THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The United States is though not an 'Asian Power' like China and the USSR, as yet does not share any territorial borders as any dispute with states of this region, yet its global, economic and geo-political or strategic goals have forced it to usually play a significant role in Asia in general and South Asia in particular. As discussed in previous chapters, two significant factors influenced Washington's policy towards South Asia, namely, containment of Communism and limiting the influence of any regional powers which aspired to play an independent role. While it is debatable whether and to what extend US help to Pakistan was directed against India during the pre-Reagan era, President Reagan was forced to accord the status of frontline state to Pakistan in its strategic perception due to deepening of Cold War or the beginning of a second Cold War. This had inevitable fall outs on US-India relationship. Apart from Pakistan, The United States relations with China and smaller states like Bangladesh, Srilanka and Nepal also influenced US-India relations. Accordingly, we propose to examine US policy towards India during the Reagan era in the context of America's role in the region.

PAKISTAN

Divergences regarding Pakistan have often hampered amicable US-Indian relations. In the 1980s, these differences again assumed,
abeight with some variation from the past, a prominent place in the bilateral dialogue. To an extent US-Indian relations in the period were conducted within the framework of this central dispute. Before examining Pakistan's role in influencing US-Indian ties during the period under review, it is, however, necessary to make a brief account of origin and nature of US-Indian differences over Pakistan.

The Continuing Problem

The conflictual relationship in South Asia itself has conditioned US-India differences over Pakistan. The departure of British forces left a bitter legacy; the hostility between India and Pakistan. The US role in the events leading up to and concluding in the partition was minimal. President Roosevelt issued sympathetic statements on behalf of Indian independence, at which time India meant the entire subcontinent, which was still a British preserve and the US had no desire to actively engage in an area about, which it knew little and cared less. Therefore, in the immediate aftermath of their independence, the US treated India and Pakistan as backwaters of the tattered and tense post-war world.

However, the Indo-Pakistani dispute, which erupted into a small-scale war over Kashmir in 1948, soon brought America into the fray and India and the US to odds. Norman D. Palmer recalled:

India was offended by what it regarded as an unsympathetic, and even hostile, American attitude towards its position on the Kashmir question from the time the question was introduced in the Security Council. It felt that the United States was siding with Pakistan, the aggressor, against India, the victim of aggression. It blamed the
United States for allowing the question to be broadened and thoroughly confused, by transforming into “the India-Pakistan question”. It claimed that the United States was taking a pro-Pakistan and anti-India stand on the issue. India was particularly irritated by what it regarded as selective and biased views of the United States on the plebiscite issue, a highly sensitive and emotion charged issue with the Indians.... The United States is one of the countries that has had reservations about the reality of India's commitment holding the plebiscite.

But US-Indian divergences over Kashmir did not long remain isolated to one issue alone. In the ensuing years, India's repeated criticisms of US preferences for Pakistan and hostility towards India and American denial of the charges, sorely affected overall US-India relations. India's rejection of offers of association with US strategic plan to counter USSR on account of India's non-aligned policy reinforced America's love for Pakistan. The US and Pakistan subsequently entered into a wide ranging security relationship.

India deemed US-Pakistan security ties as threatening to its security. India was only too aware that Pakistan sought extra regional partners for countering India's defence superiority. The US rejected India's complaints arguing that US-Pakistan ties were only intended to provide Pakistan security against the Soviet Union. Given these differences, the margin for accommodation of US-Indian perspective about Pakistan was limited. As America supported Pakistan to contain Soviet Union, China (till 1970) and India, Pakistan cannot be regarded as a cause of Indo-US tension. Rather, it is the most noticeable manifestation of fundamental and broader US-Indian divergences arising from different history, geography, places, perspectives and
priorities in international system and order. This dilemma plagued Indian American relations regarding Pakistan repeatedly.

**Pakistan as a Factor in US-India Relations During the 1980s**

By the end of 1970s and beginning of the 1980s US-Indian differences regarding Pakistan assumed an alarming proportions. The fall of the Shah in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and led to the Carter administration to resurrect security relationship with Pakistan over turning its own policy. The advent of the Reagan administration further accentuated US-Indian differences regarding Pakistan. An examination of its attitudes towards India's two major anxieties, weaponry for Islamabad and its nuclear program, will illustrate how the Pakistan factor influenced US-India ties during the 1980s.

The US and Pakistan announced, in June 1981, an agreement on a six year $3.2 billion military and economic assistance package, which included the sale of 40 F-16 advanced fighter aircraft. India's response was predictable. Mrs.Gandhi complained India faced this tilt for many years and resurrected long-standing Indian arguments against US military assistance to Pakistan. The Reagan administration, however, evinced little sympathy for India's grievances. Said an official, "on background":

I would simply refer to reports which have emanated from one neighbouring capital in the area, without being very precise about it, to the effect that the neighbouring country had signed an arms purchase agreement amounting in value to something like $8 billion over a long-term period. I don't remember what the figure was; I don't remember
what the period was but I would not be inclined to see a $3 billion 5-year American package as necessary being a significant threat in light of Soviet assistance to countries in the area, which could equally be construed as among the pressures which a State Department spokesman spoke of a moment ago. A Pakistan capable of withstanding Soviet pressures is in our national interest emphasis added]. I think if you compare the levels of assistance, which the United States proposes to give to Pakistan, I find it difficult to believe that one can realistically believe that it is US action which is fuelling either an arms race of which is doing anything other than serving patent American interests.

These arguments were not without merit. India had been a greater importer of arms than Pakistan in the preceding decade and though the extent and sophistication of its acquisitions were exaggerated by the administration (the F-16 was, for instance, more advanced than anything India then possessed or was trying to purchase), the Indo-Pakistan military balance was in India's favour and would remain so, albeit diminished, even after the consummation of the US-Pakistani arms deal. Similarly, because of India's arms acquisitions, the administration could legitimately regard its complaints that US policy was spurning a regional arms race and causing detrimental effects on India's economic development with skepticism. Finally, India's rapid response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan left it little credibility when it insinuated that the US alone was contributing to the militarization of the region.

If the Reagan administration correctly identified flaws in some Indian charges, its view that Indian fears were exaggerated missed the point: Any amount of arms provided to Pakistan would raise the ire of India. What made the administration's re-arming of Pakistan unnecessarily provocative and alienating to India, however, was the insensitivity shown to new Delhi regarding
its justification, composition, and the manner in which it was consummated.

An especially troubling insinuation was that Pakistan required military assistance because India's military build-up and its ties with the USSR threatened Pakistani security. This conveyed the impression that US-Pakistani links were designed to protect the latter against a pro-Soviet India. As experienced South Asia observer, Selig Harrison noted in early 1981:

What makes the present crisis far more ominous than any past periods of tension in India-United States relations is that the administration has fundamentally altered the rationale for military assistance to Pakistan. Administration officials do not seek to justify arms aid solely or even primarily in terms of the threat posed by Soviet forces in Afghanistan. They frankly acknowledge that Pakistan wants help mainly to build up its military posture vis-à-vis India, and they have pointedly refused to give public or private assurances to New Delhi that Washington would not permit American arms to be used in an Indian-pakistani conflict. At bottom, the Administration's policy reflects a belief that India has become a virtual Soviet ally.

Contributing to the impression that US-Pakistani ties were partly India-directed was the types of weapons transferred. A US government report noted that the Reagan administration "reversed the earlier policy of taking Indian views into consideration in deciding what kind of weapons to transfer to Pakistan." The most prominent example of this insensitivity involved the F-16s, but just as indicative was the decision to sell Pakistan Harpoon naval missiles and additional naval destroyers, which could have no conceivable use in the mountainous terrain of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The administration made little pretense that the F-16s were being provided for Pakistani security
requirements vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, instead justifying the sale on grounds of Pakistani defence modernization needs and as a symbol of US commitment.  

Aside from implying that US-Pakistani ties were aimed partly at providing the latter with security against Indian pressures, an interpretation given credence by the types of weapons offered, the manner in which the US-Pakistani relationship was consummated also exhibited needless insensitivity to India. The administration refused to provide assurances that the arms supplied to Pakistan were not to be used against India, made no overtures of military support to earn its goodwill and blunt the negative impact of the offers to Pakistan, and engaged in no symbolic gestures of empathy such as the dispatch of a high-ranking presidential representative to discuss emerging US policy (The Carter administration had taken all of these steps to placate Indian sensitivities). The dispatch to the subcontinent of Jeane Kirkpatrick, a US official known for her pro-Pakistani inclinations and anti-Indian ones, did little to soothe tensions. Indeed, her visit was not to India alone but rather to all the South Asian countries; in effect, no special treatment was accorded to India. In essence, the Reagan administration's evolving military relationship with Pakistan exhibited unnecessary insensitivity to Indian concerns.

Regarding India's anxiety about Pakistan's nuclear program, the administration was not only insensitive, but its responses to Indian criticisms were less credible than they had been compared to justifying arms for Pakistan. India complained that a military relationship with Pakistan while that country continued to pursue a covert nuclear weapons capability meant that the
US was essentially rewarding a nuclear proliferator; a proliferator whose program was aimed at it. This was an overstatement and India's objections were self-serving since it had exploded a nuclear device of its own in 1974 and possessed unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. The argument was, however, tactically astute because it was also being used, though not necessarily out of sympathy for India, by opponents of US-Pakistani ties and non-proliferation activists within the United States.

The Reagan administration's justifications for a military relationship with Pakistan despite evidence that it was pursuing a nuclear weapons capability were initially set forth at a press briefing in March 1981:

We remain seriously concerned by the Pakistani [nuclear] program and will continue to make that clear to the Pakistani Government. However, we believe that strengthening Pakistan is necessary as the Soviets continue to occupy Afghanistan, and is very important for creating a framework of regional security in an area vital to our interests. Moreover, the sanctions of the Glenn-Symington amendments have not prevented Pakistan from pursuing its nuclear program. We believe that addressing Pakistan's basic security concerns [emphasis added] and reestablishing a relationship of confidence with it offer the best opportunity in the long run for effectively dealing with its nuclear program.

First, befitting its broader foreign policy ideology, the administration was saying that non-proliferation ought to be subsumed to other compelling national security interests, in this case, responding to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and building a "framework of regional security" in South west Asia. Second, the administration noted that American legislation placing curbs on military and economic assistance had done...
nothing to curtail Pakistan’s search for a nuclear weapons capability. It therefore seemed counter productive, in the administration’s view, to maintain an arms and economic assistance embargo when it did nothing to achieve its goal and harmed American interests in a country threatened by Soviet adventurism and vital to assuring US security interests. Finally, the administration argued that by giving Pakistan the military and economic wherewithal it intended to address its security fears and reduce the motivation to acquire nuclear weapons. While prima facie the arguments had a certain logic, a closer examination of them reveals that for India their implications were negative and that the arguments were themselves unconvincing.

From the perspective of India, the most inimical matter was the administration’s insinuation that Pakistan was justified in pursuing a nuclear explosives capability since India itself had one As Secretary of State Haig said:

It has been my belief, as I said earlier, that we get more by removing the insecurities, which foster the thirst [for nuclear weapons], and I think the insecurities in Pakistan are clear when you look at what has happened to her classic and traditional neighbour’s nuclear capability. It is very important that this extremely complex and vitally important aspect of American policy be dealt with the utmost of sensitivity and that the many contradictions in its be balanced out against the fundamental motivation itself [emphasis added].

In effect, while recognizing that continuing a military relationship with Pakistan despite its nuclear weapons program was “complex” and full of “contradictions”, Secretary Haig rationalized the policy, in his word “balanced”, it, because of
India's demonstrated nuclear capabilities. India was troubled by such suggestions and was justified in being so for two major reasons.

Most importantly, India's nuclear program was far less Pakistan centered than the Reagan administration implied. Administration officials must have known that India's nuclear program was given special impetus by the Chinese test of 1964, coming as it did in the wake of the 1962 Sino-Indian war. As it was, the Reagan administration was contemplating using China in its quest to contain the Soviet Union, partly through trilateral co-operation with Pakistan, and had little inclination to legitimate India's nuclear program against a country potentially useful for its grand strategic designs. This meant that while the administration was implicitly justifying Pakistan's pursuit of a nuclear capability because of India's, it was concurrently exerting pressures on India to refrain from its nuclear activities without appreciation for the totality of Indian motivations. This fact highlighted the fundamentally discriminatory nature of the Reagan administration's approach to nuclear non-proliferation.

As a corollary, the Reagan administration's approach could be criticised because of the double standard being applied vis-à-vis India. At the same time it was essentially rationilizing Pakistani nuclear activities, it was maintaining an uncompromising attitude (at least publicly) on India's right to receive fuel for the Tarapur nuclear reactors in accordance with an agreed schedule and contract. For these reasons, the Reagan administration's policy vis-à-vis Pakistan's nuclear program was inimical to amicable US-Indian relations.
From India's perspective, criticism of the Reagan administration attitude towards Pakistan's nuclear program offered the best chance to curtail US-Pakistani ties because of the support for the nuclear non-proliferation issue in the US Congress. Indian arguments were also, in contrast to its complaints about arming Pakistan, far more credible and justifiable. Ultimately, the Reagan administration's attitude towards Pakistan as an irritant in US-Indian relations.

As if the Reagan administration's stands on weapons for Islamabad and the latter's nuclear program did not accentuate Indian and American differences vis-à-vis Pakistan enough, the entire context in which these disputes took place did. The new relationship with Pakistan was forged in the crucible of acute US-Indian animosity on a host of bilateral, international and regional issues, including the administration's plans to ameliorate ties with the PRC and expand its presence in the Indian Ocean.

That the Reagan administration exhibited insensitivity to India regarding Pakistan, there is no doubt. But it still begs the question: why? The single most important, and basic, reason was the administration's global, rigid, and security-focused approach to foreign policy. For the Reagan administration, relations with the Third World were to be shaped by a country's ability and willingness to assist in the achievement of its fundamental strategic objective, namely, the containment, even "roll-back", of the Soviet Union. Other concerns (promoting human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, and democratic governments) were to be subsumed to this over-riding
aim. It was in this East-West vein that relations with Pakistan were viewed. As Secretary of State Haig put it:

Well, I don't think there is any question but that the Reagan administration has made it clear and has reiterated sometimes with a clarity that disturbs some, that we are not going to condone illegal interventions worldwide, wherever they [sic] occur, and that we are seeking in the context of East-West relations to establish by not only words but actions the necessity of creating an East-west relationship which is characterized by reciprocity and restraint and that objective is the underpinning of American foreign policy at large. These discussions with our Indian visitors and with our guest from Pakistan today are manifestations of that overall new approach which we intend to proceed [sic]²¹

In this overall approach, security ties with Pakistan were one dimension of a broad response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the fall of the Shah in Iran and the general instability of the Southwest Asian region. They were intended to provide Pakistan the means to defend its territorial integrity from direct or Soviet-sponsored pressures, increase America's force projection capabilities in the region, facilitate the transfer of arms to the Afghan Mujahedeen and convey to Moscow that further expansion southward would meet American resistance. Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance Buckley declared that the US was "seeking nothing more nor less than to help restore stability to Southwest Asia and to protect [its] interests in the Persian Gulf in part by enhancing our ability to project our military power in the region; but most particularly, by helping the indigenous nations defend their own interests²². And, continued Buckley, "Pakistan is a test case of this approach to regional security". This comment revealed the administration's lack of sensitivity to the holistic realities and subtleties of the region. While correct in recognizing the need for a
response to the tumult there, by fixating on the Soviet and Southwest Asian facets it ignored other nuances of the regional security scenario notably Indian concerns. Given the East-West dependent interpretation of the regional problem and the appropriate response, it appeared that "[n]o amount of advocacy.... On behalf of a 'South Asia policy' which would have as its object accommodation of what many in Washington consider[ed] India's pretensions" [would] avail with the... administration²². Indeed, it was evident early that the administration did not even approach the region with any sort of South Asia or India focus. As President Carter's South Asia advisor on the National Security Council noted:

There were no flourishes for India as the Reagan administration took over in January 1981. The new ambassador was a low-key appointment—a competent career professional with solid experience in the Subcontinent; the National Security Council (NSC) staff was innocent of any specialised knowledge of India or of South Asia in general²³.

In effect, the administration's foreign policy provided little place for considerations not deemed helpful to the grand strategic design of containing the Soviet Union. And India was, initially, such a non-useful consideration.

That India was so regarded is the second factor which explains Reagan administration's insensitivity. India's tepid response to the Soviet Union's action in Afghanistan, close economic and military ties to that country and its shrill criticisms of a host of US policies led the administration to believe that India was, if not a Soviet puppet, then at least a fellow traveler.
This perception effectively limited any interest in taking into account Indian concerns.

Aside from negative perceptions about India, the administration hesitated to show too much concern for Indian sensitivities because it did not want to do anything that would be interpreted by Pakistan as American hesitations about a renewed security relationship. Reagan administration officials no doubt recalled that one of the main reasons that Islamabad had dismissed the Carter administration's aid offer as "Peanuts" was because it perceived excessive sensitivity to Indian concerns in making the offer. Moreover, the administration realized that "in light of its historical experience with US assistance and assurances, Pakistan needed to be impressed by the sincerity and desirability of the new US offer." Thus, the Reagan administration counter-compensated for Pakistani suspicions by showing an exaggerated, though for the Indians very real, insensitivity to India.

Finally, little sensitivity was shown to India because the Reagan administration believed little could be done to assuage India's anxieties about US-Pakistani relations. For example, one of the reasons that the administration did not provide assurances to India that arms supplied to Pakistan were not be used against it was because officials did not expect India would find these assurances credible. And, India's initially exaggerated and strident response to the emerging US-Pakistani relationship prompted little sympathy in the new Washington. Said one US official:

Remember, to those who were concerned about US-Indian relations and wanted them improved, the very shrill Indian reaction to the F-16s in particular and US-Pakistani
relations in general was very harmful. Opponents of India within the US government and those who were indifferent, argued that India was a hopeless case. It would object to anything we did and it was therefore not worth paying much attention to it. 

India squandered what little sympathy it possessed by its bumbling response to the Afghanistan issue. India did not alter its position as the decade unfolded, but it is important to account for mood and movement. The start of the decade was a tense time and India's swift, unambiguous criticisms of American actions and statements contrasted sharply with the slow, equivocal nature of its pronouncements against Soviet ones. This should not be disregarded as an important influence on initial administration insensitivity to India.

Given the Reagan administration's insensitivity to India regarding Pakistan and the reasons that underlay it, the prospects of mitigating differences appeared slight. However, over the next decade a limited, mutual accommodation occurred. Why did this happen? What was the nature of this accommodation? What were its limits.

Manifestations and Motivations of Accommodation

Mutual accommodation of US-Indian differences regarding Pakistan during the 1980s was minimal. In 1987, the Reagan administration pressed ahead with another six-year allotment of military/economic assistance for Islamabad worth $4.02 billion:

Certain features of the new program were noteworthy. First, unlike the 1981-1986 package, the military component was smaller
than the economic one. Second, in real terms, the annual Foreign Military Sales (FMS) portion was less than the 1981-1986 amounts. Third, however, the higher concessionality of the package meant that the reduced military dimension was somewhat misleading. Still, it is true that the 1987-1993 security assistance package was smaller than the 1981-1986 one and considerably less than what Pakistan had been seeking. No accommodation of India should be seen in this outcome. US budgetary constraints mainly accounted for the slightly reduced value of the package. Overall, the new program was designed according to Pakistani specifications and needs.

The administration continued to cite the Soviet presence in Afghanistan as justification for the military relationship, and its actions continued to belie this claim. Little effort was made, for instance, to assuage Indian complaints that the weapons offered Pakistan were unsuitable for the Afghan situation and far in excess of Pakistani defensive requirements. And the US persisted in acting as patron of Pakistan's defence modernization under the guise of protecting it from Soviet or Soviet-sponsored aggression.

Despite the few cautionary notes sounded on US commitment to Pakistan's defence modernization, a hefty chasm existed between stated US-Pakistani rationale for military ties and their actual nature. A Congressional report conceded that "Pakistan's arms acquisitions appear to be determined by its own perceived requirements rather than any joint US-Pakistani defence co-operation objectives..." And Pakistan's own perceived requirements were clearly more oriented towards India than
containment of the Soviet Union. And it was this aspect of administration policy, not the provision of some arms to Pakistan for its legitimate defence needs, which was the crux of Indian criticism.

The sole instance where Indian sensitivities on the weapons issue may have been accommodated involved the provision of E-3A airborne early warning aircraft to Pakistan. Islamabad had sought these from the US since the mid-1980s, ultimately without success. One should not exaggerate the impact of Indian opposition on the final decision however. An American official has gone so far as to say that the “Indians [were] welcome to their delusions” about the relevance of their complaints on the administration’s decision not to provide this particular weapons system. Indeed, a host of considerations far more crucial than Indian concerns, including cost, suitability, Pakistan’s nuclear activities, the death of Zia and the election of a new government is Islamabad, the imminent withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and US Congressional reluctance (perhaps partly influenced by the Israeli lobby), were responsible for the Reagan administration’s decision. Nevertheless, India’s response to the decision, discussed below, speaks volumes about how it handled differences with the US over Pakistan in the latter half of the decade.

Perhaps the only broad accommodation of India regarding US weaponry for Pakistan was a willingness later in the decade to inform New Delhi about specific sales. This in itself represented a change from early Reagan administration policy. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs
Howard Schaffer has confirmed this while noting the limits of this accommodation not only on the part of the US but also India:

Later in the decade we were more prepared to give the Indians as much advanced word as possible, given constraints about notifying Congress, about arms transfers to Pakistan. The problem was that we knew the Indians would complain anyway. In effect, there was no substantive alternation in the Reagan administration’s approach to providing arms for Islamabad and therefore little accommodation of India.

Similarly, the Reagan administration exhibited little sensitivity to Indian concerns about Pakistan’s nuclear program. Despite numerous, unambiguous indications throughout the decade that Pakistan had not ceased its efforts to covertly acquire a nuclear explosive capability, the Reagan administration emphasized that Pakistan had not actually developed an explosive device, reiterated arguments that US arms assistance was necessary to forestall its incentive to do so, rejected Congressional initiatives to tighten existing regulations linking US support for that country to restraint on its nuclear activities and refused to make specific US [weapons] sales contingent on Pakistan’s nuclear behaviour. Contrary to Indian accusations, however, the Reagan administration’s reluctance to publicly berate Pakistan’s nuclear activities did not mean that it was pleased about them. As already noted, for the administration, the difficult choice of balancing foreign policy considerations such as democracy, non-proliferation and human rights with security / strategic considerations where the Soviet Union was involved, usually resulted in a “tilt” towards the latter. And it was precisely
this dilemma which the administration predictably handled in the case of Pakistan, and specifically its nuclear program. This approach did little to alleviate Indian concerns. However, New Delhi’s perception that Washington lacked concern for Pakistan’s proliferation potential was an exaggeration.

Indeed, there were indications that Washington was not completely ignoring Pakistani nuclear activities. In late 1984 President Reagan sent a letter to General Zia warning him of the possibility of an arms cut-off if Pakistan developed a nuclear weapons capability\(^3\). And in August 1985 Washington refused to sell Islamabad a special camera because of fears that it would be diverted to nuclear uses\(^4\). Such US actions should not, however, be viewed as accommodation of India per se. More likely, the administration was responding to persistent Congressional criticisms that it was not doing enough to halt Pakistan’s march towards acquisition of nuclear weapons in order to prevent complications in the provision of arms to that country. In other words, what little censure the administration undertook regarding Pakistan’s nuclear program had more to do with sustaining the US-Pakistani security relationship than with soothing Indian sensitivities. Still, the administration’s growing willingness to speak out negatively, or at least ambiguously, about the Pakistani nuclear program marked a departure from previous insinuations that Pakistan was justified in its pursuit of nuclear weapons due to India’s advances in this area. This was recognized and appreciated by New Delhi.\(^3\)

Rather than exert direct pressure upon Pakistan to curtail its nuclear program, the Reagan administration adopted
a regional approach which allowed it to pursue certain mutually supportive objectives. First, it permitted the US to seek constraints on Pakistan's nuclear activities without seeming to single it out. This was in keeping with the administration's consistent refusal to do anything that might significantly alienate Pakistan. Second, a regional nuclear accord was seen as a prime means of building subcontinental amicability. Third, most crucially, regional confidence-building measures were deemed to be the most effective means of halting nuclear proliferation and preventing precipitous acts by either side such as preemptive attacks on each other's nuclear facilities.

One American analyst suggested that this approach was also an accommodative gesture towards India:

Recent US policy has stressed the need for Pakistan and India to reach a bilateral or regional accord not to produce nuclear weapons. This position implicitly responded to New Delhi's efforts to make the United States responsible for Pakistan's nuclear activities on account of its renewed economic and military assistance program.

This reasoning is difficult to accept. In fact, it appears that the Reagan administration was shirking its responsibility for Pakistan's nuclear program by placing the onus on India for providing Islamabad incentives to cease its activities. Moreover, pressing for a regional accord, whatever precise form it took, seemed to be an acceptance of Pakistan's version of how to stem nuclear proliferation in the Subcontinent. India had consistently rejected Pakistani proposals for a South Asian nuclear-weapons-free zone, joint adherence to the NPT or international inspections of nuclear facilities not only on grounds that this was detrimental to Indian security (as in a
subcontinental nuclear-weapons-free zone that excluded China), but also because these measures were seen as discriminatory and designed to uphold what India viewed as an unjust facet of international order⁴⁰.

Finally, US pressures for a regional nuclear accord seemed to India to suggest that Washington equated Indian and Pakistani nuclear programs. As already noted, there were significant differences in the motivations and nature of the two programs which made US suggestions that they should be curtailed or treated similarly insulting to New Delhi. For these reasons it is misleading to regard the Reagan administration's evolving regional approach to nuclear proliferation as an accommodation of India.

Ultimately, then, the Reagan administration's attempt to prevent nuclear proliferation in the subcontinent by mediating an Indo-Pakistani accord, while partially successful⁴¹, was not really accommodation of India at all because it did not, could not, address broader and fundamental Indian perceptions about nuclear non-proliferation. In essence, as on military supplies to Pakistan, the Reagan administration did little to address Indian sensitivities and concerns about Islamabad's nuclear program.

If the Reagan administration was unwilling to alter, in any substantive or direct way, relations with Pakistan in a manner accommodating India, it also soon became apparent that the administration was unwilling to "write-off" India altogether. This in itself-represented a shift from initial indications given by the Reagan administration. Instead, it adopted an approach
whereby constructive ties with India were to be pursued in the framework of continuing differences over Pakistan. Particularly, efforts were made to shift the substance of US-Indian relations away from international and regional differences (of which Pakistan was the most tangible and serious expression) to mitigating outstanding bilateral disputes and building areas of co-operation such as trade, investment, science, technology transfer and defence. It was this approach which could be characterized as the Reagan administration's accommodation of India on the Pakistan irritant in bilateral relations. There was, however, nothing altruistic or unqualified even about this very limited (as far as the issue of Pakistan itself went) accommodation.

There is a semblance of exaggeration and incompleteness surrounding interpretations of this approach. A US Senator, in an overstatement, wrote in 1984 that "[i]t is my understanding that the Reagan administration is on the verge of establishing a balanced American relationship with India and Pakistan for the first time in many years." Leaving aside definitions of balance and its manifestations, one must be puzzled about how that policy could be satisfying to India whose size, population, resources and claim to democracy has made it a consistent critic of any attempt to equate it, in whatever terms, with its neighbour. But ignoring that India would find a balanced US policy in the subcontinent to be anything but accommodation of its sensitivities and interest, the Reagan administration did little in this vein.
A more insightful view is that offered by scholar Maya Chadda. She wrote in 1986:

An examination of Washington's South Asia policy over the past six years suggests that the administration had indeed settled on a two-track policy for the region improving its non-strategic ties in the framework of regional balance and maintaining intact its strategic ties with Pakistan in the context of its larger military objectives.

There is some validity in this assessment though it suffers from oversimplification; especially in its sharp distinction between non-strategic and strategic policy. In fact, the Reagan administration’s emerging policy towards India was rooted in its fundamental strategic / foreign policy / security aim: the countering or containment of the Soviet Union. This was visible at several levels and in many ways.

Professor Chadda’s “two-track” approach characterization is itself overstated. In fact, Reagan administration policy was more akin to a “one and a half track” approach. That is, while the improvement of ties with India were partly designed to overcome the liabilities imposed on US-Indian relations by US-Pakistani links, what may be called damage limitation, it was also predicated on buttressing the administration’s unwavering, though admittedly more sophisticated, Soviet-oriented approach towards foreign policy and specifically as it related to the subcontinent. More precisely, the dominant one-tract facet was predicated on buttressing the strategic aspect of administration policy while the subservient half-track aspect was meant to address the liabilities in US-Indian relations created by US-Pakistani ties.
At the broadest level, the effort to improve ties with India was seen as potentially beneficial to countering Soviet influence. Since India was an especially close Soviet economic, political and military partner this was particularly attractive. The administration's appraisal that it was worth pursuing this tactic was a function of several factors. Most importantly, it derived from a perceptual re-appraisal of India's foreign policy and relations with Moscow that in turn rested on subtly changing Indian statements and actions. India's willingness to more explicitly and publicly criticize the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, its indications that it wanted to be perceived as less-Soviet leaning, as well as its economic modernization / liberalization and defence diversification efforts led the administration to believe that India could be a source of containment of the Soviet Union. Of course, containing the soviets via India differed appreciably (it was more limited, indirect and long-term) from containment via Pakistan or other US security allies. Indeed, it went by another description; "weaning" India away from its close ties with Moscow by ameliorating US-Indian ties in economic, scientific, technology and defence spheres.

More specifically vis-a-vis the subcontinent, the improvement in ties with India were predicated on shoring up the administration's basic policy of containing the Soviet Union via military ties with Pakistan. Improved ties with India were aimed at buttressing regional amicability. For every post-war US administration has, to a greater or lesser extent, eventually understood that subcontinental détente ultimately offers the best guarantee of minimizing Soviet influence in the area. In its initial rush to consolidate ties with Islamabad, the administration gave indications that it either did not realise this or did not care; an attitude made considerably easier to justify given India's
early hostile responses to US policy. But as the administration began to take a new look, considerably motivated by India's new signals, it adopted conventional American approaches to the subcontinent.

Specifically, according to a Congressional document, the Reagan administration sought "to reduce India-Pakistan tension by enhancing US-India ties, an objective that partly lay behind a recently negotiated US-Indian agreement on technology transfer". This observation skirts, however, the connection between improved US-Indian relations and improved Indo-Pakistani ones. It may be an exaggeration to regard this approach as pressure on or bribe of India to improve its relations with Pakistan, but it is likely that the US felt that improving its ties with India would give it greater influence, even leverage, on New Delhi's dealings with its regional rival and would diminish the negative centrality of divergences over Pakistan in bilateral relations. In part, of course, the administration thought this could be done because India had itself shown that it wanted a stable Pakistan. Washington realized that while New Delhi could not view its arms assistance to Pakistan with equanimity, it wanted stability in Pakistan for fear that further Soviet pressures in the region would challenge its regional primacy. As a Congressional report noted:

Meanwhile. India seems to share the US interest in Pakistan's survival as an independent country, and in preventing a Soviet dominated sub continent. It is unlikely that India would wish to see the collapse of Pakistan if this meant the further intrusion of Soviet forces in the region. Furthermore, the uneven and fitful amicability in Indo-Pakistani relations was something the administration was clearly anxious to sustain because it made efforts to keep ties with Pakistan intact while improving them with India possible. As Maya Chadda pointed out:
Although US strategy in South and Southwest Asia was not predicated on amicable Indo-Pakistani relations, for the administration the new mood in the subcontinent was a welcome development.

Though Indo-Pakistani relations in the decade comprised what one analyst has described as "hot and cold diplomacy", Washington's qualms about India were in some sense mitigated by the latter's unwillingness to take precipitate actions against Islamabad. The Reagan administration began to realize that it could possibly provide New Delhi with some incentives to sustain this tact, and that keeping Indo-Pakistani ties on an even keel could contribute to the Reagan administration's basic aim of shoring up the region from Soviet pressures.

Aside from using improved relations with India to improve Indo-Pakistani relations and thus buttress its anti-Soviet approach to the subcontinent, another motive for the administration to seek improved ties with New Delhi was doubts about Pakistan itself. The US was in no sense seeking to diminish the importance of Pakistan in its approach to regional security, but it became obvious as the decade wore on that the administration was seeking to "hedge its bets" and unwilling, as one pentagon official put it, "to place all its eggs in one basket". While the Reagan administration initially approached its relations with Pakistan with a single-mindedness that excluded sensitivity to India, having consolidated the relationship it set about coming to terms with its limits. Each country had national interests which it was trying to serve by engaging in a security relationship. Pakistan was undoubtedly troubled by the presence of Soviet soldiers on its northwestern borders but its more compelling interest in a renewed military relationship with the US was to
modernize its armed services against India. The Reagan administration, meanwhile saw a security relationship with Pakistan as useful for fulfilling its own strategic and security agenda. But while it made sense, for both countries, to increase co-operation after the fall of the Shah, soviet invasion of Afghanistan and outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, there were also signs of and reasons for trepidation.

The specific factors that accounted for Reagan administration hesitations about Pakistan were less ideological than pragmatic and rarely articulated publicly. But, it must have seemed risky to count on Pakistan without any hesitation since its military government was potentially unstable. Moreover, for all the Reagan administration's efforts to cement US-Pakistani security ties despite Islamabad's nuclear program, the prospect that it might actually make a bomb was not a little unsettling. Thus, for its own reasons bearing on Pakistan directly, the Reagan administration had doubts about a US-Pakistan relationship. An additional reason for the administration's modification of its largely Pakistan-based policy towards the subcontinent was Islamabad's own determination to maintain some distance between itself and Washington.

Pakistan was far less reticent than the US about expressing its qualms publicly. President Zia-ul-Haq made it clear that while he was willing to enter into a security relationship with the US, this should not be construed to suggest that Islamabad was closing off other foreign policy options and links. Specifically, Zia stated publicly that no US bases would be allowed in Pakistan, that Pakistan would retain its membership in the organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and expressed opposition to the administration's plans for a "strategic consensus" and Rapid
Deployment Force (RDF) in the Persian Gulf. More directly relevant to formal US-Pakistani ties, Islamabad went out of its way to explain that its new relationship with Washington was an aid-cum-sales military relationship and no more. In effect, despite Pakistan's overtures for a durable and credible security relationship with the US, something which it largely got, it remained cautious about the nature and extent of its ties to the US and avoided involvement in and identification with all of its policies.

Several reasons and experiences underlay Pakistan's efforts to maintain a semblance of distance from Washington. First, Islamabad, fearful of Soviet proximity to its territory, was not willing to alienate Moscow entirely. Zia's comment to the Carter administration in 1980 remained as relevant one year later. Then, he had said: "You cannot live in the sea and excite the enmity of whales." While this comment has mostly been interpreted to explain Zia's refusal to accept the Carter administration's aid offer of 1980 for fear of entirely alienating the Soviet Union, it is also possible that Zia did not want to completely alienate the Indians. Unwillingness to close lines of communication with Moscow was not predicated solely on the reasonable appreciation that Moscow was a large and powerful neighbour (even had the Soviets not been in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the USSR would remain separated by only 12 miles capable of stirring up existing separatist tendencies within Pakistan should its relationship with the Soviet Union spiral downwards into conflict. This was not an unreasonable position to take from Pakistan's perspective. History had taught Islamabad that America's commitment to its interests and concerns was questionable. It could, for example, point to the US failure to prevent the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 and the US military assistance to India following the Chinese incursion on to
Indian territory in 1962 as instances where Pakistan's willingness to assist the US (by serving as an intermediary for Sino-American rapprochement in 1971 and being the "most allied ally" of the US in Asia until the mid-1960s) was not rewarded. Aside from wishing to retain lines of communication with the Kremlin, avoiding the excessive wrath of India, and viewing US support with skepticism, the Pakistani military government had important ideological / religious interests in maintaining cordial ties with the non-aligned Third World and Islamic community.

Besides Zia may have hesitated about too close of ties with the US due to domestic considerations. And this likely contributed to Washington's evolving realization that a parallel improvement in ties with India would be in the national interest because it could contribute to a broader-based regional approach to Soviet pressures. Moreover, one wonders whether the US sought to convey certain messages to Pakistan by improving US-Indian ties. Specifically, Washington may have wished to serve notice to Pakistan that the US did have other options in the region, and that therefore restraint regarding its nuclear program and relations with India would be prudent.

Finally, the Reagan administration was simultaneously developing, albeit in embryonic form, a conception of strategic co-operation with India based on the long-view. An off-shoot of this objective, besides defence co-operation with India, was the growing willingness of the US to acknowledge Delhi's pre-dominant position in the Indian Ocean region. As US Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger proclaimed during his 1986 visit:
India is an enormously important country and one of the major dominant states in the whole region. So, as such, it is hoped generally that India will assist, as I think they are trying to do, in moderating various tensions in that area.

Similar statements by other high-ranking administration officials were given additional credence by US reactions to Indian actions in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. One should not take US support for Indian actions in the region too far however. As a practical point, the Sri Lanka and Maldives matters were hardly ones that the US could have done much about had it wanted to. And, there were undoubtedly limits as to how far the administration was willing to go in acquiescing to Indian management of regional affairs. Finally, even this accommodation was related to administration hopes that recognizing Indian regional primary would make it more amenable to keeping the Soviets in check in the Indian Ocean and reducing New Delhi's criticisms of US presence there. Whatever its limits, both in manifestation and motives, this should not detract from the fact that the recognition accorded to India was a departure from previous inclinations of the administration and went some way in mitigating Indian apprehensions that the US-Pakistani military relationship was designed to contain Indian power and alter the subcontinent's military balance.

Garnering Indian support for long-term and non-direct countering of Soviet influence, promoting subcontinental détente by improving US-Indian ties, which was meant to bolster the first objective, and incrementally building Indian appreciation for long-term US security interests in the region were three major Reagan administration policy goals. It also seems plausible that the US hoped enhanced economic, scientific, technology and defence relations with India would give it greater leverage over India’s nuclear program and success in...
achieving a regional non-proliferation accord. It might be overstating the case to suggest that this was intended as a quid pro quo approach but, in a parallel with administration arguments that arms for Pakistan would keep it from acquiring nuclear weapons, a similar concept may have been applicable to India.

In other words, the amelioration of ties with New Delhi were not isolated from the larger Reagan administration objective of stemming nuclear proliferation in the region and curtailing India's unsafe guarded program specifically.

These qualifications about the Reagan administration's approach to India in the context of differences regarding Pakistan provide a better appreciation of the real nature of its accommodation: both the pursuit and limits. In essence, despite the fact that the Reagan administration did not abandon its security-focused approach to Pakistan, an approach that by its very nature excluded significant accommodation of India, it made clear as the decade unfolded that the US sought agreement to disagree with India over Pakistan and move to areas of possible co-operation. And this trend was itself limited in that it was not motivated by altruism but part and parcel of the Reagan administration's other concerns and objectives. In effect, the Reagan administration's motivations for improved relations with India were not so much a departure from its initial approach to the subcontinent as a refinement of it. The goal of Soviet containment was still very much at its center. Nevertheless, the refinement in its approach opened a place for India in the Reagan administration's foreign policy and paved the way for constructive, even cordial ties between Washington and New Delhi. In fact, Washington's evolving approach as to how to handle the Pakistan issue in its relations with
India represented changes in the very reasons it had exhibited insensitivity in the first place. This became clear with India's own altering attitudes about US-Pakistani relations and their place in US-Indian ones. If the Reagan administration had earlier left that nothing it could do would appease India and therefore nothing was worth doing, it soon became evident that India, too was willing to improve relations with the US in the framework of differences over Pakistan.

Just as the Reagan administration was unwilling to accommodate, in any direct or substantive way, India's concerns about the provision of US weaponry to Islamabad or the latter's nuclear program so too India did not fundamentally alter its criticisms of US policy on these two matters. However, India did subtly change both the tone and substance of its comments. It is difficult to measure such changes in tangible terms, but India's initially strident denunciations of US policy did give way to more constrained criticisms. And Ambassador Barnes put it, "[t]here was a noticeable lowering of tone and stridency in Indian statements. Criticisms were made more in sorrow than anger."

Even more important were the changes in the substance of Indian positions. Though never approving Washington's policy of providing weapons to Pakistan, India took a number of steps to downplay differences on that issue. An initial indication of New Delhi's flexibility came during the Reagan-Gandhi tete-a-tete at Cancun in October 1981. Reportedly, "[c]ontrary to what had been expected, Mrs. Gandhi did not raise the issue of the sale of F16s [sic] to Pakistan.... And seemed reconciled to Washington exercising its right to choose its own allies and to arm them. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi did raise the issue..."
with President Reagan at Cancun though, as a senior administration official informed the press, "[n]o she did not raise the issue in what I would call a very hard-pressed way"57. Prior to Mrs. Gandhi's departure for Washington came another indication of India's revised attitude on US-Pakistani relations. Until then, in fact as late as August 1981 when US Ambassador to the United Nations Jeanne Kirkpatrick and visited India, Mrs. Gandhi had consistently rejected the US argument that its ties to Pakistan should in no way damage US-Indian relations. In essence, India rejected the notion, pressed by the US, that relations in the region need not be a zero sum game. During a pre visit interview she altered her stance substantially, saying "[w]e don't want the US to give up its friendship with Pakistan. But we don't see why that should affect its attitude toward us"58. By admitting that there could be amicable US-Indian relations despite continuing US-Pakistani military links, New Delhi was creating an opening for circumventing it not eradicating its differences with the US regarding Pakistan. Since some of the initial insensitivity of the Reagan administration derived from resentment at India's shrill criticisms of US policy, the US was encouraged by the new tone and responded positively. Reporting to the Asian and Pacific Affairs subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee following a 1982 visit to the subcontinent, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Schneider stated: "In India there was continued disagreement regarding our relationship with Pakistan but I found, nonetheless, a desire for better communications and friendly cooperative relations"59.

It is also noteworthy that by mid-1982 India was no longer demanding that there be no further weapons sales to Pakistan. As The Hindu reported in August 1982: Asked whether there was an
assurance from the US President. Mr. Ronald Reagan, that there would be no further arms aid to Pakistan. [Mrs. Gandhi] said she did not seek any such assurance.

Nor did India press for assurances that the arms provided to Pakistan would not be used against India though Mrs. Gandhi had earlier explicitly complained about this aspect of US policy. India also appears to have let both Washington and Islamabad know that it no longer objected to the transfer of weapons to Pakistan in principle, though it continued to object to the quantity, quality and type of weapons supplied. According to the Far Eastern Economic Review:

> Having initially opposed the US arms sales to Pakistan, India later softened its stand. During his trip to Pakistan last year Rao acknowledged Pakistan's right to modernize its defence capability - an implicit acceptance of the US arms sales.

In effect, through a number of subtle diplomatic messages, India attempted to mitigate, downplay and circumvent its differences with the US regarding Pakistan.

Under Rajiv Gandhi this tact was sustained, even in some senses strengthened. On the nuclear issue, for example, Rajiv changed his opinion about US efforts to prevent Pakistani acquisition of a bomb. As late as 1985, just before his visit to Washington, Rajiv Gandhi complained about the US "soft-line" on Pakistan’s nuclear program. But following meetings with US officials he changed his tune, saying that he was convinced that the US would do everything possible to curtail Pakistani nuclear activities. On what basis the Prime Minister made this statement it is difficult to say without access to the still classified notes taken at the meeting. What is curious is that there is no public record of the Reagan administration having taken any
action vis-à-vis Pakistan’s nuclear program that might have led the prime minister to express confidence in US policy. One may conjecture that Rajiv’s changed tune was merely a public iteration of what New Delhi must have known but had previously been unwilling to say: That the US was worried about Pakistan’s proliferation potential. Another possibility is that Rajiv, like his mother, chose to accentuate the positive rather than the negative about relations with the US on the Pakistan score. As an Indian publication reported:

...[E]ven on the Pakistan issue, Rajiv chose a different tack. Instead of telling the Americans—as all Indian delegations have in the past—that India lived in fear of being attacked by her American-armed neighbour, Rajiv emphasized that India had no fear of Pakistan and could deal effectively with that country in any military situation, but what he opposed was runaway American arms aid to Pakistan because it diverted India’s precious resources away from economic development into an arms race.

Though this interpretation is overstated, for India had made such arguments before, it is true that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi did not over-dramatize the arms-for-Pakistan issue. Here again was visible the nature of India’s accommodative approach. It did not drop opposition to US military assistance to Pakistan, but objections were made known in a way that skirted shrill denunciations and direct attacks upon the US.

India’s handling of its differences with the US over Pakistan were perhaps most manifest in an editorial piece in the official publication of the Indian External Affairs Ministry, Indian and Foreign Review. It is worth quoting in full:

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s three-day visit to the United States, on his way back from the Commonwealth Summit last month paved the way for Washington taking a close
Prime Minister Gandhi put it succinctly when he announced at his press conference after his meeting with President Roland Reagan that he could notice "a shift in US policy". The "shift" obviously related to Washington's growing realization as to "how close Pakistan is to making nuclear weapons". India had been continuously warning Washington of the danger of Pakistan actually manufacturing nuclear weapons, and had been telling the US administration that a cut in the flow of aid to Pakistan will turn out to be a deterrent to the latter's nuclear ambitions. But the US has maintained the position that a termination or reduction in aid to Pakistan will push it to the wall, leaving no alternative for Islamabad regime to going nuclear.

It is true that there was no immediate American response to the Indian Prime Minister's strong pleading for a halt to the proposed US4.02 billion dollar new military-cum-economic aid package to Pakistan. During a brief public appearance with Rajiv Gandhi on the lawns of the White House, President Ronald Reagan merely mentioned: "On the subject of US security assistance to Pakistan, I assured Mr. Gandhi that our objective is stability and reduced tensions in South Asia and that our assistance is not directed at India". But the full impact of the Indian leader's reasoned appeal, not only to the US President but also a wide swathe of opinion-makers, was felt a few days later when the US administration decided not to supply to Pakistan the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) - the radar planes which Pakistan had been seeking for the past three years, and which would have seriously jeopardized India's own air defence systems. While Pakistan sought top-of-the-line Boeing E3A Sentry AEW aircraft, there were indications that the US could only provide it with less sophisticated E 3C hawkeyes... It can be said in all fairness that Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the United states marked a beginning, however hesitant,
in Washington's reassessment of the "tilt" in favor of Pakistan to which Nixon had confessed.

Several aspects of this statement are interesting. The fact that it was in an Indian government publication is itself significant because it presumably reflected official opinion. More important was the substance of the remarks. It was not saying much to say that the Reagan administration realized the continuing nuclear activities of Pakistan. That it was said at all merely highlights India's attempt to accentuate the positive over what was clearly still sore point in relations.

Similarly, the reference about the non-sale of the AWACS requested by Pakistan is instructive about New Delhi's handling of the issue. It could not have been unaware that its objections played only a minor role in the US decision. South Block had never lacked a watchful eye about the details of weapons supplies to Islamabad. Again, it appears that the emphasis was on damage limitation by tone. Indeed, if the statement is examined closely it seems that India simply did not bother to respond negatively to President Reagan's reiteration that arms for Pakistan were "not directed at India". If even appeared to accept with equanimity the prospect that some sort of airborne warning system would be sold to Pakistan. As one journalist described India's approach:

The events of January [1988] perhaps best illustrate the new maturity in the relationship. The US decision last December to waive its nuclear non-proliferation laws and provide US $480 million in economic and military aid to Pakistan seemed to have brought Indo-US ties to a new low... But by late January the two sides were talking business as if nothing untoward had happened.
Basically, India adopted its own bifurcated approach vis-à-vis the Pakistan issue. On the one hand, it continued to criticize US-Pakistani relations (no doubt partly to fulfill domestic obligations), though even here there was a distinct decline in the shrillness of Indian criticisms and a less pronounced change in their substance. On the other, India began to indicate that the Pakistan issue need not inhibit US-Indian co-operation in other areas. The most concise official statement of India's tactic came from its ambassador in Washington P.K. Kaul: "Pakistan will always remain a problem, but instead of making it the key determinant one should make it one of fifty items".

India's motives for adopting this tact vis-a-vis the Pakistan irritant were, like the US's, not altruistic. India also presumably felt that by reducing the shrillness of its criticisms, it would have a greater chance of influencing US policy towards its neighbour. That this influence would be severely limited appears to have been accepted as something New Delhi would have to live with. More importantly, New Delhi seems to have weighed its national priorities in the decade as being economic, scientific and technological advancement and saw the US as the most suitable source through which to achieve these objectives. This would, in the first place, require a warmer climate for discussions to advance these cooperative ties. And this could be achieved by mitigating differences over Pakistani.

CHINA

The initial move towards Sino-US rapprochement had been made due to their common concern with the Soviet threat, as well as the US anxiousness to gain access to the 'China market'. Consequently,
the sino-US relations, since 1971 are determined by the triangular relation between USSR, China and the US. Every increase in Moscow's global influence has found a corresponding response in the US Chinese polities and their bilateral relations. Thus, the significance of China in the US policy was greatly enhanced with the Soviet entry into Afghanistan in December 1979. The Soviet occupation threatened the Chinese interests as well as those of the US and its allies. Secondly, China could be effectively used as a "major conduit" for reaching arms to the Afghan rebels due to its common border with Afghanistan. Realizing its significance, the Carter administration had altered the export control regulations of the Department of commerce and 'Munitions Control List' of the Department of State to assign a new 'P' classification for arms transfers, rather than its previous Warsaw Pact 'Y' classification. It also allowed the US firms to build "on-site factories" in China to the construct helicopters, computer equipment, tactical defence radar sets, weapon-testing equipment and communications equipments.

However, President Reagan brought with him a "longheld affection" for Taiwan. The Reagan administration threatened to reverse the entire trend since Mr. Reagan had stated, during his election campaign, that he was in favour of an official American liaison office being set up in Taiwan. As the 'Xinhua' reported on 13th June 1980, with reference to his campaign statement in Detroit: "Reagan's positions runs diametrically opposite to the principles governing the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States. Mr. Reagan himself had claimed that he would "improve relations with the K.M.T. as an old ally of the United states" through the implementation of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) (K) and continue the sale of "updated" US weapons, even though the
K.M.T. had been "derogated" as the de jure government by the US'.

On the eve of his inauguration, Mr. Reagan had expressed his suspicion of Communist China by describing it as a 'country whose government subscribes to an ideology based on a belief in destroying governments like ours'. Though Mr. Reagan attempted to smoothen the relations by sending Mr. George Bush to reassure the Chinese, his statement on 25th August 1980 rekindled the suspicions. He stated that the TRA (1979) provided for an "official basis for our relations with our long time friend and ally" and that the US would not pretend that their relations with Taiwan were not official. He announced that he would implement the TRA "as he understood it" by means of the discretionary powers of the President, which would include lifting of the ban on meetings between the US and Taiwan as well as the sale of arms. Even after his victory in the elections, Mr. Ray S. Cline, an Adviser to President Reagan on Asian Affairs, had speculated that the TRA would be "interpreted more generously" by the new administration.

Reconciliation Attempts

Accordingly the Reagan administration awarded low priority to China at the time of its inauguration. However, the people's Republic of China started treating the Taiwan policy as a 'litmus test' for the Sino-American relations. The US thus made "ad hoc responses" and adopted a policy which the P.R.C. could 'tolerate'.

Every administration, since 1971, had attempted to woo China to enhance the US position in the US-Soviet-Chinese co-operation on global issues such as food supply, population control and arms
limitations. Mr. Reagan, too came to accept the same objectives since China would serve as a "stabilizer" in Asian affairs and achieve a "balance of forces in the region favourable to the US and China". The Carter Administration had regarded Sino-US relations as "an important source of regional and global power and influence" needed to counteract the Soviets. The Reagan administration accepted this stand, and decided to adopt a policy in accordance with the imperatives of the strategic triangle\(^5\). Consequently, it awarded the highest priority to close Sino-US relations\(^6\).

The Reagan administration made constant attempts to increase the distance between the Soviet Union and China, so as to end the possibility of their rapprochement and to play the 'China card' in the global confrontation between socialism and capitalism. Mr. Reagan declared that the Sino-US relations were important for increasing the "prospects for peace and stability throughout the Asia-pacific region and beyond"\(^7\). Since the Soviet Union threatened world peace, it was necessary to expand the relations between the US and China to meet the Soviet challenge\(^8\).

In accordance with the conciliatory policy, President Reagan reassured the Chinese Premier, Mr. Zhao Ziyang, in late January 1981, in a personal, unpublished letter that he would continue to abide by the communique of 1972. This policy was confirmed by the State Department on 6th February and by Secretary of State, Mr. Haig, in June 1981\(^9\). Haig informed the Chinese leaders of Mr. Reagan's intention to cultivate friendly relations, which were "a fundamental strategic reality and a strategic imperative.... Of over-riding importance to international stability and world peace". A 'three-pronged' policy was proposed by the administration to strength their
ties. The proposals included an increase in the level of technology to be sold to China; secondly, the lifting of the ban on arms sales to China embodied in the US arms control legislation; thirdly, an amendment of those laws that gave the same treatment to China as the Soviet union and its satellites. These proposals were intended to demonstrate that the US did not regard China as a "potential adversary".

Mr. Reagan’s statements during his meeting with China’s Ambassador, Mr. Chai Zemin in March 1981, those of former President Gerald Ford in Beijing, and those of Mr. Reagan in October during his meeting with Mr. Zhao Ziyang at the Cancun Mexico Summit, all conveyed a similar sentiment. The US and China also decided to establish three new consulates, and settle the related economic issues of taxation, the sale of a census-related computer and the creation of a Joint commission on trade and commerce.

Reagan’s China Visit

The developing closeness in Sino-US relations was witnessed in the visit of President Ronald Reagan to China in April 1984. He received the distinction of being the first US President to address the Great Hall of the People. Acknowledging the differences between the two countries, he called for their minimization. He stated: “I have not come to China to hold forth on what divides us, but to build on what binds us”.

By that time, China had not only become the third largest trading partner of America, but the US had also become China’s largest foreign investor. American firms had already invested almost $700 million in joint ventures and offshore oil exploration. China had also
invested in several joint projects and about fifty Chinese firms had established their offices or branches in the USA. Mr. Reagan aptly summed up:

"In the past twelve years our people have become reacquainted, and now our relationship is maturing. And we're at the point where we can build the basis for a lasting friendship." Thus, the "domestic politics" and "triangular interactions" led the US towards the P.R.C. President Reagan followed the Nixon policy of exploiting the Sino-Soviet rift to "play one communist power against another".

US Arms Supplies to China

The Reagan Administration's emphasis on confrontation with Soviet Union, proved successful in bringing China, Japan and Pakistan together. Though each had its own reasons, each believed that the Soviet Union posed a security threat. Thus, the Indian policy was conditioned by the "geopolitical relationship among Pakistan-India-China and China-USSR-USA". Since Pakistan and China were required to balance the Soviet threat, Indian interests were ignored.

In June 1981, US Secretary of State announced the willingness of the US administration to sell arms to the PRC for the first time. In response to the Chinese request for fifty-two items placed before the Carter Administration and Chinese inquiries in mid-1981, the Reagan administration conceded to the sale of about thirty items. These included Hawk ground-to-air missiles, armoured personnel carriers and radar. It was announced that the arms would not be transferred quickly, as China lacked the funds and technical capacity for rapid absorption.
The administration justified the arms sale on the basis of its anti-communist policy. It reasoned that the arms would "seriously complicate Soviet military plans in Asia", even though they would not enable China to face the Soviet Union on its own. The Soviet Union would have to increase its expenditure to counteract the enhancement in Chinese resources and be conscious of its Asian frontiers even during an East-West confrontation in the Middle-East of Europe. Soviet Central Asia and the Soviet Far East would be more vulnerable due to the possibility of America using the facilities of airfields and ports in China. The closer relations between China and the US would promote "more positive Soviet behaviour" towards the US or at least provide compensation for "Soviet gains" in the Third World.

Indian Objection

The Indian government took an antagonistic stand for it felt threatened by the increasing resources of the Chinese forces. Due to the US assistance, China's air power would be raised to a high level and the "weakness and inability" of the Chinese witnessed during the Indo-china war (1962), would be removed. In other aspects also there would be an advancement in the war technology. The threat of Soviet Union, to an extent, checked Chinese ambitions towards India. Once the Chinese were confident of US assistance, the Soviet threat would decrease; consequently, increasing the Chinese threat to India.

The arms deal was however obstructed by Chinese doubts about American intentions. Mr.Reagan had attempted to attain the Chinese acquiescence to upgraded Sino-US military ties, even while arms supplies to Taiwan continued. China was not willing to accept this
two edged approach and the Reagan policy was seen as an attempt to "roll back the clock" in Sino American relations. It felt threatened by the US policy of winning over both China and Taiwan and regarded it as an effort to "create instability in Asia" and "as superpower logic to split China."

However, the issue of arms supplies continued to affect Indo-US relations. India was concerned over the supply of 24 Sikorski S-70 C transport helicopters to China by the US in 1984. The reports that PRC was utilizing them in the military operations in Tibet along the disputed border with India and to monitor Tibetan rioting in Lhasa in 1987, increased Indian apprehensions. Even in the last year of Reagan's tenure the issue continued to dominate the relations. It was announced on 15th September 1988 that China would purchase 500 advanced surveillance patrol-experimental jets (ASP-XL) air frames from the USA. The delivery would start by the end of 1988, under a $1 billion contract, cleared by Washington. These will provide the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) with the latest technology for supersonic electronic surveillance in high altitude areas. In the field of composite technology, it will have comparatively less radar detectability, supersonic speed and fly-by-wire controls. The sale was particularly significant because the US does not, as a practice, permit foreign sales in the matter of composite technology. China was also reported to be negotiating a $ 500 million purchase of 100 Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopters and intending to buy twelve of an up-dated version of the Boeing CH-47 (Chinook), the biggest helicopter flown by US forces. These arms deals threatened India and drew the US and India further apart.
The Reagan administration agreed on a long-term nuclear pact with China. The agreement was initiated during President Reagan's visit to China in April 1984. Premier Zhao had "assured" Mr. Reagan, during his visit, that "we do not engage in nuclear proliferation ourselves nor do we help other countries develop nuclear weapons". It was on the basis of this assurance, during an after-dinner toast, that Mr. Reagan had concluded the agreement. Under the agreement, the US companies would assist China in building the first of the eight large power reactors costing $25 billion. The agreement was signed in New York, on 23rd July 1985, during the visit of Chinese President Li Xiannian. The pact was met with severe criticism in the US itself. Senator John Glenn and Senator Alan Cranston opposed the pact since American and British intelligence sources had reported that China had passed technical information and assistance to Pakistan for designing and developing an atom bomb. China was also reported to have sold low-enriched uranium to South Africa and heavy water to Argentina.

The US decision to pursue nuclear co-operation with China, without the imposition of any safeguards, completely 'disillusioned' India. It particularly feared the transfer of the technical know-how to countries such as Pakistan, which were already recipients of Chinese nuclear assistance. This approval of the sale of nuclear technology to China, without written guarantees against transfer to a third country, led New Delhi into believing that China, Pakistan and the US were aligning their forces against it. Their growing co-operation troubled India for it realised that in the future it would have to stand up against their joint front. Thus, the "distant Pentagon officials" rather than
the Soviets in the neighbourhood, were viewed as a threat by the Indian policy makers at the end of Mrs. Gandhi's tenure. The new government, under Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, did not question this policy stand."

Though the US continued its arms supplies to China and concluded the Nuclear Pact, for the first time, in August 1988, US expressed its sympathy for the Indian cause in view of Chinese nuclear developments. India had constantly opposed the Chinese policy and regarded it as a threat to the proposed comprehensive arrangement to keep South Asia free from nuclear weapons. Due to its concern over China, India had disagreed to sign any agreement related to proliferation only in south Asia. In a report, prepared by Mr. Peter W. Galbraith (USA), it was said that India could be "tempted by an agreement that banned nuclear weapons not only from the sub-continent" but also from Tibet and the Indian Ocean. Thus, USA gained Indian good will by appreciating Indian concern, and suggesting a limitation on the Chinese nuclear programme.

Sino-Pakistan Bond

The US-Chinese support to Pakistan, which was witnessed at the time of the Bangladesh liberation movement of 1971, continued in the 1980s and served as a major irritant in Indo-US relations, along with the co-operation between China and Pakistan, threatened India of a Pakistan-China-US axis.

China has been constantly enhancing its military capabilities since the Communist Government came to power and has acted as a threat on the Indian borders. This risk is further enhanced by its "capacity to create mischief through India's neighbours, in particular Pakistan".
In spite of Indian objections, it did not seem likely that China would give up its "long standing relationship with Islamabad". According to Mr. Vertzberger, the threat of Soviet entry into Pakistan, after the Tashkent Conference, had led Beijing to assist Pakistan in 1966 and again in 1971. China had constantly maintained its position of the "principal supplier" of arms to Pakistan's armed forces. Continuous arms supplies to Pakistan enhanced its military capacity and presented a risk to the Indian security.

At the same time, China was attaining assistance from Pakistan for upgrading arms. Pakistan helped China in acquiring western technology by selling French Mirage fighters and US Sidewinder missiles. With both its neighbours enhancing their strength, with the US help, India felt insecure along its borders. US appeared to be the guardian and the link between the two neighbours who threatened India's security. This fact contributed to the downward trend of the US-India relations.

Expectations Unfulfilled

With the change of government in India, there had been an anticipation of improvement in the Sino-Indian relations, but these expectations remained unfulfilled. It was felt that Rajiv Gandhi would be able to work out a solution to the territorial disputes with China. The disputed area, according to the US, was "nothing more than impenetrable gorges, unclimable peaks and four mile high Himalayan tundra where nothing grows and breathing to painful". The main element of the conflict was not the territory but "India's national honour". The defect in the war had "left it reluctant to relinquish territory without compensation". Since Mr. Gandhi belonged to the
young generation it was hoped that he would work out a solution not contemplated earlier.

Though both China and India had indicated in 1985 that there was possibilities of border-talks being accelerated and trade being increased, the anticipated improvements were not seen". Contrary to these expectations, 1986 witnessed a further deterioration of relations when India accused the Chinese criticism arose when Mr. Rajiv Gandhi asked the Parliament, against the advice of the foreign Ministry (late 1986), to designate Arunachal Pradesh as a full-fledged Indian state. Though the incidents that occurred on the border were not grave in themselves, their repercussions in the form of charges and countercharges "dimmed" the hopes of better Sino-India relations".

In view of these estranged relations with China, India did not approve of the US policy which placed greater emphasis on China than on India.

SMALLER STATES

The US attempt to gain control over the South Asian region has been successful due to the problems of under development in these states and the US international capabilities, especially distributive and regulative. Besides, the countries of South Asia have closer links with countries outside their region, rather than their neighbours. The "intraregional interaction is in a state of infancy", chiefly, because the states continue to perpetuate their traditional rivalries. Further the US was able to gain ground in the region because these states were anxious to find any ally to counteract India. Due to their small size and potential the neighbours of India are scared of being


"dwarfed' by Indian "hegemonistic designs"." The US exploited the issues of conflict between India and these countries to gain the cooperation of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Bangladesh

The new state of Bangladesh had been created after the partition of Pakistan in 1971, chiefly due to the support of India. However, soon after its formation, differences had arisen between India and Bangladesh over the shared boundary, the sharing of Ganga waters and migrations across the borders. These irritants persisted in the Indo-Bangladesh relations even in the 1980s. The two countries made an attempt to resolve the dispute over the distribution of Ganga waters by establishing a Joint Rivers Commission in 1982. Yet the problem deluded a solution. India suggested realigning the Ganges with a canal linking Ganga and Brahmaputra, which would cross the territory of Bangladesh. Bangladesh did not find it acceptable because it would cause a loss of territory and the displacement of its population would entail heavy expenditure. It, thus, suggested the creation of storage reservoirs that would regulate the flow of Ganga. However, this plan required the participation of Nepal and India did not want to include Nepal in any settlement about the waters. Thus, no solution emerged and the five-year agreement for the sharing of waters (which ended in May 1984), was not renewed. The relations became tense when in 1984 India started the construction of a 2,145 mile-long fence along its border with Bangladesh to stop the flow of Bangladeshi migrants.

Though India and Bangladesh cooperated in the field of trade and joint industrial ventures, their differences in other field as well as the
aim programmes were used by the US to gain control over Bangladesh. The US believed that political stability could only be achieved in a country which had a strong economic base. The Reagan administration held the view that its aid would "foster stability and encourage civilian representative rule." It, therefore, expanded its emergency aid programme into one meant for "long-term development." The aid would be of a humanitarian nature and would concentrate on family planning, agriculture and rural employment and nutrition.

Thus, the US gave Bangladesh development assistance PL-480 funds directed towards population control, agricultural production rural employment and energy resource development as well as aid under the IMET programme. The US also offered to train Bangladeshi military officers. This was thought to be profitable since the programme would inculcate American values in the officers and make them sympathetic towards the US policies. Thus, the US would be able to further its national interests because the military had an "influential role" in the government of Bangladesh.

Consequently, the US was able to increase its influence in Bangladesh through its economic aid and military training. It also tried to encourage military co-operation between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Reagan administration used these gains against India, by perpetuating the view that India followed a "hegemonistic course" in her regional policy. The antagonism of Bangladesh was reflected in the anti-India call by the Ershad Government, when it was faced with democratic agitations. In this way, the US won an ally in South Asia, while India lost the good will it had gained by assisting in the formation of Bangladesh. This 'loss' of Bangladesh adversely affected Indo-US relations.
Sri Lanka

Though India enjoyed friendly relation with Sri Lanka, the eruption of ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhalese community and minority Tamil community having ethnic ties with Indian Tamils generated tensions in India’s Sri Lanka relation. On the outbreak of the July 1983 violence, the President of Sri Lanka sought military assistance from friendly powers such as US, Britain, Israel, Pakistan and Bangladesh, to assist it in containing the crisis. Jayawardene saw the crisis to have emanated from the chauvinistic sections of the Sinhalese community in collusion with a section of the island's army and, externally, from India.

As the predominant power in the region, India considered the region as its "sphere of influence" and itself as the "manager". It wishes to prevent or limit extra-regional involvement in the affairs of the region. On the basis of this view and with the anticipation of US involvement, the "Indian Doctrine" was proclaimed: "India will neither intervene in the domestic affairs of any state in the region, unless requested to do so; if external assistance is needed to meet an internal crisis, states should first look within the region for help."

After the July 1983 violence, it was anticipated that the US was planning to get involved in the problem. This was because of the visit of the US Defence Secretary to the island in October 1983; two months later, a US Ambassador-at-large too visited Sri Lanka; in January 1984 the Chairman of the House Defence Appropriations Committee went to Sri Lanka and in February of the same year, it was the turn of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. During the period Sri Lanka quickly concluded several agreements with the US which had strategic overtures: the leasing of an oil storage complex to
Oreleum, and the agreement with the Voice of America (VOA). All these led India to conclude that the Reagan administration was bent on involving itself in this strategically located Indian Ocean island. This view was reinforced by the perception that Jayewardene and his United national party (UNP) government, both in foreign and domestic policies, had been pro-west. However, a clearer analysis of the above assertions and later events tended not to justify such a view.

With the coming of Rajiv Gandhi to power, India succeeded in gaining the confidence of Sri Lanka by restricting Tamil militant activities on Indian territory and drastically restricting the flow of arms to the militants. Despite all the efforts of the Rajiv government, the failure of the Thimpu talks activated the Sri Lankan government to settle the problem militarily. With the Sri Lankan forces on a military solution, the US attitude towards the island republic changed. Not only because of the island's unfavourable human rights record but also because it refused to accept US appeals to allow the Red Cross to help. This forced the US to cut its aid to the island in 1986 by fifty percent. The US also continued to ignore Sri Lanka's plea for military aid.

On the other hand, the Reagan administration appreciated India's mediatory role in Sri Lanka. It extended its support to India's diplomacy on the issue and advised Colombo that a negotiated settlement was possible only in full co-operation with India. Thus, the US clearly had guaranteed India's regional role. The US asserted that: "we have been gratified... that our policies and the policies of the government of India are very much running parallel and are mutually reinforcing. This is a positive factor in our
overall relationship". Even when India violated Sri Lanka's air space to drop relief supplies, the US saw it as an "humanitarian act" 134.

Again, the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord was enthusiastically received by the US; it called it a "bold step" and "a historic landmark" in Indo-Sri Lanka relations. In fact, ever since the July 1983 violence and after a clear understanding of India's role, the US had told Sri Lanka to solve its ethnic problem with the help of India's good offices and co-operation. Hence, with the withdrawal of the remaining IPKF troops from the island, the US saw this as a step towards normalcy and hoped that it removed a major irritant between two traditional friends135.

Generally, the US reluctance to assist this strategically located island republic could be traced to the US Indian Ocean Strategy and its policy objectives in South Asia which focused more on Pakistan than any other regional state. Moreover, in the past the US had declared its lack of strategic interest in Sri Lanka136. Again, the US attempt at improving relations with India also prevented if from fully and directly involving itself in the problem.

After the pull-out of the IPKF troops from the island, a cease-fire agreement was reached between the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE. But recently this has collapsed causing renewed clashes between the island's army and the LTTE, in the North and East of the island. In fact, with the failure of attempts by the island's chief negotiator to persuade the LTTE to abandon the fighting, the government of the island decided to discredit and humble the LTTE both militarily and politically. Sri Lanka evidently does not consider the present conflict a legitimate Tamil aspiration juxtaposed against Sinhalese chauvinism but rather sees it as a question of order versus anarchy. Therefore,
it draws parallels with both the Punjab and the Kashmir crisis in India\textsuperscript{127}.

In India, the initial emotional sympathy for the Tamils that had existed in 1987 has virtually eroded. Also, presently, because of the nature of the prevailing political scenario, the south Indian state of Tamil nadu tends to have reduced its indirect support for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. New Delhi continues to reiterate its firm commitment to the unity and integrity of the island republic. India's regional security concerns still make it very suspicious of any third power involvement in the issue. This latter reason is the driving force behind India's renewed efforts and policy, not only to stop the civil war but also to finally resolve politically the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka.

The Instability in the Maldives

The abortive coup in the island of the Maldives on November 3, 1988 once again gave India the chance to discharge its responsibility as the preeminent regional power\textsuperscript{139}. With India's concerns about regional security and stability, it could not be indifferent to subversion in the region. Countries which are anti-Indian might instigate such a coup and could even transform an island such as the Maldives into a military base. This caused India's swift move in assuring the continuous stay of the island's legitimate government.

The US particularly, the UK and other Commonwealth countries did not hesitate in supporting the Indian action. In fact, similar to the Sri Lankan action, the US was the first to fully endorse the Indian role, thus, reaffirming that it genuinely accepts that India is entitled to intervene in the region so as to maintain peace, order and stability.
India and Nepal have maintained friendly relations in the economic, cultural and religious spheres and India has constantly provided economic assistance to Nepal for various projects. As non-aligned countries, the two have maintained similar views on several international issues. However, their relations lost a measure of their cordiality over the issue of the peace zone. India regards the Nepalese demand for a peace zone as "an abrogation of the treaty of peace and friendship" of 1950. India was also concerned over the growing links between Nepal and China, especially after the construction of a road from the Tibetan border to Katmandu. Nepal is viewed as a buffer between India and China, which India did not want to lose to its adversary. Its suspicions were also aroused due to Nepal's growing ties with the US. The economic assistance programmes which had been initiated in 1951, were continued by the Reagan administration. It provided development assistance, PL-480 programme and IMET funding. The US provided training to the Nepalese military officers in order to expose them to American attitudes towards the role of military in society. Important officials of the administration, like Mrs. David R. Bowen, visited Nepal. Even on the issue of the peace zone, Nepal received the US support. The US and France endorsed the Peace Zone proposal in 1983. Thus, India was wary of the support provided by the Reagan administration to its neighbour. India's fear that the US assistance would be used against it by Nepal, along with Chinese support, thus, strained Indo-US relations.

However, once the US moved towards accommodation with India especially since the Reagan administration, Washington gradually recognized India's regional role in Nepal.
Pursuit and Limits of Accommodation

The above mentioned account of US-Indian approaches to regional issues during the 1980s shows that though India resented the growing influence of the US. In its neighbourhood, yet under currents of accommodation in India US relations could be discerned. Of course this mutual accommodation of US-India differences over Pakistan, both in terms of manifestation and motivation, was marginal. For India, relations with Pakistan remained a central concern related to its national and regional preoccupations. Pakistan represented real threat to Indian security and nation building. For the US, on the other hand, Pakistan was a front line state in bleeding the Russians white in Afghanistan and for providing it a linkage with Islamic states. Washington, therefore, could not ignore Pakistan for accommodating India. These should not however obscure US-Indian willingness to work around and throw there differences in pursuit of other compromises and areas of potential co-operation. This willingness was reflected in India’s acceptance of America’s global role and responsibilities and USA’s acquiescence of India’s regional aspirations in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives. As America’s domestic system provided an important input in shaping of US policy towards India during the period under review. we shall now turn to these dynamics of US domestic imperatives.
The Soviet Union is both an Asian as well as a European power.

A good overview of the Indo-Pakistan conflict is D.C. Jha, Indo-Pakistan Relations (Patna, 1975).


Pakistan was only the third non-NATO country to receive the planes after Israel and Egypt.


In as May 1980 India signed a $1.6 billion arms deal with the Soviet Union.

There is no evidence that Indian purchases were entirely responsive to US offers to Pakistan. India had been negotiating with Britain for Jaguar aircraft and with France for Mirages long before the revival of the US-Pakistani relationship. Similarly, the May 1980 arms deal with the Soviets had been obviously finalized prior to the resurrection of US-Pakistani military ties. See Paul Lewis. “Paris to Close Indian Jet Deal”, New York Times, November 13, 1981.

Not only on the Afghanistan question did India imply that the Soviets were merely responding to “outside interference”. As a US Congressional team reported: “The delegation’s meetings with Indian leaders were held several weeks after a joint declaration by India and the Soviet Union which called for ‘the dismantling of all foreign military and naval bases in the Indian Ocean’ and opposed ‘all forms of outside interference in the internal affairs of the region’. Strangely enough the Soviet-Indian statement made no mention of Afghanistan and its occupation by 85,000 Russian troops, but specifically referred to US facilities on Diego Garcia. It was this incongruity that caused the


12 House, committee on Armed services. Changing Perspectives on US Arms Transfer Policy, 74.

13 Even official US military experts had publicly expressed doubts about providing F-16s to Pakistan. As a US Congressional report noted, “...the DOD[Department of Defense] and the Air force have, reportedly, expressed concern about the impact of the F-16 sale on Air force acquisition schedules... if anything. DOD representatives seem to have emphasized the need to ‘put the cart before the horse’, and stressed the need to correct [Pakistan’s] basic logistical and command, control and communications weaknesses, before acquiring expensive advanced weapons systems”. House. Changing Perspectives on US Arms Transfer Policy, 85.

14 As Mrs. Gandhi complained, “But this time the US is not prepared to give this assurance” quoted in Jack Anderson, “Gandhi’s Plain Talk”. Washington Post, May 16, 1982. C7

15 “Mrs. Kirkpatrick’s visit came at an especially bad juncture because of the impending sale of the F-16s. She went to all the South Asian countries so there was nothing special about her trip to India as there was of Clark Clifford’s in 1980”.


18 United States Foreign Policy Documents, n.16, p.858.

19 Ibid.
20 This should not be taken too far. As a report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs noted: "On its face the restoration of US aid to Pakistan ran strongly against the current of Congressional initiatives in the mid and late 1970's [sic] regarding nuclear proliferation, US arms transfer policy, and concern about human rights. The success of the administration's policy thus dramatically showed that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had modified American thinking, across party and ideological lines, about its interests in Southwestern Asia". Committee on Foreign Affairs, House, Congress and Foreign Policy—1981, 1982, 104.

25 Howard Schaffer, comment in personal correspondence, January 1992, cited in Sate P.Lamaye, The United States and India's pursuit of Accommodation (Boulder, co, 1992)
27 Press reports indicated that Pakistan sought a $6.5 billion package.
To cite a particular instance, Indian External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao told the Rajya Sabha on December 3, 1983 that "India has been given to understand by the US officials that the classified notification sent to the Senate by the American administration recently related to Harpoon missiles...[and] said a protest has already been lodged with the US government". Foreign Broadcasts Information Service, December 3, 1983.


Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 November 1984, p. 4


"In a February 1987 speech in Islamabad the departing US Ambassador to Pakistan, R. Hinton, said "There are developments in Pakistan's nuclear program, which we see as inconsistent with a purely peaceful program". Richard P. Cronin, Pakistan: US Foreign Assistance Facts, 7. In November 18, 1988 letter device and that the proposed US assistance will reduce significantly the risk that Pakistan will possess a nuclear explosive device President Reagan stated: "We remain extremely troubled, however, by the continued risk of a South Asian nuclear arms race. The Congress should be aware that as Pakistan's nuclear capabilities grow, and if evidence about its activities continues to accumulate, this process of annual certification will require the President to reach judgement about the status of Pakistani nuclear activities that may be difficult or impossible to make with any degree of certainty". Ibid, 1.

In September 1984 press reports suggested that the CIA had informed Congress that India was planning an attack Pakistan's Kahuta uranium enrichment facility; a report denied by India and the Reagan administration. See Robert Manning and Salamat Ali, "Murphy's Law...", Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 November, 1984, pp. 44-45.
India was willing to go no further than signing an agreement not to attack Pakistan's nuclear facilities, an agreement that fell far shy of Pakistani and US demands, and which did not compromise India's broader views about the international nuclear order.

Some success appears to have been achieved following the visit of Armacost and Fortier to the subcontinent in September 1985. Orrin Hatch "India and Pakistan: Reconciliation is Vital for World Peace", Christian Science Monitor, February 27, 1986.

Pakistan was at the heart of US-Indian differences over Afghanistan at the regional level and the Soviet Union at the global level.

Senator Orrin Hatch, "Reagan and Our Strategy for India", Washington Times, November 6, 1984, D2


Cronin, n.45.

Chadda, n.44, p.1124.

Islamabad softened this posture by accepting higher concessional terms in the second military / economic assistance package.


Indeed, the US has asked India to participate in joint naval exercises which India, as of 1990, had rejected. But, as several US Pentagon sources have suggested to this
This is not the end of the matter. Owing to Indian sensitivities “exercises” may not be the word eventually employed but something in the way of small-scale cooperation is not out of the question. Still, the significance of the overture, and the lack of finality in India’s negative response cannot be ignored.

53 Chanda, n.29, p.36.

54 An administration official reportedly cautioned that “We also urge India to be magnanimous and go an extra mile to meet the sensitivity of its smaller neighbor. What may be well within India’s rights appears to be bullying to the smaller neighbor”. In Chanda, n.46, p.31


57 Times of India (New Delhi). 2 October 1991.


A late 1986 statement by Rajiv during an interview suggests that the US had shared its intelligence with India regarding the advances in Pakistan's nuclear program. Rajiv told an Australian newspaper that "We have not only our own information, we have very good information from their best friends (countries Pakistan is close too [sic]), and they too are convinced that they do have a program." 


Ibid.,


Gregor n.70,p.188.

The 'P' category designation means that US firms would not be forbidden from exporting technology to China which could be used for military purposes but any equipment or technical data intended for the designing or development of military items or which would provide "significant contribution" to nuclear weapons design, development of delivery systems would not be exported.


Tow and Stuard, n.75, p.298.


80 Ibid., p.254.

81 W. Freeman Jr, n.72. p.89

82 Tow and Stuart. n.75. p.298

83 James A. Gregor, n.70. p.213.

84 Mandelbaum. n.76. p 399


86 Bannig Garrett , n.79. p 237

87 Stoessel, Secretary of State, "At national Council of US-China Trade, 1 June 1982," American Foreign Policy : Current Documents vol.82.no.493, p 1035


90 Banning Garrett, n.80. p.255


94 Ibid., p.72

95 Ronald Reagan, At Fudan University, Shanghai, 30th April 1989, in Realism, Strength and Negotiations. Published by American Centre, (New Delhi), p.75.

96 Banning Garrett, n.80, p.252


98 Greene , n.93, p.1.


101 Greene, n.93, p.3

102 Robert G. Sutter, n.101, pp.47-49.

103 Raju G.C. Thomas, n.100, p.706

104 Banning Garrett, n.80, p.237.

105 Ibid., p.252.

106 Greene, n.93, p.3.


112 Ibid., p.162.

113 Ibid., p.151.


115 Chandrapal Yadav, "Statement in Lok Sabha." Lok Sabha Debate. bo.9, 1 February 1980. p.315

116 S.Nihal Singh, "Turn in Sino-Indian Ties New Compulsions for Both." Times of India. 19th December 1988


120 Paul H. Kreisberg, "Gandhi at Midterm." ibid., vol 65, no 5, Summer 1987, p.1073.

121 "P.M. Denies Secret Pact with China on Border Issue." Times of India. 24 December 1988


123 Ibid., p.269.


128 Bertocci. n.126, p.167.

129 Schneider. n.127, p.900.

130 Ydullahi n.125, p.11.


134 Ibid., pp 90-91.


137 Times of India, March 28, 1990.


139 Times of India, June 18, and 19, 1990.


141 For details see Nalini Kant Jha, " India and the United States : pursuit and limits of Accommodation" Strategic Analysis (New Delhi), vol.27, no.1, April 1994, pp.94-95.