CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS
It is evident from the preceding study that during the first quarter of 1966 both India and the United States realized the need for a closer relationship and for a greater understanding between them. In the hope of establishing closer rapport and understanding, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, visited the United States in March - April 1966 at the invitation of the U.S. President Mr. Johnson. India's acceptance of President Johnson's proposal to set up an Indo-American Foundation indicated the desire of the two countries to forge a closer bond between them. It was hoped by both India and the United States that Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the USA in March - April 1966 would strengthen the relations and would lead to greater cooperation and the widening of the areas of agreement between these two countries.

The atmosphere of cordiality which was generated in the relationship between the two countries following Mrs. Gandhi's visit and India's acceptance of the U.S. proposal to set up an Indo-American Foundation did not, however, continue for long. Shortly after April 1966 the world's two largest democracies sharply differed on some major issues. These related to their respective national interests and the differing perceptions of the international situation. As a result, there were stresses and strains in Indo-U.S. relations between 1966 and 1971.

It would be evident from the study that one of the reasons for the strained relations they developed was the conflict of national interests of the two countries. The U.S. Global
strategy of security came into conflict with India's national and regional security interests. Since 1954 the United States had been giving military aid to Pakistan. India's opposition to this U.S. decision was well known. There was a long-drawn-out controversy between Pakistan and India over the Kashmir question. Moreover, Pakistan considered India as the principal threat to her security. In these circumstances, India naturally considered that the arms, given by the United States to Pakistan, would be used not for the U.S. global security interests, i.e., to contain communism in Asia but would be used against India and would pose a threat to the security and peace of the Indian sub-continent.

Following the outbreak of India-Pakistan war of 1965, the United States imposed an arms embargo on India and Pakistan. India welcomed the U.S. arms embargo on the Indian sub-continent in the interest of normalization of Indo-Pak relations and peace in the sub-continent. Pakistan was, however, very much dissatisfied with the U.S. arms embargo. The United States, having its own global strategic interests in view, could not antagonize Pakistan by withholding the military supplies to Pakistan. Consequently, the Johnson Administration had to lift the embargo partially in 1966 and 1967, and sought to provide military assistance to Pakistan through some third countries allied to the United States. The Nixon Administration went a step forward in providing military assistance to Pakistan in 1970 and 1971 ignoring the arms embargo imposed in 1965. Obviously, it was to please Pakistan. On the other hand, India was concerned about
the U.S. policy of militarily strengthening Pakistan which, in her view, would make more difficult the normalization of relations between the two countries which they had pledged to promote by the Tashkent Agreement concluded in December 1965 after the Indo-Pakistan war.

India was interested in maintaining peace in the sub-continent. She felt that this objective could be attained by developing normal relations with Pakistan. By the Tashkent Agreement both the countries had committed themselves to restoring normal relations between them. But India apprehended that the U.S. policy to rearm Pakistan after 1965 would increase the intransigence of Pakistan and would disturb peace in the sub-continent. This would, in India's view, adversely affect the normalization of Indo-Pak relations and would also threaten the security of India. In the interest of peace in this region, India strongly intended that the United States should stop all military assistance to Pakistan and should strictly maintain the arms embargo on the Indian sub-continent. But the United States could not stop the military aid to Pakistan in the USA's global security interests. So it became clear that India's regional security interests were in conflict with those of the U.S. global security, and because of this conflict of national interests their relations became somewhat cool.

The U.S. policy of normalizing relations with communist China was another aspect of the U.S. global strategy which was considered by India as adversely affecting her national interests.
Since the beginning of the sixties, India had strained relations with the People's Republic of China. After the India-China war of 1962, India looked upon China as her great adversary and a menace to her security. Since 1949 the United States too had been considering China as her adversary in Asia and, as a consequence, embarked upon a policy of containing the Chinese power and influence in Asia.

But in July 1966, the U.S. President, Mr. Johnson stated openly that Communist China with seven hundred million people should not remain outside the family of nations. It was implied in the statement that the United States was willing to normalize relations with China. During the Johnson Administration the negotiations between China and the United States for the normalization of relations began. The U.S. motivation behind the decision to normalize relations with China was obviously to exploit the opportunity of the rift between the two communist giants, the Soviet Union and China. Of these two adversaries, the United States considered the Soviet Union as its prime rival. So the United States felt that its strategic and security objective to contain the Soviet power and influence could be achieved by befriending China against the Soviet Union. Hence it decided to pursue the policy of normalizing relations with China.

India, however, thought that this new policy of the United States would reduce her own importance in the U.S. strategic designs in Asia. Prior to the U.S. decision (to normalize relations with China) the security of India vis-a-vis Communist China
was a major concern to the United States. India apprehended that if the United States normalized relations with China, she might lose interest in the security of India vis-à-vis China. India further apprehended that as a result of Sino-U.S. detente, she would be left alone in South Asia.

What India, in fact, wanted was that the Chinese power should be contained both by the United States and the Soviet Union and that China should remain as their adversary, while India should maintain friendly relations with the two super powers. It was India's calculation that so long as China would be treated and considered by the United States as her adversary, China would not attack India and threaten her security. India, therefore, felt that the kind of Sino-U.S. relations that existed prior to the U.S. decision to normalize relations with China would serve her national and security interests best. But the United States thought otherwise. Not the security of India but the development of relations with China was the prime consideration of the U.S. policy in Asia between 1966 and 1971.

Thus, it would appear from the study of the subject that India wanted that the state of relations that existed between the United States and Pakistan, and between the United States and China in 1965 (as reflected in the U.S. arms embargo on Pakistan and the adverse U.S. relations with China) should continue to remain. In a word, India thought that in Asia the politics of status quo was most conducive to her national interests. The United States, however, thought that the change in the U.S. policy with regard to arms embargo on Pakistan and a
change in the U.S. policy with regard to China would serve her national and security interests better. This difference in the conception of national interests of India and the United States often strained their mutual relations between 1966 and 1971.

It would be evident from the study that the United States was convinced that India was militarily the most powerful nation of South Asia. She was also under the impression that although India claimed to be a non-aligned nation, she was virtually very close to the Soviet Union. Since India was not a U.S. ally, the United States never wished that India should develop as an independent centre of power in South Asia with a dominating influence in the politics of this region. The U.S. thinking was that if India acquired the potentiality to control the politics of South Asia, the U.S. security interests in that region would not be served; on the contrary, it might help increase the Soviet influence. In other words, the predominance of India in South Asia might mean the predominance of the Soviet influence in that part of the world. To the United States this was not a desirable development.

Further, it would appear from chapter four and five above that as Pakistan was a U.S. ally, its security and integrity was an important element of the U.S. policy in Asia. It was the thinking of the U.S. Administration between 1966 and 1971 that the threat to Pakistan's security from China was remote; on the contrary, India posed the real threat to Pakistan. One of the reasons that motivated the United States to give continuous military
aid to Pakistan between 1966 and 1971 ignoring India's protests was to meet the threat from India and to strike a military balance between India and Pakistan so that India might not emerge as the predominant power in South Asia. This particular policy of the United States was the great source of stresses and strains in the relations between India and the United States during the period under study. India may, naturally have thought that being the most powerful nation of South Asia, she should have a free hand in the politics of this region. And ultimately by defeating Pakistan in the war of December 1971, India demonstrated that the military aid to Pakistan by outside powers like the United States and China could not elevate Pakistan to the status of the predominant power in South Asia, nor could it create a military balance between India and Pakistan. It was also demonstrated that India was the superior power in the politics of South Asia.1

It has been shown in chapter five that the security and integrity of Pakistan were of so vital an interest to the United States that it could not support the democratic movement of a

wing of Pakistan against the oppressive military regime of that country. In this particular instance of the Bangladesh crisis the United States felt that the ideal of democracy was expendable for the cause of the integrity of Pakistan which was, however, ruled by a military dictator. But this attitude was very much disappointing to India. She was surprised to see that the United States, which believed in the democratic ideals and fought against totalitarianism to establish democracy in the world, should not have openly supported the movement of the people of East Pakistan which was, according to her, a democratic movement. Instead, the U.S. stand on the Bangladesh crisis, in India's view, helped the military dictatorship of Pakistan to suppress the movement of the East Pakistanis.

The U.S. perception of the Bangladesh crisis was different. She perceived that India had the motive to dismember Pakistan. That was why it stood steadfast behind the Yahya regime. This made India to be very critical about the U.S. stand on the Bangladesh crisis in 1971. The relations between India and the United States, which in 1971 were at the lowest ebb, became even worse when the United States branded India as the aggressor. India thought that while the United States professed the ideals of democracy and individual freedom, her actions, in practice, did not, however, support her professions. On the other hand, it was surprising for the United States that non-aligned India with faith in democratic values should have concluded a Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union in 1971 and should be so closer to Moscow.
So it appeared from the preceding study of the issues relating to the Indo-U.S. relations that relationship between the two largest democracies of the world, the United States and India, became strained as a result of the differences in their national interests and their perceptions of the international situation. Despite the differences, both the countries sought to maintain friendly relations between them. Their differences did not lead them to the severing of ties. They confined their differences within certain limits. Neither the United States nor India desired that their relations should become inimical because of the differences between them on certain issues. For example, situation created by India's acceptance first and rejection later of the U.S. proposal in 1966 for the Indo-American Foundation could have completely alienated the Johnson Administration from India; but the fact that no such thing happened reflects the U.S. conciliatory attitude towards India.

The United States had, in fact, no anti-India policy as such. Some of its policies had, no doubt, some adverse effects on India's national interests, but those were not deliberately designed against India. It cannot be disputed that the primary purpose of the United States to give military aid to Pakistan was not to threaten India's security but to defend Pakistan against any threat to her security. In other words, the United States gave military assistance to Pakistan, during the period under study, for defensive and not for offensive purpose. It was, however,
not the intention of the United States that Pakistan should attack India and threaten her security by the arms given by the United States to her. On the other, India was concerned over the U.S. policy to normalize relations with China. This policy of the United States had some adverse effects on India's national interests. But the purpose of the United States behind its new policy towards China was not to play it against India. In other words, it was not the U.S. intention to use the Sino-U.S. détente against India. The United States decided to normalize relations with China simply to achieve its national interests and not to harm India. Despite her differences with India, the United States never considered India as her enemy in Asia and, therefore, did not adopt a policy in Asia that was intentionally directed against India.

It also emerges from the study that although for the U.S. strategic interests in Asia Pakistan and China were closer to the United States, this did not mean that she lost interest in India and its democratic set-up. Certain things were common to both these countries. The most important of these was the shared commitment to democracy. This was always a unifying force in the relationship between India and the United States and kept them close notwithstanding their occasional differences. During her visit to the United States in March-April 1966, Mrs. Gandhi stated in one of her meetings with President Johnson as follows:

"India and the United States cannot . . . allow their relations to drift. As friends committed to common ideals, they can together make this world of ours a better place
in which to live." 2

In another meeting with President Johnson, Mrs. Gandhi stated,

"India, if it is stable, united, democratic, I think, can serve a great purpose. If India is not stable, or if there is chaos, if India fails, I think it is a failure of the whole democratic system. It is a failure of many of the values which you and I both hold dear." 3

Similarly, President Johnson in reply remarked,

"There is much that binds India and the United States together. Both our nations have the deep-felt obligation to the basic dignity of man . . . There is in India and this country the strong tradition of freedom that just will not die." 4

The above statements seemed to have reflected the inherent desire of the United States and India to remain close as democratic countries. Even when the Indo-U.S. relations were most critical in 1971 on the question of Bangladesh crisis, the United States expressed its strong interest in the Indian democracy. Thus, in the Foreign Policy Report to the U.S. Congress on 9 February 1972, President Nixon stated,

"The United States, of course, has a tradition of friendship with India . . . Our strong interest in Indian democracy and progress is not diminished." 5

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
Between 1966 and 1971, India received from the United States large quantities of food and economic aid, no matter if India opposed many of the U.S. foreign policies. Although the U.S. food and economic aid to India was not always smooth (because of occasional differences between them), the United States never totally stopped giving aid to India. No doubt, she gave aid to India in order to help India maintain its democratic setup. The United States did not intend to disrupt friendly relations with India simply because the latter disagreed with her on some issues.

It emanates from the study that India did not consider her differences with the United States on a particular issue to be the sole determinant of its total relations with that country. It was not desirable for India that its total relations with the United States should be adversely affected because of disagreement on a particular issue. That was why in the context of discussion in Rajya Sabha on the reported U.S. decision to permit Turkey to sell 100 Patton tanks to Pakistan, Mr. Swaran Singh, the Defence Minister of India, stated on 21 November 1968 as follows:

"... We have to fashion our relations with other countries keeping in view the totality of relations. There may be differences of opinion in one sector and there may be identity of views in several other sectors..." 7

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7. See, India, Rajya Sabha Debates, 66 (21 November 1968), 766.
India thought that her differences with the United States on a particular issue should not disrupt her friendly relations with that country. Hence, Mr. S.P. Singh, India's Deputy Minister for External Affairs stated in the Rajya Sabha on 9 November 1970 in the context of the U.S. Government's decision in October 1970 to give military aid to Pakistan,

"Our relations with America are very friendly, they have been friendly and even today they are friendly even though we may not like this particular act of America." 8

In fact neither India nor the United States wanted that their strained relations during a particular time should unnecessarily prolong. In 1971 these two countries experienced a new law in their relations since 1966. The occasion was the Bangladesh crisis. It has been shown in Chapter five that after the Bangladesh crisis was over, both India and the United States felt that they should restore their normal relations through "serious dialogue" between them. Both these countries felt that their differences of opinion and attitude on this particular issue should not lead their relations to the breaking point. Hence, after the crisis was over, Mrs. Gandhi stated that India's relations with the USA were "perfectly normal" and India had "nothing against the United States." 9 Similarly, President Nixon, too, expressed the view, in his Foreign Policy Report to the U.S. Congress on 9 February 1972, that although the United States disagreed with

8. See, India, Rajya Sabha Debates, 74 (9 November 1970), 125.

"specific Indian actions" in 1971, the United States had friendly relations with India. Mr. Henry, A. Kissinger wrote that in 1971 Indo-U.S. relations were in a state of "strained cordiality, like a couple that can neither separate nor get along." On the other hand, the Reports published by the Ministry of External Affairs of India from 1966 to 1971 maintained that in spite of divergence of views between India and the United States, India's traditional friendship and normal relations with the United States continued to exist.

It appears to emerge from the study that both India and the United States sought to maintain their traditional friendship and tried to promote understanding between them. The understanding was facilitated by the periodic high level bilateral talks between these two countries. For example, from 26 to 28 July 1968 India and the United States held bilateral talks on matters of common interests and concern. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. B.R. Bhagat, the then Minister for External Affairs, and

13. See, India, Lok Sabha Debates, 18 (31 July 1968), 3110-3116.
the U.S. delegation was led by Mr. Nicholas Katzenback, the then U.S. Under Secretary of State. Referring to the talks Mr. B.R. Bhagat told the Lok Sabha on 31 July 1968 - "At the conclusion of the talks both sides felt that this new venture in an old friendship was beneficial in every respect." Both sides agreed to hold such periodic bilateral talks between them in future also.

Both countries sought to promote understanding between them by the exchange of high level visits of the important persons. Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi visited the United States in March - April 1966. On 16 and 17 February 1966 Mr. Humphrey, the Vice President of the United States visited India enroute his Asian tour. Mr. Morarji Desai, the Deputy Prime Minister of India toured the United States in September 1967 to know each other's views. Mr. William Rogers, the U.S. Secretary of State (1969 - 1973) visited India from 23 to 24 May 1969 to learn India's views on matters of common concern. President Nixon visited India from 31 July to 1 August 1969 and discussed with the Indian leaders how peace could be maintained in Asia and how to strengthen friendship between India and the United States. Mrs. Gandhi again officially visited the United States in November 1971.

Thus, we notice that the undercurrent of friendship and cordiality which binds both these countries has never been impeded during the period of our study. There were differences no doubt, some very serious, but they never threatened to destroy the basic values which the people and the Governments of both these count-

14. Ibid.
countries admired and cherished. It is a matter of great satisfac-
tion that neither of these states tried to stall the inflow of ideas or information nor did they discourage the operation of humanitarian and cultural activities. Even when the situation became highly irritating as in the case of the U.S. arms aid to Pakistan or when the differences over a particular issue, as in the case of the Bangladesh crisis, appeared to be a great deal sharp, both the Governments realized the importance of keeping cool and did not issue any declaration or adopt a policy which would strain their relationship so severely as to snap it or turn each other into enemies. These differences played their part in making each state assert its right of having a separate outlook and an individual approach to certain problems and at the same time making each conscious of furthering and solidifying certain important and basic values which each is pledged to support and stand by. Thus we conclude that the Indo-U.S. differences merely reflect certain emotional strains which every healthy relationship is subject to, but which cannot injure it to the point of severance or rupturing of diplomatic relations.