pressures. On other key issues friendship between the most popular and the most populous democracy will continue to blossom. It is hoped that the see-saw game between the political and economic pressures in Indo-US relations will ultimately lead to the victory of economics and pragmatism over politics and rhetoric’s.