CHAPTER VI

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FRENCH NUCLEAR OPTION FOR INDIA IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

6.1 Indo-French Identical Aversion to the Superpower Managed Nuclear Defence

In 1959 de Gaulle sealed the fate of French nuclear defence to be independent from the influence of super powers.

In his memoirs he wrote:

A France without responsibility would be unworthy of herself, especially in the eyes of Frenchmen. It is for this reason that she disapproves of NATO, which denies her a share in decision-making and which is confined to Europe. It is for this reason too that she intends to provide herself with an atomic armament. Only in this way can our defense and foreign policy be independent, which we praise above everything else.¹

After having experienced ignominy of total subjugation during the years of the Second World War, France did not wish to repeat this tragic experience. However to regain the lost status of a global power, France, under de Gaulle during the 1960s, considered nuclear weapons necessary. For France this was not the first time that it had to arm itself with most modern means of defence, in order to protect its national sovereignty and independence.

Keeping in view the all round reconstruction of France and to keep France in race with the other developed countries, an Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) was set up in 1945 with a view to developing nuclear energy in the fields of science, industry and national defence.²

Later, in the mid-1950s, the plummeting morale of the French army after its defeat in Indochina, found France's self-esteem at its lowest ebb. Therefore, nuclear weapons were considered necessary to salvage France's big power status.

At the time of initiation of the nuclear programme, the bomb was not in the minds of Frenchmen, it was meant for peaceful purposes. The nuclear energy was supposed to be used in a spirit "corresponding less to a military preoccupation... than to a desire to secure for France the legitimate share which could eventually revert to her in... peaceful use" of this energy.³

The explosion of the Soviet nuclear device in 1949, followed by the British in 1953, brought about a change in the French mind. Further, blatant discrimination by the US towards France resulted in vigorous debate for development of nuclear weapons under the French control. The Nassau experience of de Gaulle proved to be the last straw on already strained relations between the US and France. In January 1963 de Gaulle declared that France would rely on its own independent nuclear strike force. By 1965 France's commitment to NATO was reduced to one armoured and one mechanical division, and three tactical air wings, all based in West Germany. On 7 March 1966, de Gaulle withdrew France from the military integrated command of NATO.

To counterbalance American influence in Europe, France tried to cooperate with the Soviet Union; this process received a jolt when the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968.

These experiences led France to work for self-reliance in developing various military programmes, even though, France was facing severe financial crisis and lacking

technical know-how. In 1960-64, loi de programmation, development of the first-
generation nuclear weapons system (i.e., atomic bombs carried by Mirage IV aircraft) 
was devised.

Though initially the US help was provided for the development of the French 
ballistic missiles but, it was withdrawn later under the congressional pressures. It is then 
surmised that the US assistance was continued clandestinely. The French strategic 
force is often referred to erroneously as force de frappe; France never aimed at the 
retaliatory second strike. This was, however, the updated instrument of national defence. 
De Gaulle’s successors continued to follow his policy of national nuclear independence. 

In 1981, after assuming the French presidency, Francois Mitterrand stated:

There is today a contradiction between the strategy based on defence of 
the national sanctuary alone and the strategy based on the Alliance.... But 
if this doctrine (of independent deterrence) is sufficient in itself, why the 
Alliance? It would be more honest to tell our neighbours that they cannot 
count on us if they are attacked. More honest to tell the French that they 
cannot count on others in case of danger. Neither of these situations, I 
must say, is satisfactory. Does autonomy of decision exclude solidarity? 
Does Solidarity exclude independence?

The limits of France's power and its dependence on its allies for security 
prompted France to adopt an approach of equi-distance from both the superpowers. 
France chose complete autonomy in political and strategic decision-making, even if it 
stayed on as a member of NATO.

Therefore, it would be wrong to compare the French position with India's non-
alignment, which meant keeping away from both the military blocs dominated by the two 
opposing super powers.

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4 According to some reports as referred by R.S.Norris, A.S.Burrows and R.W. Fieldhouse, Nuclear 
p.191.

Following the end of the Cold War, France has moved closer to the NATO, while maintaining intact its national independence in strategic decision-making. In the case of India, it has had also to modify its position on non-alignment owing to the collapse of the Soviet bloc in late 1991. Non-alignment was weakened; in fact its relevance came to be questioned. Yet the movement has survived as a forum for political cooperation among the third world countries. As such, India has continued to pursue the policy along "continuity and change."

To have a clear perception of India's present position, one may have to recapitulate how following its independence India had to keep itself away from both the hostile military blocs, armed to teeth with weapons of mass destruction. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his sentiments in this regard as follows:

Our earth has become too small for the new weapons of the atomic age. While man, in the pride of his intellect and knowledge, forces his way into space and pierces the heavens, the very existence of the human race is threatened.6

For Nehru military pacts or alliance with the US or the USSR had 'no meaning in a military sense', as small countries have little or no military value in the nuclear power era, "Perhaps such alliances have some psychological value."7

While addressing the concluding session of the Afro-Asian Conference, held at Bandung in 1955, he bemoaned power asymmetry between the nuclear-haves and have-nots:

There is no friendship when nations are not equal, when one has to obey the other and when one dominates the other. That is why we raise our voices against domination and colonialism, from which many of us have

6 Jawaharlal Nehru, then Prime Minister of India, in "Appeal to the USA and the USSR", Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches, 1957-1968 (New Delhi), 27 November 1957, p.308.

suffered for so long. And that is why we have to be very careful to see that no other form of domination comes our way.  

In this conference, he also put forward India's idea of development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.  

Until 1974, this had been India's policy in nuclear field to which Indian leaders adhered. In May 1974 under the changed international situation India exploded its first nuclear device (Pokhran I) known in common parlance as "nuclear implosion". Already, on 30 April 1955 in Lok Sabha, Nehru had explained that non-alignment will not create new power blocs, and would not use threat or force in resolving international disputes. 

Owing to general aversion to super-power dominated military blocs the movement of non-alignment was born, which meant an independent approach in policy making, and not to be tied down to any particular line of action because of the membership of that bloc. India wanted to have friendly relations with all the countries irrespective of their membership in different blocs. 

This position was made clear in Nehru's speech in Lok Sabha on 9 December 1958:

> When we say our policy is one of non-alignment, obviously we mean non-alignment with military blocs... If we accept that there are only two ways, then we certainly have to join the Cold War - and if not an actual military bloc, at least a mental military bloc... I am not prepared even as an individual, ..., to give up my right of independent judgement to anybody else in other countries.

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8 Speech at concluding session of the Asian-African Conference at Bandung, Indonesia, 24 April 1955, ibid, p.290.  
9 ibid, p.295.  
10 Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961* (New Delhi, 1961), pp.79-80.
India pursued the path of non-alignment, with emphasis on self-reliance; in the arena of security, he stressed on peaceful co-existence, and comprehensive general disarmament, with a view to promoting international peace, while strengthening the UN role in the world affairs.

To overcome energy crisis in the country and to speed up economic and scientific development, research on atomic energy was considered necessary so as to bring India into the ranks of the advanced states. At the initiative of the former Prime Minister Nehru, an Atomic Energy Commission was established in the 1950s. Dr. Homi Jehangir Bhabha became its first chairman.

Thus India became the first Asian country to have an experimental reactor, APSARA, in 1956. This reactor was built with the collaboration of the UK.

According to Dr. Bhabha use of atomic energy was for peaceful purposes as well as for industrialisation. He also presided over the first international conference on Atoms for Peace in 1956. Though after Chinese aggression situation changed towards positive inclination for having nuclear option.11

In 1974 after the first nuclear implosion, the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said in an interview to Newsweek that: the explosion formed an integral part of India's policy of "carrying out research and development into all meaningful applications of nuclear energy for economic development."

Further she stressed that there is a difference between a nuclear country and a nuclear weapons country:

There is a difference between a nuclear country and a nuclear weapons country; we don't have any bombs, we don't intend to use this knowledge or this power for any other than peaceful purposes.\textsuperscript{12}

Shocks of nuclear explosion were felt all around the world and since then India joined the club of 'defiants' who did not sign non-proliferation treaty of 1968.

On 15 June 1974, while talking to newsmen Indira Gandhi said:

We are against the non-proliferation treaty merely because we thought that it is discriminatory and unequal. Now if there is an agreement which applies equally to everybody, then naturally we have to think about it, but here what is happening is that a few nations are exempt from non-application and they are allowed to stockpile nuclear weapons where other nations, who do not want to make war, are not even allowed experiments for the peaceful purposes.\textsuperscript{13}

The foregoing sentiments that expressed protest against discriminatory behaviour of the nuclear-haves echoed the views of General de Gaulle in the early 1960s when he refused French participation in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva. He had said:

We... do not see any reason to increase the size of the honourable assembly that is being held there, which intends to present irreconcilable plans and can do nothing but moan a little, like the chorus of old men and women in ancient tragedy.... So long as disarmament is not being carried out... we have, with regard to ourselves, the obligation and the necessity of our own atomic deterrent force. Consequently, we shall continue our tests in any case until the goal is reached, unless... the others rid themselves of their means of destruction.... Until such time, she does not see the need for taking part in proceedings whose inevitable outcome is... disillusion.\textsuperscript{14}

Despite belonging to two different countries Indira Gandhi and de Gaulle both were struggling to draw their countries out of the quagmire of power politics created by

\textsuperscript{12} Newsweek (New York), 3 June 1974.

\textsuperscript{13} A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, India’s Foreign Policy and Relations (New Delhi, 1988), p.579.

the US and the USSR. India before the blast, had emerged victorious from the Bangladesh war but only after much humiliation it had suffered at the hands of the Western countries. France, on the other hand, was entangled in its colonial affairs. At the moment the need of the hour was assertion of independence on the part of both the countries belonging to two different hemispheres.

6.2 Theoretical Validation of the Small and Medium Power Nuclear Deterrence

What is power? To understand the relations, status and capabilities of states one has to know about power. For some it is the ability or capacity to control others and for them to do what one wants them to do and also see that they do not do what one does not want them to do. For others it is the ability to control the behaviour of other states in accordance with one's own will. It can be wealth, resources, manpower and arms conferred power on nations.

Wealth has a significant place as an element of power because through wealth one can accumulate instruments of coercion, and through wealth one can influence another.

But the mere possession of wealth does not ensure power, the use of resources imparts power to a nation. The nation should know to control and influence others through utilization of the resources it possessed.

The status is also a vital element of power, it demonstrates significance and potential of a nation in international politics. On the basis of possessing resources countries are divided into different categories. According to one political scientist - a great power is a state whose leaders consider that it can alone exercise a large, perhaps

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decisive impact on the international system; a secondary power is a state whose leaders consider that alone it can exercise some impact, although never in itself decisive, on that system; a middle power is a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact on a small group or through an international institution; a small power is a state whose leaders consider that it can never, acting alone or in a small group, make a significant impact on the system.\textsuperscript{16}

To measure power of the state, examination of relativity of power, the gap between the estimate and reality of power and specificity of power is necessary. The limitation on this is development of nuclear energy and emergence of the power of the weak.\textsuperscript{17}

On the basis of the foregoing analysis France's motivation to go nuclear was "the choice of a medium power facing threats to its independence and influence in a time when the outstanding weight and potential of atomic weapons in international security was already obvious, and at a time when disarmament and non-proliferation practically did not exist.\textsuperscript{18}

It was General Pierre Gallois who promoted the idea of proportional deterrence that was deterrence of strong by the weak, through the use of anti-city and nuclear escalation policy.

For a credible nuclear deterrent three essential requirements were the second strike capability of the nuclear arsenal; threat to vital interests; and political will to use nuclear weapons.


\textsuperscript{17} Mahendra Kumar, \textit{Theoretical Aspects of International Politics} (Agra, 1986), p.224.

France's arsenal contains MIRVs (Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicles). But it does not have an autonomous surveillance and early warning system, it has 'state of art', C3I systems to support its nuclear strategy.\(^1\)

France chalked out a strategy to strike major cities and industrial centres of the former Soviet Union in case of a conflict, and concentrated on escalation of war, though according to the former President Francois Mitterrand French strategy was to avoid war, not to win it.\(^2\)

Though political will is one of the components of medium power nuclear deterrent, there were doubts whether France would have used nuclear weapons, because during the Gulf war in 1991, Mitterrand thought use of nuclear weapons as barbaric act. So question comes to the fore about the real utility of French nuclear weapons.

Secondly, these nuclear weapons would have been used by France when its 'vital interests' were threatened. There is no clear cut definition of these 'vital interests.'

At present France is facing a severe financial crunch and cuts are being made in future nuclear arsenals.

With the unrecognized help of the US nuclear umbrella France kept up its nuclear deterrent against the former Soviet Union. The French withdrawal from the NATO military apparatus created logistical problems for NATO. In case of a Soviet aggression the US had to deploy its nuclear weapons in Britain or Germany, a precarious choice to make.

Like France, India too has strategy of defensive defence. Because of its size, population, and a considerable industrial base, strong armed forces, independent arms

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industry and self reliance in weaponry, India is a power in South Asia to reckon with. It also wields some influence among the developing nations in the third world.

In nuclear field India is self-sufficient in operating a complete nuclear fuel cycle; mining its own uranium ore; processing it; fabricating fuel elements; building research and power reactors, reprocessing their spent fuel and feeding back some of the plutonium into its demonstration breeder reactor.  

But it does not fulfil the requirements of medium nuclear power. Though it has capability to make bomb (and, in fact, it has already exploded five nuclear devices) that is not the only requirement to become a medium nuclear weapon power. One needs delivery system along with other supportive structures, such as communication, command, and control systems and appropriate tactics, to become a nuclear weapons power.

With its frail economy achieving this goal seems a distant idea, though breakthroughs in delivery modes have since given Indian defence a new life.

Once in a speech during debate on demands of Ministry of Defence in Lok Sabha Nehru had said,

What is the equation of defence? In what lies the strength of a people for defence?... army, navy, airforce... are the spear point of defence.... The more technical armies and navies and airforces get, the more important becomes the industrial and technological bases of the countries.... Supporting all this is the economy of the country. If the country's economy is not sound, it is a weak country....

In 1971 to preserve its influence the US exercised 'nuclear gunboat' diplomacy in the bay of Bengal. After India's victory in the war of 1971, it came face to face with

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22 Jawaharlal Nehru, n.7, p.40.
axis of Pakistan-China and the US, that emerged to balance the ‘imbalance’ created by Indian victory, in South Asia. In 1965 India confronted Pakistan-China-Indonesia axis.\textsuperscript{23}

The assistance for India came from the Soviet Union that provided aid in the areas of steel mills, heavy industry and local arms industry. Instead getting appreciation for attaining self-sufficiency and independence India got caught in the US onslaught of containment.

In 1972 in a foreign policy report the US President Richard Nixon called Pakistan a ‘close friend’ and ‘ally’. Under the Agreement of Cooperation of 1959 the US was also to protect territorial integrity and sovereignty of Pakistan.

A policy of providing Pakistan military aid continued. And Canada suspended technical aid to India after it made peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE) in 1974.\textsuperscript{24} Earlier when India had asked to provide necessary protection after the Chinese nuclear explosion in 1964, the help of the UN should be sought, was the advice India received from the US and the USSR.

India was a ‘weak power’ in the eyes of Western countries, but by exploding nuclear devices in May 1998 that status came under question.

Now India can assist neighbouring countries and can attain regional political leverage.

As the sixth nuclear power, she could by right demand a seat at the top table. And as the only non-aligned nuclear power, she could naturally assume the leadership of the other non-aligned nations. India could open her own nuclear umbrella over the countries that lie around her borders.

\textsuperscript{23} K.Subrahmanyam, n.11, p.126.

Above all, she could if she wished impose her own settlement on Pakistan.\textsuperscript{25}

The changes in Pakistan and its development of nuclear weapons have serious impact on India's nuclear policy. As in future it can cause serious threats to India's security along with the US and China supporting it. At present India is standing at the threshold of nuclear world.\textsuperscript{26}

6.3 Convergence and Divergences in the Indo-French Post-Cold War Threat Perceptions

The threat perceptions have to be reconsidered in the aftermath of the Cold War. Collapse of the Soviet Union and the resultant spread of nuclear weapons as a result, have caused a serious security threat not only for France but other nations of the world as well, including India.

In 1972 the French White Paper prepared by Lucien Poirier divided French security interests into three circles - first circle was metropolitan France, second, Europe and third was world.\textsuperscript{27}

Any threat to French 'vital interests' is a threat to French security. Following the same policy in the 1990s, that threat to 'vital interests' is threat to the French security, France defines certain new risk factors that can pose threat to French security.

In the White Paper on Defence (1994), Russia and other regional powers, armed with nuclear weapons are considered a threat.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{25} Michael Edwards, "Illusion and Reality in India's Foreign Policy", \textit{International Affairs} (London), vol.41, 1965, p.58.

\textsuperscript{26} For a threshold power requirements are economic, financial and technical ability to go nuclear, along with a political will.


\textsuperscript{28} See Appendix 12.
That is why France still adheres to its nuclear deterrence, but has modified its position. It has classified different threats when it can and cannot use nuclear weapons. 29 This classification resulted from the experience of France in the Gulf War, where it could not use nuclear weapons, under its policy of non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear powers.

In 1992 a Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy and Doctrine was established. It is an effort to develop 'concerted nuclear deterrence' for Europe. As only Britain and France are the nuclear powers in Europe.

For India, despite adopting 'friendship with all its neighbours' stance it is flanked by one overtly hostile and the other covertly hostile nuclear powered neighbour.

In 1953 Nehru expressed his benign views towards Pakistan: for India and Pakistan

... even though they may live in two separate, independent countries now, are not only very near to each other in geography but bore innumerable common affinities.... If for the moment we set aside some political problems over which we differ, we meet not as strangers or people from two countries, but as people who know each other all our lives. 30

But unlike de Gaulle, Nehru seems more of a dreamer, like many who at the time of making of Pakistan thought that Pakistan will not last long. That was a mistake. They did not take international power politics into account in which both major players needed strategic points to target their weapons at each other to enhance their influence in the area. And Pakistan needed more weapons and economic aid to nurture itself. How Pakistan behaved in subsequent years of its coming into existence, Nehru saw it for himself.

29 ibid.

On Kashmir Nehru said that,

Kashmir is not a bit of baggage to be thrown from Pakistan to India and from India to Pakistan..., but the fact of the intrusion of outsiders into this business. They have taken an unholy interest in it and come in the way of solution... it should be settled in a friendly way.  

Showing India's concern to preserve peace for progress, friendly relations with neighbours are necessary, Nehru look forward for it,

... an agreement between China and India was signed in Peking. This agreement not only settles some outstanding points between the great countries of India and China and establishes their relationship firmly on peaceful basis, but I think it will help in the maintenance of peace in Asia.

This agreement between India and China was based on the principles of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence.

But for the consternation of India its two important neighbours started aligning militarily against it. To China's ambition to become a major power in Southeast Asia, India seems to be an impediment. In the mid-1950s China started helping Pakistan militarily.

In front of realpolitik Nehru's idealism stood helpless as China increased its influence in the sphere of India. Dissatisfaction among the non-aligned countries on their underdevelopment led India - friendly countries to join hands with China, that was becoming increasingly inclined towards committing an act of aggression, in the following years against India.

After Chinese aggression in October 1962 India found itself alone in the world of power politics. Britain suggested India to give away most of Ladakh to the Chinese and become a member of the Western military alliance.

Whereas "China from the beginning was determined to assert her influence as a radical and militant element in the international politics, India chose the more constructive path of mediation, non-alignment and peaceful accommodation." 33

After flagrant violation of the Panchsheel agreement by the Chinese the foundation of peace in the region shook badly. Indian leadership could not cement the breaches made by China in 1962, till the moment.

From the beginning China wanted a weak India so that it can become sole-strong military power in the region. And in realisation of this ambition of China Pakistan is playing a significant role. In 1964 China exploded its nuclear device and started developing and refining its nuclear technology for the development of sophisticated nuclear arsenal. It already possesses tactical and strategic missile systems to deliver nuclear weapons and these missiles are aimed at India and Russia.

Since 1988 December after the visit of the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi relations with China have been cordial but not fully friendly.

Pakistan’s importance for China is to gain easy access to the Persian market, where some of the countries of that region buy Chinese weapons.

On the other hand Pakistan is overtly hostile to India. The year 1971 came as a turning point in the history of both the countries India and Pakistan. Pakistan was not only badly defeated by India, but it also lost its territory of the East Pakistan, that

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became modern day Bangladesh. India once again experienced isolation in the world community, especially in the western world.

In an address at Columbia University Indira Gandhi said,

... basically in the world every individual ultimately is alone and every nation is ultimately alone. And India is prepared to fight alone for what it thinks worth fighting for.  

To get the support of Western democracies on Bangladesh she toured the US, the UK, France and FRG, but all she received was 'appreciation' 'no substantial support'.

Under the Simla Agreement India brought Pakistan to negotiation table to solve the conflict between the two nations bilaterally.

During the same crisis Indira Gandhi emphasised the need to be prepared against any aggression.

We have no animosity towards Pakistan even though they have campaigns of "Crush India", Conquer India. We have not had anything against even China. China has attacked us. Pakistan has attacked us. On our side we have always said we want friendship. On our side we have always taken unilateral steps which we thought would lead to normalisation of relations. But there has been no response forthcoming.... Certainly India will not provoke a war or conflict. But India is determined to safeguard her interests. India is determined to keep her freedom intact.

Complete preparedness of military, as well as national awareness are very important at the time of national crisis,

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35 Indira Gandhi, at a public meeting in Jaipur on 28 November 1971, ibid, p.577.

36 Indira Gandhi, n.34.

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To say once that we are prepared is not enough. We have to be prepared for it everyday and at all times and to ensure that we are prepared in every way, physically as well as mentally.\textsuperscript{37}

The successors of Nehru and Indira also followed the same path of "peaceful use of atomic energy" policy, and also asserted to make nuclear weapons if the need arose. Since 1981 India started concentrating more on development of missiles. The plan was to develop whole series of new missiles - *Agni*, *Akash*, *Prithvi*, and *Trishul*; a low level radar *Indra*, the new frigates; *the Arjun* tank, the light combat aircraft (LCA) project, the fast breeder reactor prototype development; the 500 MW reactor under development; centrifuge uranium enrichment; and the ASLV and PSLV were also planned.

Despite knowing Pakistan's clandestine possession of nuclear bombs the US found itself unable to stop Pakistan going further as China continued helping Pakistan. A nuclear Pakistan poses a grave danger to Indian security.

Other threats came from the presence of nuclear weapons in the Indian Ocean and states of the former Soviet Union. The race to vitiate Indian Ocean with the nuclear weapons was started by the US in 1971 during the Bangladesh war. But the US nuclear fleet remained in the Ocean even after the end of the war. The fleet was there to protect the US interests in the region, such as Persian oil and containment of communism. The clear cut US hegemonic designs were seen in this region. To counter the US hegemony in the region India sought Soviet friendship.

Thus one can find some similarities and differences between the Indo-French strategic thinking. As in the case of geostrategic location of France, India too possesses an important strategic position in the sub-continent. France is one of the largest countries in the European continent. Therefore, impact of the changes made in these

\textsuperscript{37} Indira Gandhi, n.35.
countries has far reaching repercussions. For long French national security was threatened by its powerful eastern neighbour, Germany, so much so that the war between the two assumed global proportion. Only after their near total destruction and help provided by the US peace was established on the continent.

In South Asia too peace was established only after the total defeat of Pakistan in 1971. Though during the Cold War France continued to feel threatened by the nuclear USSR, and so has been the case with India in relation to nuclear China.

Both are independent medium-ranking powers - despite their affiliation with the US and USSR; they both have maintained autonomy of decision-making in the field of defence. That means both are responsible for using their discretion in security matters. In the case of France, it is related to the use of nuclear weapons against an aggressor, and in the case of India, it is completely free to decide about sending its troops to participate in a UN sponsored effort at restoring peace in a conflict torn area, anywhere in the world. Uptil early May 1998, India had no nuclear arsenal. Being medium powers, both have economic as well as resource constraints to develop their weapons and other related programmes. Though both are self-reliant in the field of defence equipment production, they still need more funds for R&D to modernise their defence capabilities. India has been dependent on the USSR to the extent of 70 percent for its defence equipment and technology particularly until the end of the Cold War. Faced with the energy crisis, both were impelled to rely on their atomic energy resources, despite known harmful side effects, for the atomic energy is cheaper source of more power. According to Nehru "the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes is far more important for a country like India whose power resources are limited...."38
India opposed the creation of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as it was controlled by the nuclear-haves and exempted them from controls.

Divergences

Unlike India, France is a member of the North Atlantic Alliance; therefore it is expected to participate in the collective defence under the aegis of the alliance. It is also a member of WEU. Unlike India, France does not face any direct military threat to its territory anymore. France shifted from its policy of peaceful uses of the atomic energy in 1960, and exercised its nuclear option. Its acquisition of nuclear status bears relevance for India.

6.4 Diverging Approaches to Regional Security

European history is a history of struggle for power; it is full of conflicts, and security alliances have been forged frequently to balance the imbalance of power on the continent. With the advent of nuclear weapons, there has been a qualitative change in the formation of alliances, which now through collective effort overcome to the strategic imbalance at the regional as well as global level.

With incomparable nuclear might of the two super powers, countries in the Third World felt insecure. Even though some medium ranking nations, such as France and UK also possessed nuclear weapons, but they were nowhere as compared to the two superpowers.

In a security alliance, its members have to resolve their own disputes peacefully and have to meet external threats by using force collectively against the aggressor. But
according to one view, alliance is a formal agreement between two or more nations to collaborate on matters of national security.

The emergence of bipolar nuclear systems with ideological differences gave birth to a rigid alliance system keeping in view the destructive potential of war between the two nuclear superpowers.

The new international system produced regional alliances for security. In Europe, NATO was this security alliance and France was a member of NATO. This alliance was formed under the US leadership to defend Western Europe against any aggression from the Soviet Union. There was a provision in the NATO pact that any attack on one member will be treated as an attack on all and would be met collectively by the use of military strategic forces. NATO had prepared the West for coalition warfare. This was one of the reasons that Atlantic Alliance is still considered important.³⁹

Notwithstanding provisions for collective defence, mistrust among the allies put question mark the credibility of the alliance. They were not sure whether in the case of Soviet nuclear attack on Europe the US would retaliate with its nuclear weapons. They thought that to protect the US territory the US would not retaliate with nuclear weapons.

To avoid this destructive probability France emphasised on nuclear defence of Europe by Europeans. To achieve this aim Europeans should have their own nuclear weapons which were denied to France under McMahon Act by the US. On the grounds of discrimination in providing nuclear know-how and sharing NATO's decision-making with France, it disengaged itself from military command. Even after its withdrawal from NATO, France is still dependent on the US nuclear umbrella against any threat to

France. Even to ensure internal stability of Europe NATO is required. Despite being one of the largest countries on the continent, France is afraid of its immediate eastern neighbour's might as well as far eastern one's.

Since 1992 the emphasis is on developing a Pan-European defence. After disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 and signing of Maastricht Treaty in 1992 emphasis is on increasing power of Western European Union as a defence area of Europe that would merge with European Union later, and then EU could be responsible for Europe's defence. And France is one of the chief architects of this plan.

Contrary to French compulsions India does not rely on any alliance system for its defence. It is the biggest nation on the sub-continent with a population of nearly 900 millions. Furthers its relations with China are balanced by their mutual military might, as well as its friendly relations with Russia.

With Russia, India signed 20 year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on 9 August 1971. India clarified that it is not a military alliance.

Above all, India chose to be non-aligned, keeping itself away from military blocs. This helped it promote friendship with other nations, and be independent in decision-making about one's own affairs.

It means to take decision on every international issue on the basis of merit, independently and fearlessly and strike a balance between national interests and international requirements.

According to Nehru,

... the policy of military alliances of the Cold War has not brought any such results to the world.... In fact the last few years, the spread of this
policy to Asia has not added to the world's security or to any country's security.\textsuperscript{40}

Non-alignment allows ad-hoc arrangement of security. That means that a country has to be fully prepared militarily. It can however seek military help from other countries. A country does not have to get embroiled in other’s disputes as it happens in an alliance system where allies have to respond collectively to defend an aggrieved ally.

Another thing is that in front of nuclear weapons, alliances are not effective as these weapons are weapons of mass destruction; the only way to protect oneself is to try not to get involved in the conflicts.

Nehru believed that: "The equation of defence is your defence forces plus your industrial and technological background, plus, thirdly, the economy of the country, and fourthly the spirit of people."\textsuperscript{41}

But to modernise armed forces one needs foreign assistance like

The more technical armies and navies and airforces get the more important becomes the industrial and technological base of the country. You may import a machine or an aircraft or some other highly technical weapon and you may even teach somebody to use it, but that is a very superficial type of defence because you have not got the technological background for it. If spare parts go wrong, your whole machine is useless. If somebody from whom you brought it refuses to supply a part of it, it becomes useless. So that in spite of your independence you become dependent on others, and very greatly so.\textsuperscript{42}

This is what happened in reality. Due to economic crisis India could not develop its own arms industry from the very beginning. Earlier the USSR provided noteworthy

\textsuperscript{40} Nehru, \textit{Selected Speeches, April 1961-September 1961} (New Delhi, 1961), p.98. See also Peter Worsely, \textit{The Third World} (London, 1964).

\textsuperscript{41} Nehru, n.7, p.39.

assistance to India to develop its own arms industry. After the collapse of the USSR, India has lost a precious partner who could supply defence equipments and technology.

Both countries are presently struggling hard to reconstruct their economies. Earlier they provided markets for each others products. From mixed economy and centralised economic administration they have to learn to live with market-oriented liberal economy. The US is taking advantage of this precarious situation. They have pressurised Russia not to sell defence technology to India, especially the US-Russia wrangling over transfer of cryogenic engine for India's space technology. That would hurt Russia's interests as well as of India. For India the 12-tonne high-performance engines were required to serve as the upper stage of GSLV. This restriction has slowed India's progress to develop ICBMs, as the launch of PSLV and GSLV got hampered.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty signed in 1971 came as a challenge to India's policy of non-alignment. But India's stand was that despite having signed the Treaty India maintains its independence in its external relations and defense affairs.

By believing in peaceful co-existence and friendship with all, India does not have any specific enemy theory. During the Cold War it had to protect itself against criticism on account of its treaty with the Soviet Union. India had to explain that in the circumstances as they prevailed, India had no option but to conclude the afore-cited treaty with the USSR. And the treaty makes it clear that it does not impinge on India's commitment to non-alignment.

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43 A Cryogenic rocket engine burns a super-cooled liquid oxidiser typically liquid oxygen, together with another liquid that may not be super-cooled, in order to achieve high performance from a given weight. *Strategic Digest* (New Delhi), vol.23, no.12, December 1993.

44 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in an interview on BBC by Mark Tully, 1 November 1971. *Years of Endeavours*, p.540.
6.5 Franco-German Reconciliation: Its Relevance in the Indo-Pak Context

The struggle to gain and remain pre-eminent power on the European continent wrought havoc to the whole continent. There was within seven decades between France and Germany brought cataclysmic destruction of the continent, so that both the countries had to shed off their age-old rivalries, and work together to build up united Europe. Both of them realized that the main villain of peace was the nation-state that loved inequality, and their endless endeavour to balance the imbalance led to perpetuation of war in Europe.

With the result, Jean Monnet, the father of European Unity movement brought the two nations together soon after the Second World War to negotiate on the modalities of supranational unity that would replace Balance of Power by the Unity of Power. This does not supplant the nation-state; it only supplements. As such, one European scholar pertinently observes:

On stark contrast, the postwar West European system has not only been stable but ultrastable. While some hundred wars and civil wars have battered the rest of the world, Western Europe has remained a solitary island of peace…. Instead of the perpetuation of the ancient arch-rivalry between Gauls and Germans, the world witnessed Franco-German friendship and the grand experiment of European integration. France even returned the Saarland to the Federal Republic in 1957.45

There was a time when any thought of rearmed Germany will make French shiver with fear but the efforts to overcome it irrespective of their differences resulted in a new beginning for Europe.

It is not that both nations do not have differences but for them construction seems to be more important than destruction. After emergence of bipolar system and nuclear rivalry between two superpowers Europe realised that there would not be any Europe any

more if nuclear war takes place between two giants as the battlefield was situated in central Europe in divided Germany. Germany was not only divided but had lost autonomy in matters of security as well.

Both the leaders de Gaulle and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer were disappointed by the US let down in 1957; the former because France was expecting US cooperation with it on its nuclear weapons programme; and the latter because FRG was expecting that it will be able to get equal status with other allies on security issue because Germany was directly concerned with the probable nuclear war in Europe.

The efforts to bring Germany closer to the French plan to unite Europe resulted in Franco-German treaty of 1963.

In 1960, de Gaulle had stated:

France's desire to 'contribute to building Western Europe into a political, economic, cultural and human group, organised for action progress and defence' and such a Europe 'the indispensable condition of the equilibrium of the world.'

Despite supporting de Gaulle's plan that the European political Union may seek a reform of NATO to upgrade the European role, Adenauer stressed on the idea 'that this union should support the continued existence of the Atlantic Alliance.' While dilating on significance of the Franco-German solidarity for Europe, de Gaulle had said,

On this solidarity depend all hopes of uniting Europe on the political and defense levels as on the economic level. In consequence, the destiny of the whole Europe, from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains; for if a structure, a firm, prosperous, and attractive organisation, can be created in Western Europe then there reappear the possibilities of a European

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46 At Rambouillet, before meeting Adenauer, in July 1960, 'Address of 31 May 1960, Major Addresses and Speeches of General Charles de Gaulle, p.78.

47 Wilfrid L.Kohl, French Nuclear Diplomacy (New Jersey, 1971).
balance with the Eastern states and prospects of a truly European cooperation.\textsuperscript{48}

According to the treaty that was signed by the French President de Gaulle and German Chancellor Adenauer on 22 January 1963, a formal mechanism for consultation between two states was established. Biannual meetings of the heads of state government, frequent conferences at the ministerial levels, including quarterly meetings of defence ministers were planned. Consultations were to be coordinated on each side by an interministerial commission, headed by a high-ranking foreign ministry official. The areas of these consultations were to cover "all-important questions of foreign policy", including questions relating to the European communities, East-West relations, NATO and other multilateral organisations of which both countries were members. Aid to the developing countries, youth matters, education and cooperation in general economic policy were also included.\textsuperscript{49}

In the area of defence, efforts were to be made to harmonize strategy and tactics to increase exchanges of personnel between the armed forces of the two countries, to study possibilities of cooperation on civil defence; both governments agreed to organize a joint research and development programme in the field of armaments.\textsuperscript{50}

Though treaty was signed by both France and Germany, the only discordant note was highhanded attitude of de Gaulle, but for the sake of Germany Adenauer tolerated it.

\textsuperscript{48} ibid.

\textsuperscript{49} See (Text of Treaty) Appendix 13.

\textsuperscript{50} ibid.
It was observed that the Franco-German axis was reinforced by de Gaulle and Adenauer's heightened awareness of the need to create "something durable".51

The successors of de Gaulle enhanced their cooperation with Germany on the same and different grounds.

And to play its part for Germany, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt expressed his faith in French political leadership. In his memoirs in the 1980s, he advocated a political leadership role for France in Europe, and advised Germany to take a modest back seat, remembering its past and concentrate on its economy.52

Under the Presidency of Mitterrand, who first extended hand of friendship towards German Chancellor Kohl in the early 1980s both countries got breakthrough in the area of defence. Cooperation between the two countries increased to develop common defence for Europe under the Franco-German axis.

Earlier in 1970 former French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann tried to set aside the differences of past in front of the French National Assembly. And he said,

It is wrong to allow the past to continue to cast its shadows over a nap on which geographical frontiers have been overthrown by wars, and over a present which poses grave but quite new problems. This kind of intellectual laziness is always wrong.53

The French commitment to its West German partner was expressed by the former French Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy. In 1981, in a speech in the IHEDN he said: "...
aggression against France does not begin when an enemy penetrates the national territory."

And to protect France and Europe against the threat of the Soviet ministers the French President asked German Chancellor to support NATO.

In 1982 Kohl proposed to establish Franco-German brigade to strengthen Europe's conventional defence. A plan that culminated into Eurocorps in which other European countries can also participate. Though this Eurocorps will work under the command of NATO if need arises.

Not only this prior consultation with Germany on the use of nuclear weapons against the targets in Germany, was also another major step that France took to bring the two countries closer.

Since mid-1950s joint arms production as well as civilian products became another core point of Franco-German reconciliation. Between 1955 and 1965 they worked on Noratals and Fouga Magister aircrafts, in the early 1959, C-160 transport aircraft equipped with two turbo prop engines; Alpha Jet combat aircraft, in the area of guided weapons, the Milan and HOT anti tank systems and the Roland low-level air defence system. Other projects for the 1980s were Franco-German anti tank helicopter (PAH-2); a super-sonic anti-surface missile; folding road equipment; 120 mm KE ammunition; a rapid landmine clearing system. Airbus, TA-9 and TA-11 aircrafts and HN-160 engine for Ariane rockets multilateral prospects. In 1988 establishment of Franco-German


55 Eurocorps, Appendix 9.

Security and Defence Council; the Finance and Economic Council and Environment Council are other examples of increasing cooperation between the two.

But it is not that their relations are free from frictions. The French President was apprehensive over military revival of Germany in October 1990 when German unification took place, further the Yugoslav break-up exposed serious differences between the two in the context of Central Europe.57

Fears of German hegemony and German Europe are coming to fore but spirit of Franco-German cooperation has not dampened.

The Franco-German paradigm could be relevant to countries in other continents as well, especially in case of India and Pakistan in South Asia: On the basis of common understanding, historical roots of the social, cultural and political dimensions of the Franco-German rivalry, how could they manage their conflict, adopt regional approach, and establish a South Asian Peace Order.58

First, in the relations between the two duets, there is no question of identities of the member states being submerged in any regionally organised cooperative endeavour.59

The question is whether cleavage between two nations - India and Pakistan created by conflictual interests on racial, religious, linguistics, social, cultural and civilizational issues could be overcome and cooperation can take place for further unhindered growth of two nations. Then, the added issue is how to bring about reconciliation between the


59 ibid.

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two, they reconciled irrespective of their different nationalities and religions. Are these diverging interests more important than the all round growth of the whole sub-continent?

It is commendable that the two European nations, whose past had been drenched in animosity towards each other, have buried their traditional rivalries, and are now forging regional unity. This is an example worth emulation in other world regions.

As in the case of the formal conflict-ridden Europe, so South Asia today presents the same spectacle. Apart from the sectarian centrifugal forces in each country, religious fundamentalism has disruptive effect in South Asia.

Religion is being used in furtherance of a particular communal force, not to humanize but to tear as under different communities in the sub-continent. On religious grounds, territorial dispute between the two countries poses grave threat to peace and security in the region. And this threat gets further compounded with the latest nuclear explosions by India and Pakistan.

Incessant hostility on the part of Pakistan has dragged India into a blind arms race on the continent making other neighbours uncomfortable. Until now, all the friendly overtures on the part of India have proved oneside affair. On 13 May 1985 the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had said in front of Rajya Sabha that, "Pakistan is a country that we have been historically having problems with.... We have offered to open up trade, to open up visits by visitors and tourists, but it must be on reciprocal basis." 60

On 20 April 1988 in front of Lok Sabha Rajiv Gandhi not only wished Pakistanis well but also emphasised on increasing cooperation between the two countries on the grounds that,

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Pakistan 'with whom we share much in common - language, music and literature... therefore, we greatly welcome any exchanges at the peoples level - visitors, tourists, students, journalists, trade unionists, women's groups....' and 'Peace between Pakistan and India is peace between the peoples.'

In 1988 some propositions akin to Franco-German treaty of 1963 were made by India to Pakistan but fizzled out due to lack of response on the part of Pakistan. These propositions were,

- a treaty of peace and friendship;
- an agreement for non-attack on nuclear facilities;
- discussions on new ground rules on the border;
- a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on hijacking;
- an MOU on air space violations by military aircraft;
- expansion of private trade;
- a move for non-discriminatory regime and the status of most favoured nation (MFN) treatment in trade;
- Indo-Pak joint ventures etc.  

Cultural and academic exchanges were proposed along with confidence building and risk reduction measures.

On its part former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1989 ruled out proposals like joint defence between India and Pakistan. She admitted that Kashmir was a difficult problem. She too supported confidence-building measures on the model of Helsinki accord (1975), and meeting of peoples of two countries with each other. Rajiv
Gandhi's proposal for non-attack on nuclear facilities was agreed to achieve mutual recognition of each other's nuclear capabilities.

There should be transparency on defence, space and atomic energy budgets. The war should be declared as non-viable instrument of policy; Kashmir issue has to be solved peacefully on the basis of Simla accord; mutual force reductions on borders with provision of verification.\(^{63}\) Suggestion was made about living with inevitably nuclear Pakistan, India should take necessary precautions and initiate confidence building.\(^{64}\) Without establishing democratic government removed from the threat posed by its own military, achieving peace and cooperation with Pakistan seems next to impossible. Because among with its vested interest would not allow peace to be established on the sub-continent.

On the issue of regional approach at the initiative of Bangladesh, South Asian Association on Regional Cooperation (SAARC) came into existence in 1985. This is the forum that brings together the heads of state/government of all the seven nations to discuss on issues of common concern. Bilateral contentious issues have been kept out.

For decades, the unresolved issue of Kashmir is hampering relations between India and Pakistan like France. France and Germany have once and for all settled their dispute on Alsace and Lorraine. If India and Pakistan have not succeeded in settling this issue, despite three wars, that means there is something basic that hinders reconciliation. One thing is clear that the two nations must find an answer to this issue through bilateral negotiations, as has been provided in the Simla Agreement. Any attempt to involve third

\(^{63}\) K.Subrahmanyam, n.11, pp.106-12.

\(^{64}\) Ibid, p.113.
party mediation into it is likely to complicate the matters, rather than facilitate any solution to it.

Another way to deal with this intractable problem is to freeze it for a certain number of years, say ten years. During this period, the two nations may cooperate in fostering normalized relations between themselves as well as with other South Asian nations. There could be projects initiated under the auspices of SAARC on wide-ranging areas, such as energy, transport, telecommunion, computer software, etc. There could be increased exchanges of students and faculty at various levels between different universities in the region. Perhaps, there could be attempts made at reducing expenditure on defence. And if this is done, all the seven countries could join together in setting up high tech projects, in which scientists from all the seven countries could participate. This could be something similar to EUREKA. Perhaps, such an enterprise may be named as South Asian EUREKA (suggested by Chopra in his SAARC 2000 and Beyond). Gradually, mutual trust and confidence will build up, and it is in this environment of mutual trust, that intractable issues like Kashmir could find some answer. Certainly, military-strategic approach to it would be mutually suicidal to say the least. Apropos, Nehru had stated beautifully as under:

countries make pacts and alliances often through fear of some other country or countries. Let our coming together be because we like each other and wish to co-operate and not because we dislike others and wish to do them injury.65

In the changing present world scenario cooperation and interdependence are the theme not non-cooperation or autarky. The compulsions of the Cold War impelled countries to adopt politics of military alliance but its collapse now raises the issue how

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65 Nehru, Speech in Moscow in 1955, n.7.

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these alliances could be considered valid in the post-Cold War scenario. Further, it is imperative that the two countries may learn from the systemic change at the global level, and adopt new techniques in finding solutions through collective endeavours, which must aim at opening up new vistas of cooperation so that basic issues of poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition may be tackled. Else, all these countries would continue to be dependencies of the big powers; at no stage, they would find a respectable position or status in the global community of nations.