The decade of 1980s marked a distinctive phase in American policy in general and its policy towards South Asia in particular. Ronald Reagan's election as an American President with attendant alteration in foreign and domestic policies in that country as well as global and regional changes such as Iranian revolution, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the consequent beginning of the 'new' Cold War produced significant changes in US policy, especially its policy towards South Asia. It was generally believed that the beginning of the 'second' Cold War generated bitterness in US-India ties because Pakistan, India's principal rival in South Asia, acquired immense significance in American strategic perception as a bulwark against Russian expansion in southwest Asia. This was symbolized by the US decision to supply arms to Pakistan worth US$ 4.2 billion. India understandably resented this American decision as Pakistan had always used in the past its weapons against India.

Ironically though it may appear, seeds of accommodation in US-India relations that blossomed into Indo-US joint military exercises in the 1990s, US support to India during the Kargil conflict and President Clinton's visit in early 2000, were actually sown during the height of the 'second' Cold War in early 1980s. If India realised, on the one hand, the dangers of Russian intervention in Afghanistan, which acted as buffer between India and the former USSR, President Reagan also realised, on the other hand, the dangers of putting all American eggs in South Asia in to the Pakistan basket. The factors that led to this realization on the part of both the countries and other imperatives that brought them closer need closer examination to
comprehend the dynamics of US policy towards India since the Eighties and project the direction of their interactions in the 21st century.

Surprisingly, however, a systematic effort has hardly been made to study factors and forces that produced realism in American policy towards India in the 1980s. A few studies have, of course, focus on US-India relations during the Reagan administration. These studies include, Manuka Khanna, *Indo-US Relations during the Presidency of Ronald Reagan* (New Delhi: Classical Publishing, 1996), Satu P Limaye, *US-Indian Relations* (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), and Nalini Kant Jha, "India and the United States: Pursuit and Limits of Accommodation". *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol 17, no 1 April 1994, pp 89-107. These studies being general in nature, do not however specifically focus on American policy towards India during the Reagan era in the larger context of overall US foreign policy. Some of the studies have also failed to go deeper into dynamics of US-India ties during the Reagan administration. Manuka Khanna, for example, mainly focuses on differences between the two countries. In the process, she ignores the undercurrents of accommodations that distinguished the Reagan era from previous administrations. In fact, the factors and forces that conditioned continuity and changes in US policy towards India during the Reagan administration so far largely remain unexplored in a systematic manner. The present study is a modest attempt to fill this void.

Divided into seven chapters, the first chapter of the dissertation is devoted to an exploration of major factors that shape US policy in general and its policy towards India in particular. The chapter thus
explains US policy towards India in the larger framework of American foreign policy and seeks to identify roots of discord in US-India ties.

Chapter II deals with those global factors that conditioned American policy towards India during the Reagan administration. In this context, the implications of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the politics of the Indian Ocean area, and the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), the 'North'-'South' divide, the West Asian conflicts, African problems, etc. for US policy towards India have been explored.

In the third chapter, US policy towards India has been analysed in the context of regional environment. This chapter, therefore, probes the role of Pakistan, China, etc., in influencing of US policy towards India during the period under review. It has been argued in this chapter that though President Reagan continued to accord priority to Pakistan in the South West Asia, he gradually moved towards accommodating India's regional role and responsibility in other parts of South Asia.

Chapter IV makes an appraisal of the domestic context of US foreign policy in general and its policy towards India during the Reagan administration in particular. The role of American 'public' opinion including Congress in influencing US policy towards India's nuclear policy and the Kashmir dispute has been highlighted.

In the light of the above-mentioned global, regional and domestic milieu, the subsequent chapters examine the specific issues in US-India relations. Chapter V, for instance, examines the issue of nuclear proliferation in US-India relations. Chapter VI deals with defence and economic co-operation between the two countries.
Finally, the nature and tenor of US-India ties during the Reagan administration have been appraised in the last chapter.

The study has been conducted with the help of historical analytical method. Both primary and secondary sources available in Pondicherry University library, American Studies and Research Centre library in Hyderabad, USIS library, Madras, JNU library and Indian Council for World Affairs library at Sapru House in New Delhi have been critically used.

The present study, it is hoped, will generate fresh debate about the causes, manifestations, and limits of US-India co-operation since the Reagan era.