CHAPTER - II

SHIFTING SECURITY PERCEPTIONS
AMERICAN APATHY TOWARDS PAKISTAN'S ARMS QUEST

After 1961, the United States undertook no major arms sales to Pakistan. Pakistan had to increasingly rely on other sources for its military requirements. China became the largest supplier of arms, taking over from the United States after the latter imposed arms embargo in 1965. But Chinese arms failed to meet the Pakistani requirements of sophistication. This compelled Islamabad to purchase weapons from the United Kingdom, France and other nations with whom Pakistan had no defence or any other strategic links. It made all purchases from Western Europe on commercial basis. Financial help for these purchases were provided by Islamabad's Arab friends. On the other hand, its ally, the United States, cold shouldered Pakistan's repeated requests for arms. Elaborating on the United States' arms sales policy towards Pakistan, the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, Marshall Wright, told the House Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia in 1974 that international relations had changed since 1959 and that the change had made it unnecessary for Washington to accede to Pakistan's arms requests despite American defence links with Islamabad.\(^1\) The United States

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\(^1\) This policy statement came in reply to a query by Lee H. Hamilton, Chairman, Subcommittee, whether Pakistan could depend on its defence agreements with the United States to gain access to military hardware. *Asian Recorder (New Delhi)*, vol. 20, 24 January-4 February 1974, p.11826.
provided Pakistan with only insignificant quantities of arms even after the
dismemberment of its one-time linchpin in South Asia. Islamabad, however,
continued its efforts to impress upon Washington the need to modify its
arms sales policy.

But, Pakistan was convinced that it would not be in a position to
persuade Washington to undertake large-scale arms transfers to Islamabad.
This reluctance of the United States stirred considerable anxiety in
Islamabad. Yet, Pakistan viewed the United States as a potential source
and was careful not to make any drastic changes in its policies that could
jeopardize future Pak-U.S. ties. Therefore, though the U.S. was not
receptive to Pakistan's request for arms, Islamabad was careful not to take
steps that would completely severe its relations with Washington. Thus,
even in its reach for new friends, Pakistan was careful to accord priority
to its relations with the Arab nations and China whose cooperation the
U.S. had begun to seek to counter Moscow.

For Islamabad these nations were seen as dependable sources of
help when compared to Washington whose course was too often
conditioned by domestic compulsions and the reluctance to endanger its
relationship with India. Therefore, no sooner did the Bangladesh crisis
end, than the new leader of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, undertook a
visit to Muslim nations calling it a "journey among brothers." Traumatized by the dismemberment of its eastern wing and virtually ignored by the United States, Pakistan's new priority was to "build anew" by intensifying its contacts with Arab nations. Simultaneously, fostering even closer relations with China and depicting Beijing as Pakistan's most reliable friend was a key element in Bhutto's foreign policy approach. But ironically, this very emphasis on forging closer relationship with Arab countries and China further contributed to the low American perception of Pakistan, for, it suited the United States well.

After the 1971 Bangladesh War, it was evident that the U.S. was in no position to increase its defense links with Pakistan. Although President Nixon persisted in his mental "tilt" in favour of Islamabad, there was nothing substantial that he could do for the South Asian State. The President was embroiled in the Watergate crisis that crippled his resolve to take momentous decisions. Coupled with this situation were the after effects of the Vietnam War which together precluded the possibility of a renewed Pak-U.S. military alliance. In the State Department and the Pentagon, no influential personages showed any disposition to stress the need to accede to Islamabad's arms requests.

Nevertheless, a relentless Bhutto did not give up hope. When

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Gerald Ford became President, the Pakistan Prime Minister undertook a visit to Washington in 1975. This was to persuade Ford to solve what Bhutto termed the most "delicate problem" -- the resumption of arms sales to Pakistan. Obviously, the explosion of a nuclear device by India in 1974 had shaken Pakistan and added a sense of desperation to its search for arms to ward off what Bhutto called the danger of "nuclear blackmail." Bhutto's shopping list included radars with "look-down capability" to enhance detection of low flying aircraft, "helicopter-borne surveillance radars and radars installed in Lockheed C-130 transports, and replacements for the ageing Rockwell F-86 fighters."  

President Ford was receptive to Bhutto's plea for the lifting of the arms embargo. However, he made it clear to Bhutto that the U.S. decision to consider Pakistan's request should not be deemed as representing the beginning of a large-scale provision of arms to Pakistan. Nevertheless, under the arrangement that Washington was willing to accept, Pakistan was permitted to buy such "lethal" weapons as might be approved by Washington. Thus, for the first time since 1965, Pakistan was accorded the permission to buy "lethal weapons." But, the State Department clarified that the decision to buy arms should not be deemed

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4 *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (Hightown, New Jersey), 21 April 1975, p.25.
as a major step signalling a renewed American strategic interest in Pakistan. Alfred L. Roy Atherton, Assistant Secretary for Near East and South Asian Affairs, made it clear that the U.S. was not going to resume its policy of arming Pakistan to maintain "parity" with India or engage in an "open-ended" policy of granting all that Pakistan requested.\(^5\)

The case for allowing potentially lucrative arms sales was also being strongly pressed by U.S. defence contractors and their supporters in Congress. One of the items under consideration, the A-7 bomber, was being manufactured by the LTV Corporation in Fort Worth, Texas. This was the constituency of the Democratic "heavy weight", James C. Wright. The benefits the sale of A-7s would bring Fort Worth, also influenced the decision to sell the planes to Pakistan. The manufacturing plant was facing closure as the planes were not anymore required by the Pentagon. But the Congressman who was also the deputy whip of his party managed to include the aircraft in the Defence Department purchase orders. Washington was also beginning to be concerned about its diminishing influence in Islamabad that its arms embargo was causing.

Another factor which influenced the lifting of the American embargo was the growing feeling in Washington that the effectiveness of its decision to deny Pakistan arms was being undermined by the liberal British and French arms sales policies. Additionally, Washington took note

\(^5\) *Asian Recorder*, vol. 21, 9-15 April 1975, p.12533.
of Pakistan’s complaint that while it was being denied U.S. arms, India was acquiring large quantities\(^6\) of weapons from the Soviet Union and other nations. Washington decided to undertake arms delivery to Pakistan to correct what Under Secretary of State, Joseph Sisco, said was "a rather anomalous situation" and for the perceived reason that Pakistan needed arms to quell the "separatist strife in North-West Frontier province and Baluchistan"\(^7\) and to diffuse threats that appeared to cause instability in Pakistan.

In a somewhat similar vein, *The Richmond Times Despatch* wrote that the "friendly government" of Prime Minister Bhutto needed the weapons "not to embark upon any foreign military adventure, but to keep the country in one piece.\(^8\) American defence analysts were also of the view that political instability was a major factor that induced the Soviet Union to increase its presence in the Indian Ocean.\(^9\) And more importantly, the American arms sales of 1975 could also have been influenced by Prime Minister Bhutto's assurance that if Pakistan were

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\(^6\) In a working paper attached to the State Department's announcement of the 1975 arms sales to Pakistan, it was noted that India had received $1,697,000,000 in outside arms while Pakistan had received arms worth only $851 million. *Asian Recorder*, vol. 21, 9-15 April 1975, p.12533.

\(^7\) *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston, Mass.), 25 February 1975.

\(^8\) *Richmond Times Despatch*, 27 February 1975.

supplied with adequate conventional weapons, it would detract Islamabad from its quest for nuclear weapons. In fact, senior officials of the State Department admitted in 1976 that the arms sales would be used as a lever to block Pakistan's nuclear programme.\(^\text{10}\)

It is thus discernible that the 1975 arms sales agreement with Pakistan can be attributed more to the American aim of retaining some influence in Islamabad and preventing any further instability in Pakistan, than to any effort designed to strengthen the American South Asian ally to once again play any important role in U.S. defense strategies. Therefore, in keeping with this limited objective, the Ford Administration did not find any need to rush the key item in the proposed sale, the A-7 aircraft.

Nevertheless, reports that the U.S. was considering the sale of military hardware to Pakistan evoked predictable Indian criticism. India contented that the sales would spark off an arms race in the subcontinent. The Indian External Affairs Minister Y.B. Chavan, put off his scheduled visit to the United States to attend the Indo-U.S. Joint Commission meeting scheduled for mid-March 1975. Further, the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi declared that the announcement of arms sales to Pakistan had "queered" India's "pitch" and that it would hamper the

\(^{10}\) *Asian Recorder*, vol. 22, 23-29 September 1976, p.13369.
normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan.\textsuperscript{11} The sharp Indian criticism to the lifting of the arms embargo coupled with the absence of any strong reasons for the U.S. to immediately strengthen Pakistan militarily, prompted the Ford Administration to leave the final decision to sell the "hot" A-7 bombers to the incoming President, Jimmy Earl Carter.

\textit{Carter's Arms Transfer Policy}

In 1977, Jimmy Earl Carter was elected as the 39th President of the United States. With his Administration came a new set of domestic and foreign policy priorities. The emphasis was clearly on an "almost aggressive reassertion of American idealism."\textsuperscript{12} In foreign affairs, Jimmy Carter advocated a virtual dismantling of the principles of containment which earlier Administrations followed with varying emphasis since the end of the Second World War. The Vietnam War had clearly shattered the U.S. resolve for sustained intervention abroad and contributed in large measure to the change.

Carter had even during his election campaign, advocated the need for the U.S. to water down its containment strategies. "Indeed, the Carter

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., vol. 21, 18-24 June 1975, p.12637.

\textsuperscript{12} Stanley Hoffman, "Requiem" \textit{Foreign Policy} (Washington, D.C.), no.42, Spring 1981, p.3.
Administration came into office articulating the supposition" that the Vietnam war had "destroyed the continuity of containment," as the "basis of its political will."\(^{13}\) The general mood until the end of the 70s in the U.S. was towards a dilution of American commitments abroad. Carter’s assumption of the Presidency "on a platform of moral redemption and retreat from containment"\(^{14}\) acted as a basis for its implementation. The American President therefore came to symbolise a "middle-of-the-road policy" framework. Carter developed the theme that "America’s image had been tarnished by the use of Machiavellian tactics, secret diplomacy, back channels, ‘Lone Ranger’-diplomacy, excessive concern with power politics and an accompanying neglect of principles and morality."\(^{15}\) His approach was more liberal and less militaristic than those pursued by his immediate predecessors. It implied that there would be lesser emphasis on military and security alliances.

In his policy pronouncements and in the choice of his senior staff, he reflected this line of thinking. The composition and locus of power

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14 Ibid., p.19.

also communicated this image. All the key officials\textsuperscript{16} of his cabinet were from the left of the conservative right. They primarily came from the Eastern Establishments, -- the Trilateral Commission and Council on Foreign Relations. Carter appeared to have avoided the Conservative groups of the Eastern Establishment, such as the Committee on the Present Danger, Business Round table, and Business Council. He chose from only the center and liberal side of the Establishment. Even Dean Rusk and Paul H. Nitze who belonged to the conservative school and were advisers to Carter during his campaign did not find any berth in the new Administration. Carter's Administration did not contain even one member from the "141 member Board of Directors of the hard-line anti-Soviet Committee on the Present Danger."\textsuperscript{17}

During his race for the Presidency, Jimmy Carter had expressed his disapproval of indiscriminate arms sales and the unnecessary foreign entanglements these sales begot. For the countries that looked towards the U.S. for its defence requirements, this was a disconcerting development. Hence, the prospect of the victory of Carter, as a Democratic nominee, was understandably a source of some anxiety to Islamabad. Pakistan had always found Republican Administrations some what more receptive to its

\textsuperscript{16} For details on the leanings of the key officials of the Carter administration, see : Laurence H. Shoup, \textit{The Carter Presidency and Beyond: Power and Politics in the 1980s} (California, 1980).

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p.104
pleas for security assistance.

When Carter was elected to the White House, he immediately initiated steps to reduce U.S. arms supplies to third world countries. Within a few months of the new Administration assuming charge, Carter on 13 May 1977 signed Presidential Directive No. 13 (PD-13) imposing a new set of regulations on the export of U.S. arms. This directive which was announced on 19 May 1977, brought into force a new conventional arms transfer policy.

The new arms sales policy was based on two fundamental assumptions: first that the unrestrained sales of weapons would result in disruption of stability in the various regions of the world, and second, the United States has a special responsibility as a leading arms manufacturer to take the lead in regulating its military exports. The new policy laid down three basic criteria/conditions to identify nations that would be entitled to arms transfers from the United States. The criteria were:

1. Arms transfers would only be used as an "exceptional foreign policy implement" that would be resorted to when it can be "clearly demonstrated" that such transfers would be in the interest of American security or where it could contribute to it.

2. Only where security of "close friends" are involved would

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arms transfers be effected. All other nations would have to look elsewhere for their defence requirements.

3. There would be no ordinary exception to this policy. There was, however, a provision for a Presidential waiver. But this waiver was only to be applied where it was clearly discernible that "extraordinary" circumstances existed to warrant the sale of military hardware to friendly nations. This exemption would be made to only offset quantitative or qualitative or other disadvantages to maintain a regional balance. Other than these conditions, there was also an annual ceiling placed on the dollar value of new "commitments of weapons and weapon-related items" under the United States Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and the grant Military Assistance Programme (MAP). 19

This policy regulation, however, exempted the NATO countries, Japan, Australia and New Zealand from its purview. 20 The implication of this new policy was that only nations falling within the "core" areas of American interests would henceforth be eligible for arms transfers from the United States. This core area represented primarily the NATO countries. Other than these countries, the nations which had military ties


with Washington or were considered to be strategically important, like Saudi Arabia were also exempted.

Thus, with the election of Jimmy Carter as the President, nations like Pakistan could not derive comfort from the new restrictive policy. Pakistan did not fall within any of the three declared categories that would entitle it to any substantial arms transfers. Pakistan not being a member of NATO did not fall within the totally exempted category. Therefore, when even nations like South Korea and the Republic of China were to be allowed only reduced purchases, Pakistan, a nation far less important to the U.S., faced bleak prospects of obtaining permission to purchase American arms. That Carter really intended to clamp restrictions on the sales of American military hardware was clearly demonstrated when he cancelled the proposed sale of the 110 Corsairs to Pakistan.

The new Administration also indicated that its arms sales policy would be selectively and vigorously tied to the global priorities in the U.S. security requirements. The position of Pakistan was further complicated because of the intrinsic import of the policy that only where there was a compelling need to maintain a regional balance would arms transfer be undertaken. Regional balance for Pakistan meant its military position vis-a-vis India -- a nation which Carter considered more important than Pakistan. Hence, the chances were extremely remote for Pakistan's constant lobbying for American arms to succeed.
The Nuclear Issue

On 18 May 1974, India exploded her first nuclear device with the professed aim of developing a nuclear programme for peaceful purposes. Besides the peaceful purposes to which nuclear energy could be employed, the explosion also constituted an announcement to the world that India could manufacture nuclear weapons. Predictably, the implications of the explosion were not lost on Pakistan. The reaction from Islamabad was swift. Prime Minister Bhutto accused India of "brandishing the sword of nuclear blackmail."\(^{21}\) Pakistan now felt that it would have to face its traditional enemy with a new weapon that could be used as "a means of pressure or coercion against non-nuclear countries."\(^{22}\)

Despite India's assurance that the nuclear test was meant for peaceful purposes, Pakistan refused to accept the Indian contention. It believed that now since India had successfully exploded a nuclear device and attained the capacity to produce nuclear weapons, Pakistan would be at a distinct military disadvantage. To overcome this perceived debility


\(^{22}\) Ibid.
caused by the lack of a nuclear capacity, Pakistan embarked\textsuperscript{23} on an ambitious programme to acquire nuclear reprocessing capacity of its own. This was done under the pretext that its nuclear programme was exclusively for peaceful purposes. But later developments and statements of Pakistani leaders laid threadbare the veiled intention of Pakistan. It was starkly clear from the notes and a dairy purported to have been written by Z.A. Bhutto from his prison cell while awaiting execution, that Pakistan was determined to produce nuclear weapons. Alarm ed by India’s 1974 nuclear explosion, Bhutto wrote that “Pakistan had no reason to lag behind” in the nuclear field.\textsuperscript{24} According to Bhutto, Pakistan was even prepared to “eat grass” to match India’s nuclear capability.

To the United States, the nuclear explosion by India came as a blow to its nonproliferation goals. By the 1970’s, nuclear proliferation had become an important issue with far-reaching consequences for the superpowers. Proliferation of the nuclear weapons, it was believed, "would complicate regional confrontation, pose political problems to the U.S., create risks of the superpowers being drawn into conflicts which

\textsuperscript{23} There is however, conclusive evidence indicating that even before the Indian explosion, Pakistan was contemplating means to acquire a nuclear capacity. The point that is sought to be made here is that, it was only after India exploded its nuclear device did Pakistan’s efforts become frantic. Moreover, Pakistan’s nuclear device programme began to have an impact on its bilateral relations with the United States only after the Indian explosion.

\textsuperscript{24} B.L. Kak, \textit{Z.A. Bhutto: Notes From the Death Cell} (New Delhi, 1979), p.43.
could involve nuclear weapons." Besides this professed reason, there was also the fear that proliferation of nuclear weapons would erode the political clout of the great powers. But when it came to Pakistan's regional rivalry, it relegated to the background American goals as it had always done. Despite intense American pressure, Pakistan concluded with France an agreement on 18 March 1976, for the construction of a nuclear reprocessing plant in Pakistan.

The previous Administration of Ford had also considered nonproliferation as an important foreign policy objective. The United States feared that if Pakistan were allowed to set up the nuclear reprocessing plant, a new arms race involving nuclear weapons might erupt in the subcontinent. It was argued that reprocessing capability would allow usable fuel obtained from spent nuclear fuel to be used to manufacture weapons-grade fissionable material. Therefore, despite his known sympathy for Pakistan in its difficulties with India, the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, strongly opposed Pakistan's nuclear adventure. During a visit to Pakistan, just two months after the Pak-French nuclear agreements had been signed, Kissinger strongly warned Pakistan to abjure its nuclear quest. There was a threat implied in Kissinger's warning.

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It meant that if Pakistan disregarded U.S. nonproliferation goals, it might result in the suspension of all future American aid. That was Kissinger's stick, while the carrot that he dangled was the prospect of increased aid if Pakistan became receptive to the U.S. position on the nuclear issue. Simultaneously, it exerted intense pressure on France to cancel its nuclear agreement with Pakistan. What was remarkable was that the American pressure continued despite French opposition to any interference from the U.S. The continuing pressure from the U.S. irked the French Premier Jacques Chirac who openly criticised the U.S. Administration for trying to "intervene in what concerns two sovereign States" and the French press termed the American move as a "blackmail." But the United States did not relent. To prevent Islamabad from acquiring a nuclear reprocessing facility, the United States is reported to have proposed an alternate plan to France. Under the plan proposed by Kissinger, the plant was to be set up in France rather than in Pakistan. While Pakistan was to own the reprocessing establishment, France was to have effective control over it.

Henry Kissinger's particular efforts to prevent Pakistan from going nuclear could be explained in the context of the traditional Indo-Pak enmity that had already spawned two major wars. The United States

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believed that "proliferation of nuclear weapons technology could add a more ominous dimension to a world in which regional political conflicts persist." In addition, there was also a fear in Washington that any nuclear bomb produced by Pakistan could fall into the hands of Arab radicals. In the event of such a development, it was reckoned that the Arab nations may be tempted to use the weapon against Israel.

If the Ford Administration had pushed hard to prevent Pakistan from going nuclear, the effort was renewed with added vigour after Jimmy Carter won the election in 1976. Under the Carter Administration, "the need to halt nuclear proliferation" came to be seen as "one of mankind's most pressing challenges." Carter made the nuclear issue the touchstone of Pak-U.S. relations. The intense pressure brought to bear on Islamabad on a very sensitive issue cast a pall over their bilateral relations.

Unfortunately for the Bhutto Administration, the American pressure came at a time when it was struggling to bring under control the domestic unrest that was rocking Pakistan. The American criticism of Bhutto at this juncture tended to further weaken the Pakistani government. There were widespread demands for provincial autonomy and movements calling

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for the ouster of Bhutto. But when it came to American nuclear nonproliferation goals, the Carter Administration continued to exert pressure on Bhutto, unmindful of the implications such pressure could have on the Bhutto government. Therefore, coming at a very difficult time, Pakistan, viewed the American *cri de coeur* as being "antagonistic" and "irresponsible", and a danger to the security of Pakistan.³¹

Meanwhile, American pressure reinforced by certain other West European nations forced France to reconsider its decision to sell the reprocessing plant to Pakistan. Despite Pakistani gratitude and goodwill, the French yielded to pressure from U.S. and France cancelled its offer to Pakistan. The United States was considering the resumption of aid to Islamabad in view of the disturbances in Iran and Afghanistan. But no favourable decision was taken as Pakistan continued to doggedly pursue its nuclear programme. Thus, as soon as it was announced in Islamabad on 24 August 1978, that the French-Pak nuclear deal had fallen through, the United States lifted the embargo on aid imposed as a response to Pakistan’s pertinacious attitude towards its nuclear deal with France. The circumstances under which the embargo was imposed and subsequently lifted were intended by Washington to serve as a clear warning to Pakistan against any fresh efforts to seek outside assistance to set up a

reprocessing facility.

After France cancelled the nuclear agreement, Pakistan embarked on a clandestine plan to acquire a nuclear reprocessing plant by buying the various components of the plant from Western Europe, mainly West Germany, Britain, Netherlands and Switzerland with financial support from Libya. The United States after having demonstrated its resolve to prevent the French-Pak nuclear agreement from going through, continued to pursue its nonproliferation goals stubbornly. U.S. also continued to insist that those nations who had not signed the nonproliferation Treaty of 1970 should do so without delay. In 1978, the United States Congress passed a new act called the Nonproliferation Act prohibiting American nuclear assistance to any nation which had not accepted the so-called "full scope safeguards." Further, in 1979, a new law in the form of the Symington amendment was made to section 669 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1976, barring economic and military assistance to nations that obtain equipment for nuclear enrichment without placing it under international safeguards. Pakistan had all the while resisted American efforts to persuade it to accept the full scope safeguards on the ground that India had similarly refused to comply with such limitations. With the passage of the Symington amendment, however, Pakistan once again confronted the danger of all American assistance being cut off if the Pakistani clandestine nuclear plans came to light. Thus, when American intelligence agencies
confirmed\textsuperscript{32} European reports that Pakistan was surreptitiously acquiring nuclear reprocessing capacity, the Carter Administration reacted strongly. It announced that most of the $40 million that had been approved by the Congress for Pakistan for fiscal 1979 and all the $45 million in assistance proposed for 1980 would be withheld. This was followed by a decision to wind up the Aid Missions in Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi.

As irony would have it, the second American aid embargo on Pakistan was imposed within two years, and the consequent strain in U.S.-Pak bilateral relations came at a time when developments of far-reaching future significance for U.S. security interests were taking place in West Asia. (These developments in Afghanistan and Iran and their bearing on subsequent U.S. policy will be dealt with in the subsequent chapter). What is sought to be explained here are the ramifications the Carter policy on nonproliferation had on Pakistan. The nonproliferation issue had gained much momentum and topical importance in the United States. This made it difficult for the United States to ignore Pakistan's pursuit of a nuclear arms development programme irrespective of the difficulties such a policy would engender. To dampen Pakistan's nuclear quest, Carter had even offered to sell Pakistan up to fifty Northrop F-5E Tiger II fighter planes and to assist Pakistan's nuclear power programme and also to lend diplomatic support for the Pakistani proposal calling for a nuclear-free zone

in South Asia.

The United States was clearly faced with the dilemma of promoting its nonproliferation goals while simultaneously trying to enlist Pakistan's support to respond to the brewing crisis in West Asia. *New York Times* reported\(^{33}\) that the Administration had approached Pakistan with new inducements of advanced conventional arms and threats of harsh economic sanctions. The newspaper revealed that the Administration even contemplated covert action against Pakistani nuclear facilities to prevent Pakistan from going ahead with its nuclear weapons programme. It was not long before the troublesome developments in Iran and Afghanistan were to force some rethinking within the Administration. The U.S. media too began drawing attention to the negative fallout Washington's attitude towards Pakistan could have on U.S. security interests. The *Christian Science Monitor*, for instance, wrote that the United States had "every strategic interest in bolstering rather than ruffling U.S.-Pak ties."\(^{34}\)

*Human Rights Concern*

Another development which hampered Pak-U.S. relations was the Carter Administration's professed concern for human rights. In 1970, an


\(^{34}\) *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 April 1979.
amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 had been made tying U.S. aid to the incidence of political prisoners to potential recipient nations. By 1976, two more crucial amendments were made and one such amendment of section 116 of the Foreign Assistance Act barred economic assistance to nations violating human rights.

When Carter assumed office, human rights became an important determinant of U.S. foreign policy. It "became the early cornerstone of Carter's foreign policy, and clearly differentiated him from his predecessors." Zbigniew Brzezinski has written that the concern for human rights stemmed from Carter's own private proclivities of "religious beliefs and political acumen." "His international human rights campaign is based on a missionary assumption that we [U.S.] must not permit violation of the American Bill of Rights in the world at large and that it is our [America's] duty to take the lead." It was designed primarily to "give credibility and a new image to a foreign policy badly weakened

35 Abernathy and others, n.15, p.59.
36 Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor 1977-1981 (New York, 1983), p.49. Carter had himself attributed his concern for human rights largely to the social milieu in which he grew up. Carter had reminisced that the denial of rights to the blacks and their legal segregation in Georgia, where he was a school going child, made him aware of the importance of human rights. Also see: Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith, Memoirs of a President (London, 1982), pp.141-151.
at home and abroad by the Vietnam debacle."\textsuperscript{38} More specifically, it sought to achieve three "interrelated" aims of building domestic support for a foreign policy that would continue to support intervention and confrontation at a time when such tendencies lost support at home. It discredited the Soviet Union and added a moral dimension to provide an image of "benevolence, integrity, and justice that was deeply needed for reconstructing the U.S. hegemony in the post Vietnam era."\textsuperscript{39} Making his intentions clear, Carter commented that "the government of the United States will continue, throughout the world, to enhance human rights" and that "no force on earth can separate us from that commitment."\textsuperscript{40} Carter revealed the priority his Administration was placing on human rights when he appointed an Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs with human rights officers in each bureau of the Department of State. In addition, an inter-agency committee was created "to review human rights and foreign assistance issues."\textsuperscript{41}

Pakistan's human rights record was very poor and the situation was no different in the late 1970s. The Amnesty International reported that there were over 2,000 political prisoners in Pakistan and that they were

\textsuperscript{38} Shoup, n.16, p.154.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p.155


\textsuperscript{41} Abernathy and others, n.15, p.59.
being tortured to extract confessions. In the same vein, Leonard Garment, a U.S. member of the U.N. Human Rights Commission criticised the Bhutto government for large-scale arrests of political opponents of the government in Islamabad. But there is no evidence to show that Pak violations of human rights substantially influenced Washington's policy making towards that country. The reason was that the American opposition to Pakistan's nuclear ambitions eclipsed all other issues which the United States considered important in South Asia. The implementation of this priority had already resulted in the curtailment/cancellation of U.S. assistance to Pakistan. But at the same time, the Pak violations of human rights, in a limited way, further contributed to the low American perception of Pakistan.

The mass imprisonment of political prisoners around the mid 1970's by Prime Minister Bhutto to stifle his opposition caused some trepidation in the United States. Further, the overthrow of the elected government of Bhutto in July 1977 and its replacement by the military dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq was widely interpreted in the United States as a serious reversal of Pakistan's experimentation with democracy. The consensus was that "Pakistan was engaging in a consistent pattern of gross

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violations of internationally recognized human rights."\textsuperscript{44} The establishment of special military courts to try "crimes against the state" with the authority to impose even death penalties with an open trial disregarding the "most basic due process protections" came up for scathing criticisms during the hearings.\textsuperscript{45} At the same time, it can be argued that if the nuclear issue had not eclipsed all other issues relating to Pak-U.S. ties, Washington would still have imposed restrictions on its aid to Islamabad if Carter's reaction to the policies of the Guatemalan regime were any indication. Carter's emphasis on the promotion of Human Rights was not merely rhetoric in nature. Carter cut off all aid to Guatemala in 1977 because of its repressive human rights policy.\textsuperscript{46} Thus, when the nuclear controversy was stretching thin the Pak-U.S. relations, the deteriorating position of human rights and the overthrow of Bhutto made it easier for the Carter Administration to exert more pressure on Pakistan. The United States found it propitious to exert pressure on Pakistan to further America's non-strategic interests -- nonproliferation goals, human rights


\textsuperscript{45} For details of the discussion, please see: Hearings, Ibid.

concepts and democratic ideals -- in the absence of any strategic role that Pakistan could perform for the U.S.

**U.S. Appraisal of India as the Dominant Regional Power**

A major factor that had begun to influence American policy toward Pakistan even earlier than the advent of the Carter Administration was Washington's perception that India should be regarded as the dominant power in South Asia. The defeat of Pakistan in 1971 contributed decisively to such an appraisal.

In the United States there was widespread criticism of the Nixon Administration's "tilt" towards Pakistan during the Bangladesh war. The Democratic Party platform, for instance, in 1972 criticised strongly the Nixon Administration's pro-Pakistani policies that had "seriously damaged the status of the U.S. in Asia."47 India had strongly reacted to Nixon's bias for Pakistan. The Administration, therefore, undertook a damage-limitation exercise and called for a "serious dialogue" with India. Nixon was compelled to undertake this exercise despite the President's known

dislike for India and Mrs. Gandhi in particular. The United States came to realise that "as long as India faces Chinese hostility and American indifference, New Delhi will have little option but to rely upon the Soviet Union. Moscow will always endeavour to exploit in the needy hours of India." But nothing concrete was done by either the Nixon or the Ford Administration to better Indo-U.S. relations. But it was clear that there was an implicit recognition in Washington of India's new dominance in the region.

There was a further enhancement of India's status when New Delhi exploded its first nuclear device in 1974. In a report submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Relations, it was concluded that India was central to the future of South Asia. The report added that India not only possessed a technical pool of competent scientists but was also capable of developing "nuclear explosives" by very "original techniques and processes." It also alluded to the fact that the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 had left India in a dominant position in South Asia.

Henry Kissinger writes that Richard Nixon was favourably disposed toward Pakistan. According to him Mrs. Gandhi's "moody silences brought out all of Nixon's latent insecurities", and that the two leaders were "not intended by fate to be personally congenial". Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston, 1979), p.848.


But this did not mean that the United States had begun to assign India the importance it had assigned Pakistan in the early days of their alliance. The difference in the new approach was that India gained more attention because Pakistan became less important. In addition, India’s size, its mammoth population, its geographical location and the Indian democracy began to weigh more in the absence of any present or immediate threats to U.S. strategic interests in South Asia.

Washington was aware that there was little prospect of inducing India to offer help in the American strategic schemes. Though Pakistan had a record of co-operation, the absence of even any perceived short range threats in the region inevitably meant that Washington saw no special need to woo Pakistan.

Of all the U.S. Presidents, the reality in the subcontinent was most clearly recognised by Jimmy Carter who was elected to the White House in 1976. His Administration sought to convey that while it was deeply interested in what remained of Pakistan, it also desired to improve working relations with India. Washington too adopted a less critical view of India’s non-aligned policy and acknowledged this was a realistic course reflecting Indian interests and its own standing as the most important country in the region. Such a course was seen as the most pragmatic option to counter any further rise in Soviet influence in India and to mitigate Indian anxieties about the evolving U.S. detente with People’s
Republic of China.

The Senate acting on the recommendations of the Carter Administration, approved in 1977 a $1.6 billion foreign aid bill. This contained the first significant amount of U.S. aid for India after the 1971 war. The imposition of emergency in India in 1975 and the adverse reaction it evoked in the United States, had provided for the first time some relief to Pakistan. In these circumstances it became difficult to single out Pakistan for not respecting democratic ideals. However, it was a short-lived respite. The defeat of Mrs. Gandhi in the 1977 general elections evoked widespread appreciation and admiration in the U.S. for the resilient spirit of democracy in India. Pakistan was once again placed in a disadvantageous position. To make things worse for Islamabad, almost at the same time as Mrs. Gandhi was defeated, Pakistan's stint with democracy met with an ignoble end.

Carter himself with sentimental references to his mother's stint in the Peace Corps in India gave the impression that he was attaching importance to rebuild and strengthen U.S. relations with India. "The President himself took a personal interest in the country [India]." The President on the other hand found no reason to undertake a similar

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exercise with regard to Pakistan.

Carter claimed to have a special regard for the new Indian Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, with whom he saw much in common. To the United States the Indian Prime Minister was an "anti-Communist" who cared for the territorial integrity of Pakistan as much as the United States did. More importantly, the United States viewed the policies of the Janata government as a departure from the pro-Soviet policies that the U.S. felt, characterised Indian policies under Mrs. Gandhi. Washington was specially heartened by what it believed to be the new government's concept of genuine "non-alignment" or what had been termed as the effort to be "completely neutral." Further, to the United States it appeared that the Janata Government in India was viewing less critically the growing American presence in the Indian Ocean and adjoining areas. Washington felt that India was attributing the growth of the U.S. presence to a "realpolitik" approach to foreign policy. To the United States this constituted a departure from the policies of the earlier governments which frequently criticised U.S. Naval presence in South Asia, especially in the


Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{54}

The Carter Administration's perception of India was undoubtedly confirmed when the American President undertook a visit to India in 1978. It is also not insignificant that Carter was the first American President to visit India without stopping in Pakistan. Carter had clearly placed India before Pakistan. In his speech to the Indian Parliament during his visit to India, Carter explicitly recognised India's increasingly important role in world affairs and acknowledged that India had become a nation of global importance.\textsuperscript{55} These developments were understandably viewed with concern in Islamabad. At the same time, Carter and his senior associates had been careful enough not to make any statements derogatory to Pakistan or that the U.S. was not interested in Islamabad. One significant issue for Pakistan was the attitude of the Carter Administration to the controversial issue of shipment of enriched Uranium to India. The President was willing to overrule the recommendation of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and authorise the shipment of enriched Uranium to India. This willingness had a profound impact on Pakistan's own nuclear quest.

India's Prime Minister Morarji Desai had publicly renounced any further nuclear explosions and pledged neither to manufacture nor to

\textsuperscript{54} Lawrence Ziring, "Pakistan and India: Politics, Personalities, and Foreign Policy", \textit{Asian Survey} (California), vol. 18, no. 7, July 1978, p. 7-27.

acquire any nuclear device. Nevertheless, the President was seen as singling India out for preferential treatment. To Pakistan and its supporters, it appeared to be a rather anomalous policy. For, both the countries had not signed the Nonproliferation Treaty and not accepted the "full scope safeguards" making the policies of both India and Pakistan identical. That Pakistan was being discriminated against even after the U.S. believed that India had diverted U.S. supplied heavy water for its nuclear explosion, clearly drove home the point that Delhi was being accorded far more importance by Washington than Islamabad.

It was during the Carter Administration that Indo-U.S. relations perhaps reached its apex. Indeed, Indo-U.S. relations, in the words of the then Presidential Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had "never been better." No previous Administration had accorded India more importance than Pakistan and acknowledged that "the most crucial factor of the subcontinent ... is the central dominating position of India." In contrast, under the Carter Administration, the American perception of Pakistan and


58 Cohen and Park, n.55, p.10.
their relations reached the lowest nadir. Indeed, the Carter Administration mostly viewed and treated Pakistan with the status reserved for a small and unstable third world military dictatorship involved in the clandestine acquisition of nuclear weapons. Therefore, for the first time since the Second World War, there was an incumbent of the White House, who was willing to recognise India’s predominant position in the subcontinent.

WINDS OF CHANGE

By middle of the 1970s, Soviet influence and power began to grow in West Africa and South West Asia. Soon the U.S. found that the pro-Western regimes in these areas were coming under direct pressure from Soviet supported “liberation” movements. In addition, several nations aligned to the U.S. were facing increasing threat from opposing internal forces. These adverse developments, for the U.S. that took place in Africa and West Asia, particularly in Iran, lead to re-appraisals of the expanded Soviet Naval capabilities in the region. This in turn actuated an increased U.S. Naval presence in the Indian Ocean which had not received significant U.S. attention earlier. The growing importance that was being attached to the ocean adjoining the Persian Gulf, was bound to lead American planners to take a fresh look at the possibilities of again seeking
Pakistan's cooperation.

Since the end of the Second World War, however, the U.S. had been maintaining a skeletal presence in West Asia. In 1949, the U.S. had rented from the British a naval facility in Bahrain and set up a small naval presence in the Middle East, called MIDEASTFOR, rotating two destroyers from the Atlantic fleet.\(^59\) In the 1960s the U.S. introduced nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean area to get a new "angle"\(^60\) to increase the capability of Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) on Soviet and Chinese targets. Washington and London joined hands to increase Western presence in the Indian Ocean region. But in 1971, Britain withdrew from the Middle East and the "East of Suez." An anxious United States of America moved quickly to fill what was called the "vacuum"\(^61\) created by the withdrawal of the forces of

\(^{59}\) Department of State Bulletin, Vol.70, 8 April 1974, p.372.


\(^{61}\) In the ultimate analysis, the reasons for the growing U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean is linked to the American aim of extending power and to acquire a strong military interventionist capability in order to be able to exert pressure on nations in the region. U.S. Military officials themselves admit that the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean had little concrete influence on the U.S. decision to increase its naval presence. For the statement of J. Owen Zurhellen Jr., Deputy Director of U.S. Arms Control (continued...)
The American plan to increase its presence in the Indian Ocean gained sudden momentum with the onset of the oil crisis in 1973. American presence and interest in the Indian Ocean and the mouth of the Persian Gulf substantially increased as a result. The opening of the Suez Canal also strongly spurred the quickened pace. With the Canal opened, the distance between the Soviet Black Sea fleet at Sevastopol and the Persian Gulf, was reduced by 2,500 miles. Further, with the opening of the Suez Canal, the distance of 10,400 miles which the Soviet ships had to travel to reach the Persian Gulf through the Cape of Good Hope, was reduced to 3,300 miles. This enhanced the capacity of the Soviet Navy to intervene in the area when required at short notice. Military experts in the U.S. argued that the Soviet Black Sea fleet deployed in

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61(...continued)


the Mediterranean would be able to sustain a larger presence in the Indian Ocean in view of the reduced distance from the home port that eased the logistical problems. Prior to the opening of the canal, the Soviet Union had to detach ships from its Pacific fleet based at Vladivostock to operate in the Indian Ocean. As a result, the American policy makers came to believe that if a growing Soviet Naval presence went unchecked in the Indian Ocean, then the sea routes to Iran and the Persian Gulf States, the Gulf of Aden and Bab-el-Mandeb and the oil rich countries would be threatened by Soviet influence. In addition, what added urgency to American moves was the increasing feeling in Washington that Moscow was harboring grand designs to move into the Persian Gulf and take control of South Africa's mineral wealth.64

The size of the American ships placed Washington at a specific disadvantage. The Soviet ships were comparatively small and therefore could easily navigate through the Suez Canal. This was for the reason that Moscow's naval strategy emphasised the deployment of smaller ships

64 Statement of Dr. Igor Glagolev, former Senior Research member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Science and a former Adviser to the Central Committee. A somewhat similar opinion was voiced by Dr. T.B. Millar of the Australian National University. Anthony Harrington, "The Indian Ocean and U.S. Security", Vital "Speeches (Southold, N.Y.)", vol. 46, no.22, 1 September 1978, p.674.
in comparison to the U.S. dependance on large and bulky carrier lead task forces. On the other hand, there were limitations on the class of ships that could navigate through the Suez Canal because of the generally large size of the American naval vessels. This limitation too had an important influence on the U.S. decision to significantly increase its naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Additionally, and more importantly, the Soviet Navy had acquired a blue water capability. This resulted in an enhanced capacity of the Soviet Navy to engage in the "show of the flag" in distant areas. This growing capability of the Navy in conjunction with the Gorshkov Doctrine which implied that a powerful navy for Moscow was as important for the Soviet Union as it was for the British in the past, impressed upon the American Naval planners the need to strengthen their forces to meet the threat. 65 This development also lent credence to the American fear that Soviet Union would use "military assistance and shows of force to influence events where their major interests are at stake." 66

Referring to the sharp increase in the Soviet deployment in the Indian Ocean, Seymour Weiss, the Director of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, testified before the Subcommittee on the


Near East and South Asia of the House Committee on Foreign affairs that the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean rose from 1000 ship days in 1968 to 6,500 in 1973, while that of the U.S. registered only a "moderate" increase from 1,150 in 1968 to just over 2,000 in 1973. 67 This was seen as a dangerous trend that could pose severe problems for the U.S. in the future. The oil embargo imposed by the Gulf nations on the West had already heightened their fears. Coupled with an increasing military activity of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean region, U.S. Naval strategists began arguing that immediate counter action had to be taken to reassure America's allies and friendly nations in the region. If this was not accomplished it was felt in the Pentagon that the American influence in the "Oil Wells" of the world would be severely compromised. The U.S. therefore established a full fledged communication base in Diego Garcia in 1973 and increased the American naval presence in the Indian Ocean.

In addition, to reinforce logistical facilities, the American Navy sought bunkering and aircraft landing facilities in Diego Garcia to enlarge the American presence in the area. 68 Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the need to expand the American base in Diego Garcia, the Defence Secretary James Schlesinger revealed that the Soviet

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67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., p.374.
Union was substantially improving its base facilities in Somalia and even introducing Soviet missiles there.\textsuperscript{69} An expanded U.S. presence was therefore considered imperative to reassure America's friends in the region about Washington's commitment to their security. The augmentation of U.S. presence was designed to serve as a warning to the adversaries of the West that it would not tolerate any erosion of "American influence" in the Persian Gulf.

But even during the period of increasing military activity in the Indian Ocean, the U.S. did not find it expedient to involve Pakistan to augment pro-Western presence in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan, however, participated in the CENTO exercises. For instance, in 1974, Pakistan hosted the largest CENTO exercise called "Midlink" which was supposedly directed to demonstrate the resolve of the U.S. and friendly nations to protect the oil lanes from any Soviet threat. Washington's efforts to continue maintaining at least minimum military links with Pakistan can be interpreted as an effort by the U.S. to ensure that in case of any eventuality, they would not have to start looking for allies. It was also perhaps another attempt to reassure Pakistan that Washington still considered the nation important from its strategic angle. But CENTO exercises were few and far between and no large-scale exercises were conducted after the Midlink exercises.

In the meantime, the Western presence steadily increased in the Indian Ocean. The U.S. had established new military facilities in the periphery of the Indian Ocean and feverishly upgraded its Diego Garcia base. Surprisingly, even under these circumstances, the U.S. did not find it beneficial to accept the Pakistani offer of an air and naval base at Gwadar on the shore of the Arabian Sea close to the Iranian frontier. The offer was originally made by the Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to President Nixon in 1973 and renewed thereafter to the Ford Administration in 1975.

Strategically, a base at Gwadar would have served the U.S. well because of its closer proximity to the Persian Gulf region by about 2,000 miles. But it was perhaps reckoned in Washington that the advantages of such a base would be outweighed by the political costs Washington could have to pay for the close relations the U.S. would have to forge with Pakistan for the base. Washington was also aware of the fact that any close relations with Pakistan would heighten intra-regional rivalry in the subcontinent. Moreover, Pakistan was beset by instability and there was no surety that any U.S. base, if set up in Pakistan, would survive the upheavals.

Pakistan, on its part, was all the while advocating an increased American and Western Presence in the Indian Ocean. It continuously harped on the theme that it was in the interest of the Western nations
to counter the increasing Soviet presence in an area close to the oil rich regions. The Pakistani Prime Minister said in an interview that the Indian Ocean had become a "critical area" where the Soviet Union was attempting to establish "hegemony."\(^70\) But there was little doubt that Pakistan was encouraging the Western presence to counter the steady growth of the Indian Navy which Pakistan saw as a threat to its own security. Evidently, Pakistan hoped that the establishment of an American naval and air base at Gwadar would again bring the U.S. closer to Pakistan and stem the indifference that had come to characterise American policy toward Pakistan. The setting up of a base in Pakistan would have invariably brought Islamabad military and economic aid besides diplomatic support in its historical rivalry with India. Further, any Pakistani participation in the patrolling of the Indian Ocean would have automatically meant access to American facilities in the Indian Ocean to the disadvantage of India.

It was manifest that the U.S. did not envisage any role for Pakistan in its increasing presence in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan was both economically and militarily a weak nation. Its Navy had neither the ships capable of patrolling the Indian Ocean and supplementing the U.S. presence, nor the finances to acquire them. Pakistan had no substantial

naval strength. To assign it any naval role in the area the U.S. would have had to give Pakistan new sea vessels and incur additional financial expenditure. New financial outlays would have been required to subsidise or finance sales of ships and allied equipment to Pakistan to equip it for any military role in the Indian Ocean.

The position was that whatever little role Pakistan could perform to safeguard American interests could be better done by Iran under the Shah. Iran with its oil riches looked as the ideal nation that could be encouraged to play an active role in the Indian Ocean. The Shah believed that his country was already on the way to becoming a regional power by virtue of its oil wealth and the strong American backing. The U.S. on its part encouraged the Shah in his ambitions to make Iran the most powerful regional power. Henry Kissinger revealed this when he declared that Iran was playing a "constructive" role in the Indian Ocean and that it had the "support" of the U.S. 71

In the Iranian ambition, the Pentagon clearly discerned a confluence of U.S.-Iran interests. It was in U.S. interests to have a friendly nation like Iran become a powerful regional power with expanded military capabilities. As long as the Shah of Iran protected the oil-rich nations and the oil routes, it was only doing for the U.S. what it would have to do otherwise at considerable political and economic costs. The Iranian

attempts to also forge regional alliances could have only served U.S. strategic interests. The Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait, Dr. Rexa Ghassimi, announced in 1977 that Tehran had called for a collective security effort to protect oil lanes, asserting that "there was a link between the security of the area and the security of the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean." Without having to incur any expenditure on its own and with the prospect of obtaining a sizeable part of the surplus petro-dollars Iran held, through increased military sales, the U.S. worked to prepare a more than eager Iran for military roles to augment pro-Western presence in the Indian Ocean. Ironically, to the extent Iran was able to increase its defense strength and play a more active role in the Gulf, Pakistan’s utility for the U.S. eclipsed. But at the same time, there was an indication that if events in West Asia were to take a different turn with the increasing assertiveness of Moscow’s foreign policy, then Pakistan’s possible assistance in U.S. Security policy would have to be re-assessed.

Re-assessment of Pakistan’s Importance

By 1975, detente which was steadily ushering in an era of restraint

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on the part of the superpowers began to exhibit signs of rupture. The primary cause of this development was the perceived emboldening of the Soviet foreign policy. The U.S. had expected that detente would restrain the Soviet Union from using the umbrella of nuclear parity with the United States to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. But, by the mid 70s, the Soviet Union began to push its foreign policy goals intervening more actively and through proxies in areas outside its traditional sphere of influence, in what the adviser to President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, argued was Middle East, Africa, Iran and Afghanistan creating an "arc of crisis." This was achieved through the increasing use of its newly acquired logistical capability in a manner reminiscent of the U.S. strategy during the Cold War.

To the Washington military think tank, Soviet military power became closely linked to its foreign policy. The argument that attainment of strategic parity would make the Soviet Union more willing to take risks\(^73\) began to have more subscribers. This they argued would now enable Moscow to sustain military campaigns far away from its shores. The U.S. Intelligence Organisations too supported this thesis and assessed that the Soviet ability to bring to bear its power in trans-border regions

increased eight-fold in ten years. Soon the United States started again evolving policies to counter wherever the Soviet influence and presence grew. Simultaneously, it began reorienting its policies to support pro-Western nations particularly in areas considered closer to the oil rich Gulf nations. To attain a stronger influence in the region, the United States started looking for friends and allies that could help it circumscribe Soviet influence. Countries like Pakistan once again came to be viewed with more interest than during the period of detente. This did not, however, mean that the strategic planners in Washington were moving with any sense of urgency for enlisting the support of nations in and around the ‘arc’. But at the same time, there were indications that the developments were being watched very closely by Washington. Pentagon started reviewing various options and slowly edging closer to nations like Pakistan that could be of potential assistance to the U.S.

Soviet Intervention in Africa

While the United States was re-assessing Pakistan’s importance in the new setting, the developments in Africa were also to have some bearing on Islamabad’s strategic importance for Washington. With the onset

of the oil crisis, the instability in Africa disturbed American strategic planners. The Soviet Union involved itself in the Angolan civil war in 1975. It ferried thousands of Cuban troops to Angola at a crucial stage in the civil war and turned the tide of the battle in favour of the Soviet backed popular movement for the liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.). Even in such appraisals, there was hardly any emphasis on a new or enhanced role for Pakistan.

The Soviet Union, however, continued to increase its presence in Africa. It had already gained a foothold in Addis Ababa. In 1977, Moscow dropped Somalia for a bigger bargain, Ethiopia. In the very next year, about 7,000 Soviet "advisers" and Cuban troops were flown in to augment the Soviet presence in Addis Ababa. This enabled Ethiopia to repel a Somalian attack in the Ogaden region. The defense planners in Washington continued to warn about the increasing threat from the expanding Soviet presence in the strategic region of the "horn of Africa."

By 1977, the State Department estimated that Cuba had military advisers and troops numbering 10,000-15,000 in Angola, 1,000 in the People's Republic of Congo and smaller numbers in Guinea, Somalia and Mozambique. Predictably, the increasing Communist influence was causing considerable rethinking of U.S. policies. Referring to the increase in Soviet arms, advisers and Cuban personnel in Africa, the

American Vice-President, Walter Mondale, remarked that "we [U.S] cannot ignore this increase and we [U.S] oppose it." U.S. policy makers began believing increasingly that the "Russians were embarked on some nefarious African 'grand design' -- perhaps an attempt to develop a chain of positions along the Western oil routes." Just as the hardliners in Washington were advocating an increased Western role in the effort to frustrate the moves of an "emboldened" Soviet Union after its war by "proxy" in Angola, Kalangan forces led by Angola based Cuban forces invaded Zaire, a pro-Western nation, in 1978. To counter such moves, with the support of the United States, French military instructors and Moroccan troops landed in Zaire to interdict the invading forces from the copper rich province of Shaba in the northern part of the country. Nevertheless, Moscow's influence began to grow in Mozambique, South Yemen, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. Cuba also introduced its forces to back movements arrayed against Western influence especially in Africa and more particularly in Angola. With this development, the fear that Moscow's influence would soon replace that of the West added credence to the anti-Soviet theory of Pentagon hardliners. Meanwhile, in what the Western military strategists calculated was a testimony of added Soviet confidence, Moscow began sending its

76 Ibid., 27 May 1977.
77 Adam, n.30, p.65.
men to replace Cuban airmen who were assigned the task of promoting Soviet influence overseas.\textsuperscript{78}

\textit{The Afghan Crisis}

By 1978, it appeared that events that could compel a re-thinking in U.S. strategic assessment of Pakistan were unfolding in quick succession. In the mid 70s it was West Asia and Africa that the U.S. Strategicians felt were areas that were being threatened by Soviet influence. Now the theatre began to shift to South West Asia. The American fears were compounded on 22 April 1978, when the Communist Party of Afghanistan, backed by a segment of the Afghan armed forces, overthrew President Muhammed Daud Khan who had come to power in 1973. Soon, a Marxist-Leninist government was established in Afghanistan under the leadership of Nur Muhammed Taraki. The Soviet Union became the first nation to recognise the leftist regime in Kabul and in a short time concluded with the new government over thirty aid agreements.\textsuperscript{79}

In the United States, Moscow's increasing ties with Kabul were seen as a development that had far-reaching implications for the West. It was felt that Moscow harboured a desire to secure an access to the

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Time}(Tokyo), 8 August 1979.

\textsuperscript{79} Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan Under the Khalq", \textit{Problems of Communism}, vol.28, July-August 1979, p.34.
warm waters of the Indian Ocean. For this purpose it was believed that the Soviet Union would move through Afghanistan and exploit Pakistan's troubles with Baluch rebels. The intimate Soviet-Afghan relations that were being forged were viewed with consternation in Washington. The U.S. began to increasingly feel that Afghanistan was in the process of being transformed into an extension of 'Soviet territory'. After the 1978 coup, Soviet power was seen as bordering Pakistan in the Khyber pass. It was felt in Washington that Afghanistan which had for long served as the traditional buffer that kept the Soviet Union away from its alleged historical ambition of reaching the Indian Ocean, was seen as having been replaced by Pakistan.\footnote{David Van Praagh, "Pakistan's New Buffer Role Against the Soviets", \textit{Business Week}, 21 August 1978, p.48.} Given the perceived American stake in preventing the Soviet Union from gaining any access to the Indian Ocean, Pakistan's importance for the United States took an upward swing.

At the same time, by mid-1978, the American position and influence in South West Asia also weakened. It threatened to take a "precarious" turn if the Soviet Union managed to secure more influence in the region. The Shah of Iran was fighting for his survival and the hope that Washington's handpicked nominee for "regional leadership" would survive to continue playing that role dwindled. In the light of these developments, Pakistan which was located in the corridor to the Persian
Gulf and was a part of the "arc of crisis" was seen as a nation whose stability was of increasing importance to the U.S. During the visit of Henry Kissinger in December 1974 to Afghanistan, the U.S. Secretary of State tried to persuade Afghanistan to reach some modus vivendi with Pakistan on the long-standing Baluch and Pakhtun problem.81 Under the bidding of the Shah of Iran, Kabul and Islamabad also entered into an agreement that Afghanistan would neither aid nor give refuge to Baluch and Pakhtun rebels.82

With the establishment of a leftist government in Afghanistan under the leadership of Nur Muhammed Taraki, foreign policy pundits in U.S. argued that Kabul will have no intentions of making good the promises of the previous government. Pakistan’s problems with Baluch and Pakistan separatist movements, it was argued, would now increase with assistance from Afghanistan. The pronouncements of the new Afghan leadership only exacerbated the American concerns. Within months of the coup, the new government declared that the Baluch and Pakhtun problems "should be resolved in the light of the historic facts of this region"83 -- a warning that Afghanistan would not promise not to aid these forces.

The new government in Afghanistan indicated that peace between

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81 Indian Express (New Delhi), 16 December 1974.
82 Pakistan Economist (Karachi), 4 November 1978.
Pakistan and Afghanistan would be hard to come by unless the Baluch and Pakhtun sentiments are accommodated by Pakistan. The integrity of Pakistan which had been considered "vital" by successive U.S. Administrations now became a strategic imperative for Washington. The Under Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, aired that anxiety when he declared that the Carter Administration was concerned about the possibility of "Pakistan's internal problems" lending "themselves to exploitation by foreign sources."\(^8^4\) A Pakistani daily, Nawqi Waqt, in a London datelined report also revealed that according to a secret assessment which the U.S. Defence Department made in May 1979, Pakistan would be destabilised by the Soviet Union in the effort to reach the Indian Ocean.\(^8^5\)

Further, the pentagon was alarmed when a 20 Year Treaty of Friendship and cooperation was signed between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union in November 1978. The continuous augmentation of Soviet presence in South West Asia, West Asia and Africa were seen as a well orchestrated move by Moscow to gain influence in the region to the exclusion of the United States. With civil strife in Iran and a Soviet foothold in Afghanistan, it was argued that Washington should reconsider


its strategic ties with Pakistan and seek its cooperation in the effort to defeat Soviet "schemes". The nuclear issue was nevertheless hampering any significant policy change toward Pakistan and standing in the way of renewal of arms supply to Pakistan. This was evident from the fact that as soon as Zia-ul-Haq announced that the Pak-French nuclear deal had fallen through, Washington announced the resumption of aid to Pakistan. The resumption of aid was a clear signal that the Afghan drift toward Moscow and the turmoil in Iran had influenced this decision. In addition to the threat to American influence in the Persian Gulf States, the tension brewing in South and North Yemen also enhanced Pakistan's importance for the U.S.

The Yemens were strategically important nations because they could exercise control over the access to the strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, through which 60 per cent of the oil consumed by Western Europe and Israel passes. The U.S. had long suspected South Yemen of being a Russian surrogate. In 1971-72, Soviet supplied Mig-21s flown by Cuban pilots had attacked border villages of Saudi Arabia. In July 1978, the pro-American North Yemeni President was assassinated. Within 48 hours

87 Time, 10 July 1978.
of this assassination, Abdel Fatah Ismaili, a fanatically pro-Soviet member of the Presidential Council in neighbouring South Yemen overthrew the South Yemeni President who was working towards better relations with the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. A Soviet hand in the coup was suspected. The Wall Street Journal wrote that the Soviet pilots who were in South Yemen at the time of the coup helped in the overthrow of the President.\textsuperscript{89} This was seen as yet another attempt by Moscow to gain more influence in and around the Persian Gulf. Washington now believed that since South Yemen had a stauncher pro-Soviet leader as its President, there may be a renewed interest in creating unrest and trouble in Saudi Arabia -- the only remaining big American ally in the Gulf.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, despite Taraki's claim that Kabul would follow its policy of non-alignment, the strong ties that were being forged with Moscow appeared to the U.S. as an alarming signal. With the establishment of the Taraki government, Soviet-Afghan relations became more intimate. Within months of the revolution, 3,000 to 4,000 Soviet military "advisers" flew into Kabul to help strengthen the Taraki government. It was perhaps also not considered a mere coincidence that the new Afghan leader's first foreign tour abroad in December 1978, took him to Moscow. During that very first trip, the now familiar 20 Year Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation was signed with Moscow. Pakistan

\textsuperscript{89} Wall Street Journal (New York), 8 September 1978.
which had already been wary of the Afghan support for the Pakhtun rebels saw in the fast increasing contacts of the new Taraki regime with Moscow, a clear danger to its security. The Soviet support for the Afghan stance on the Pakhtun issue since 1973 was already seen in Pakistan as a "Soviet brow beating to induce Pakistan" to join the 1969 Asian Security Plan floated by Brezhnev. Therefore, the new pace with which Afghanistan was establishing newer lines of contacts with Moscow could not but increase Pakistan's and U.S. concern about the probability of a strengthened and more active Soviet support for Kabul on the Pakhtun issue.

The close relations being forged with Moscow and the 1978 treaty between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union could not but heighten U.S. concerns about the Soviet intentions in the region. For, the new treaty came close on the heels of a similar treaty that was signed between the Soviet Union and Ethiopia referred to earlier. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, the Soviet moves in "Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Yemen ... cumulatively" presented a "serious problem for the stability of the region and for the West's secure dependence on oil." Thus, because of Moscow's growing influence in the region, Washington was forced to

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91 *Newsweek* (New York), 18 December 1978.
ignore the strains in Pak-U.S. relations and undertake in 1978, the largest arms delivery to Pakistan in over two decades.\textsuperscript{92}

It had become evident that the Carter Administration had slowly begun to have second thoughts about persisting in its neglect of Pakistan. The developments in Afghanistan influenced the rethinking. Washington continued its aid and assistance to Afghanistan pursuing a policy of "watchful waiting." But one incident that took place on 14 February 1979 prompted and accelerated change in the American policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan. On that day, the American ambassador to Afghanistan, Adolph Dubs, was killed in a Soviet-directed operation to rescue him from the hands of four extremists who had held him hostage. The U.S. drastically reduced its economic assistance programs, withdrew peace corps volunteers and terminated military training programs. To the U.S., "the Afghan handling of the rescue operation portrayed a fundamental shift away from Afghanistan's traditional non-alignment policy."\textsuperscript{93} As a result, the Afghan-U.S. relations touched a new low. From this point, as the Soviet Union charged, the U.S. began making some military supplies available to rebel forces fighting the Taraki


\textsuperscript{93} Testimony of Jack C. Millor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 15 May 1979, in: \textit{Department of State Bulletin}, vol. 79, April, 1979, p.54.
government. It was further alleged that Egypt, China and Pakistan were also involved in the provision of assistance to the rebels in consonance with U.S. moves.\textsuperscript{94} However modest may have been the Pak-U.S. aims or actions in Afghanistan at this point, it was the first time in years that the U.S. and Pakistan became close partners in a concerted move against an irritant threatening the stability of Pakistan. This suggested a heightened American concern for the territorial integrity of Pakistan as also the use of Pakistan in moves directed against a hostile regime in Afghanistan.

\textit{The fall of the "Gendarme"}

The regime of the Shahanshah of Iran faced mounting domestic opposition by 1978. It was initially held in Washington that Iran would tide over the internal upheavals threatening Shah's autocratic regime. But as events unfolded in quick succession, the Shah's fall became imminent. In fact, the U.S. had not seriously expected the Shah to have an early exit. Therefore, when the Shah was forced to flee Iran in February 1979, the U.S. was caught with little or no viable options in West Asia. Although even after Shah fell, "the strategic value of Iran as a buffer against Soviet encroachments Southward remained," it nevertheless

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Pravda} (Moscow), cited in Dupree, n.79, pp.47-8.
implied that the "American ability to coordinate jointly with their crucial state was lost."95

Not only was the "loss" of Iran a severe blow to the U.S., the fall out of the revolution also threatened to adversely affect American interests in the entire Persian Gulf. To the U.S. it meant that it could no longer rely on the local states to ensure stability on their own implying that the U.S. would have to become "more directly involved" to maintain "security in the region."96 In addition to the loss of the U.S. "protege", Washington had to face a radical anti-American Government in its place. The new government in Iran was strongly influenced by the unconditional support Washington had extended to Shah. Whatever doubts remained were buried when militant Islamic students stormed the American Embassy in November 1979 and held fifty American hostages threatening to kill them unless Washington agreed to certain Iranian demands. The impotence of the U.S. to save its most pliable and useful ally in the region had already sent tremors of doubt and fear regarding the wisdom of aligning closely with the U.S. Washington's prestige and dependability as an ally was seriously compromised by the Carter Administration's inability to come to the Shah's rescue during the turmoil in Iran.


Coming close on the heels of the Shah's departure, the U.S. failure to free the hostages from the Islamic revolutionaries seriously damaged the prestige and the perceived effectiveness of Washington's huge military machinery.

The new fear in Washington was that the Soviet Union would capitalise on the anti-American sentiments sweeping Iran and gain an unacceptable level of influence in the Gulf. Policy makers opined that Moscow would lend its support to the new regime after the Shah departed in February 1979. Although the Soviet Union "made no direct criticisms of Iran until his departure... she nonetheless posed as the protector of the revolution" and alluded to a warning that Brezhnev had given in 1978, that "any interference" in Iran would "affect Soviet interests, as having deterred U.S. military intervention." The U.S. position in the Gulf had obviously weakened and Washington embarked a desperate campaign to seek the assistance of friendly nations in the region to bolster American prestige and military strength. In this effort Pakistan's influence in the Muslim nations of the Gulf was not lost on the United States.

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97 Ibid.
Pakistan's Muslim Connection

With the exit of the Shah in 1979, the U.S. was virtually without any strong Muslim nation in the Gulf or its periphery that could strengthen and protect pro-American regimes in the oil rich region. Soviet threat was perceived to be becoming real and the small nations of the Gulf more vulnerable. Thus when the Government of Taraki in Afghanistan started forging closer relations with Moscow, the U.S. could no longer ignore Pakistan, a Muslim nation with close ties with the small Muslim countries of the Gulf. Pakistan's strategic position near the Persian Gulf oil fields and location at the point where the Gulf of Oman meets the Arabian Sea once again gained the attention of U.S. defense planners. Further, Pakistan was seen as the only nation that could be set up as an impediment to prevent Soviet Union from reaching the warm waters of the Indian Ocean.

In the meantime, Pakistan continued to forge closer relations with Islamic nations making "it to some degree a factor in the Middle East."\(^98\) This direction in the policy of Islamabad which began in earnest

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after the 1971 Bangladesh war, soon burgeoned.\footnote{99} A significant
development in this direction was the progress that Pakistan was able to
make in inducing some Arab countries to receive the services of Pakistan
military personnel -- a connection with long range potential of being
financially and militarily helpful to Pakistan if Islamabad were to confront
a problem from its immediate neighbours. This link also created a web
of inconspicuous transnational links between Islamabad and various Arab
nations supplementing "the country’s more formal alliance connections with
the Northern Tier States of the Middle East and the U.S."\footnote{100}
Understandably, this Pakistani scheme which was designed to bolster
Pakistan’s role among the Islamic nations and to earn badly needed
finances went largely unnoticed by the United States before the fall of the
Shah. But when the Shah fell, the role Pakistani forces were playing in
these nations was viewed as furthering the interests of the United States.

According to the \textit{New York Times},\footnote{101} Pakistan had military
missions in over 22 countries, the largest being in Saudi Arabia and
Jordan. In Abu Dhabi and several Muslim nations, Pakistan’s military

\footnotesize{\footnote{99} As an indication of the fast improving relations, Pakistan’s export to Arab
countries which was only 12 per cent of its total exports, rose to 33 per cent
in 1975. Shirin Tahir-Kheli, "The Foreign Policy of ‘New’ Pakistan", \textit{Orbis}
(Philadelphia), vol.20, no.3, Fall 1976, p.754.}

\footnotesize{\footnote{100} \textit{New York Times}, 6 February 1981.}

\footnotesize{\footnote{101} Ibid.}
representatives were basically accredited to the air force. In Saudi Arabia, besides strengthening its air force, they were playing an invaluable role of providing training to Saudi armed forces and accredited as advisers. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had signed an agreement on military cooperation and exchange in 1967. Especially as Saudi Arabia's regular army consisted of only 25,000 personnel, Pakistan's role in strengthening the armed forces could not have escaped appreciation in Washington.

The ouster of the Shah and the establishment of a militant regime with an aggressive foreign policy in Iran that considered it a religious fiat to promote "pan-Shi’ism", threatened to sow instability in the pro-Western monarchies of the Persian Gulf. There was a distinct possibility that the popular religious sentiment that now formed the base of the Iranian regime could become a source of inspiration for the masses in other nations. Coupled with this probability, the determination of the new revolutionary regime in Tehran to export its brand of revolution threatened to incite overlapping religious minorities of the various Monarchies. This threatened to create instability in an area critically important for the U.S. For instance, within months -- in September and October -- of the establishment of the revolutionary regime in Iran, Shia-inspired disturbances erupted in Iraq, Kuwait and Bahrain and notably in Saudi Arabia's Eastern (Hasa) province in November and December.102 Although these threats

102 Strategic Survey, n.95, p.47.
were sternly and quickly stamped out, the possibility of larger threats of this kind still existed. The capture of the Mecca Grand Mosque in November 1979 by religious zealots close on the heels of the Iranian revolution sent tremors through the royal family of Saudi Arabia. Though there was no evidence that the capture was Shia inspired, it nevertheless revealed the vulnerability of the Saudi regime and the possibility of religious fanatics spearheading political uprisings to change the leadership. Therefore, the security role being played by the Pakistani military component became one of critical importance.

Clearly, any direct American presence in any Arab country would have drawn the ire of the Arab nationalists and radicals. These groups were already known for their abhorrence of the U.S. and its policies because of Washington’s support for Israel. Further, any nation which might have invited or allowed American presence would have faced isolation in the Arab world. The Saudi example was lesson enough for the Americans. In 1979 the U.S. had despatched a Squadron of F-15s to Saudi Arabia during the brief Yemeni conflict. Soon the Saudi regime became the target of radical Arab criticism. Due to this development, and for the fear of opposition from other Arab nations, Saudi Arabia had to turn down an American offer to station U.S. troops in their country. In fact, anti-American sentiments were sweeping Islamic capitals. Mob

attacks on American embassies had become commonplace. The American 
embassy was burned down in Islamabad itself; and in Libya, a rioting 
crowd attacked the U.S. embassy. Because of the anathema to U.S. 
presence in Arab soil, the U.S. was compelled in 1979 to withdraw all 
nonessential dependents of the American Embassies from Iran, Pakistan and 
eleven other Muslim countries. In such a situation, the presence of 
the military elements of a friendly Pakistan to strengthen the pro-Western 
conservative regimes of the Persian Gulf region could not but contribute 
to a more favourable American appraisal of that nation.

What further underlined the importance of the crack Pakistani 
"advisors" in various Arab nations was the impotence of the America's 
second pillar in the Persian Gulf -- Saudi Arabia. Unlike the Iranian 
forces under the Shah, the Saudi Arabian forces were incapable of 
substantially helping neighbouring countries in times of crisis. This clearly 
came to the surface during the two-week Yemeni War in March 1979. 
Saudi Arabia was unable to do anything substantial to help North Yemen. 
The U.S. had to rush 75 military advisers and emergency aid. The 
gravity of the situation was such that Carter had to invoke the emergency 
provision of the Arms Export Control Act to bypass Congress to rush aid 
to North Yemen. In fact, during 1979, North Yemen received $540

\[104\] The other eleven countries were: Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Quatar, Oman, 
million worth of U.S. military aid, making it the largest recipient of U.S. arms after Israel and Saudi Arabia. In addition, the Carter Administration became wary of the repercussions the conflict could have on its close ally, Saudi Arabia. The President ordered the despatch of a task force into the Arabian Sea to warn Moscow of the risk of supporting North Yemen and to demonstrate U.S. support for Saudi Arabia. And further, the U.S. had to seek the help of over 70 Taiwanese pilots to help fly the aircraft supplied by the U.S. This would perhaps have been only a small part of the help that Tehran may have extended to South Yemen if the Shah had not fallen and the U.S. would have been spared of the need to directly rush aid to South Yemen.

At the same time, by the end of 1979, there was no military alliance that could effectively prevent any military action against America’s friends in the Persian Gulf. The long moribund CENTO was dismantled after Iran and Pakistan withdrew from it in mid-1979. Pakistan withdrew from the alliance because it found that even after the fall of Kabul to leftist forces, no large-scale American aid was forthcoming. Therefore, when the Shah fell and Tehran became overtly anti-U.S. and withdrew from the CENTO, Pakistan, as one of its diplomat put it, felt that it

106 Ibid.
might as well not suffer the disadvantages of continuing its alliance with
the U.S. without receiving commensurate benefits. The lukewarm
American response to the developments in Afghanistan appeared only to
confirm the growing opinion in Pakistan that the continuation of its
alliance with the U.S. would only adversely affect its standing among
third world nations. Pakistan had already applied for membership in the
non-aligned group and it found that the defunct alliance with the U.S.
was impeding its full membership. In fact, CENTO was created for
the security of friendly regimes when crisis could spawn instability as
during Iran crisis. Ironically, it was dismantled exactly when an alliance
like CENTO would have been beneficial.

Faced with this adverse situation and increasing Soviet influence, the
U.S. increased its direct presence in the Indian Ocean and West Asia.
Washington in a dramatic change of mind in 1979 decided to accept a
Somalian offer of a base at Berbera (The offer was first made in 1977
to be only declined by the U.S.). As part of the same strategy,
Pakistan was depicted as a moderate state that would "contribute stability

109 Naveed Ahmad, "The Non-Aligned Movement and Pakistan", Pakistan
Horizon, vol.32, Fourth Quarter, 1979, p.79.
American policy strategists opined that the growing Soviet influence in the vital region was evident in the Soviet Union's treaty links with several nations of Africa, Middle East and East and south Asia. Consequently, support grew in the U.S. for protecting the American interests through a military build up and a more direct and heightened role in the security of friendly nations including Pakistan. After the fall of the Shah and the growing Communist influence in the region, the Indian Ocean witnessed the largest American build up since the Second World War. Two aircraft carrier battle groups led by the Kitty Hawk and Midway were detached from the Seventh Fleet in the Pacific. By the end of 1979, the U.S. had over 21 ships including the two aircraft carriers in the Indian Ocean. To augment U.S. naval presence in Indian Ocean, Washington even compromised the strength of its Pacific fleet. Simultaneously, the U.S. increased its efforts to bring peace between Israel

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111 Testimony of Jack C. Millor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 15th May 1979, in Department of State Bulletin, n.93, p.50.

112 During the period 1971-79, the Soviet Union concluded the treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with ten countries. Although strains developed in relations with some of the nations with which the treaty was signed making the treaties meaningless, the treaty links nevertheless revealed the growth of Soviet influence. Besides India, the other nations with whom Moscow signed the treaty are: Egypt (1971), Iraq (1972), Somalia (1974), Angola (1976), Mozambique (1978), South Yemen (1978), Ethiopia (1978), Afghanistan (1978) and Vietnam(1978).
and Egypt with a view to preventing another Arab-Israeli conflict that could increase Soviet influence in the Middle East. As a part of this effort, the U.S. agreed to sell Cairo arms worth $1.6335 billion\textsuperscript{113} during the period 1976-77, and financed military sales to the tune of $1.5 billion\textsuperscript{114} in 1979 to Egypt.

Washington also started paying more attention to Pakistan. After the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, Admiral Thomas Moorer, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had suggested that the U.S. should utilise the military port in Gwadar in Baluchistan as a replacement for the loss of military faces in Iran and also the Badaber Base near Peshawar for electronic surveillance.\textsuperscript{115} It has also been opined that in the "re-orientation of policies, especially in the context of a projected threat… Pakistan was sought to be propped up as the alternative to Iran."\textsuperscript{116} Nevertheless, no definite American scheme to involve Pakistan in U.S. strategic plans was announced. Perhaps, it can be concluded that if it were not for Pakistan’s tenacious efforts to build a nuclear bomb, there

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\textsuperscript{113} Foreign Military Sales and Assistance Facts, n.92, p.1.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., p.8.

\textsuperscript{115} Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Pakistan’s Security: The Challenge and The Response (Lahore, 1988) p.129.

would have been a more evident change in the American policies toward Pakistan. The U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Jack Millor's testimony that "Pakistan's current activities ... restrict our [U.S.] ability to assist it in meeting its considerable security and economic requirement," illustrates the point. This does not, however, mean that Pakistan's importance for the U.S. had become crucial. It certainly took an upward swing, but Pakistan's nuclear efforts stood as an impediment to any change, the U.S. may have intended to make. Therefore, although Pakistan had become important, its usefulness was not considered compelling enough to set aside American nonproliferation goals. The Indian Prime Minister's ultimatum that India would keep its nuclear options open if Pakistan produced nuclear weapons must have only contributed to the U.S. fear of a nuclear arms race in the subcontinent. It also reinforced Carter's resolve to prevent Pakistan from producing nuclear weapons. Perhaps, it may not be a simple coincidence that no sooner had Charan Singh sounded the warning than some talk of some undefined U.S. covert actions against Pak nuclear facilities came to light.118

117 Testimony of Jack C. Millor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 15 May 1979, in Department of State Bulletin, n.93, p.50.

118 In July, 1979, the Caretaker Prime Minister of India, Charan Singh warned that India would not hesitate to produce nuclear weapons if Pakistan did so. (continued...
Change in U.S. Policy

With the fall of the Shah of Iran, the past policies of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf were seen as impediments to even a partial retrieval of its position. Washington moved towards securing the support of as many nations as it could muster to strengthen its weakened position in the region. The strategic relevance of this area continued to increase for the West. Besides being the source of two-thirds of the "free world's" petroleum reserves, it also had become an international finance center and a vast market for Western industrial and military goods.119

Not surprisingly, under these circumstances, the American perspective of Pakistan began to take on a new meaning. Warren Christopher, the United States Deputy Secretary of State, after a visit to India and Pakistan in 1979, told the House Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee on March 7, that the U.S. perception of South Asia was changing. He further added that Washington could not make the "South Asia policy in a vacuum" and that the United States would have to consider the import of

118 (...continued)

New York Times, 28 July 1979. And the New York Times of 12 August of the same year, reported that the Carter Administration was even contemplating covert operations against Pakistani nuclear facilities to prevent Pakistan from producing nuclear bombs.

events in other areas as well while framing its policy towards Pakistan. The statement was an unmistakable indication that the U.S. was rethinking its policy toward Pakistan and that Islamabad's "derivative" importance had once again become a determining factor in the formulation of Washington's security plans. Simultaneously, in the wake of the instability sweeping Afghanistan, opinions were voiced about Islamabad's potential usefulness in Pentagon's defence plans to contain the influence of Moscow. Pakistan was viewed as having "replaced Afghanistan as the traditional buffer to keep the Soviet Union from reaching the Indian Ocean."\(^{121}\)

Nonetheless, there was no immediate reversal of American policy towards Pakistan. The only perceptible change in the American stance was that Washington became more concerned with the instability in Afghanistan and its possible repercussion for Pakistan. Islamabad was considered too unstable for the U.S. to be assigned any crucial strategic role at this stage. It was felt that "General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq's Pakistan is a weak reed for US to lean on in Southwest Asia."\(^{122}\)


\(^{121}\) Praagh, n.80, p.48.

\(^{122}\) David van Praagh, "Will Pakistan Go the Way of Iran?", *Business Week*, 4 February 1980, p.46.
Therefore, reconciliation between India and Pakistan became more important for the U.S.

Warren Christopher announced that the U.S. was prepared to sell arms both to India and Pakistan. This he clarified would be done according to what Washington perceived to be their "genuine security needs." He also underlined that "reconciliation between Pakistan is of central importance" to the U.S.\textsuperscript{123} This was a reflection of the fear that regional conflicts would further reduce U.S. influence in the region. But at the same time, the U.S. announced that it would be cautious in its arms sales policy lest it should cause interregional rivalries to flare up. Predictably, with the loss of Iran and faced with a rapidly increasing Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the U.S. feared that any Indo-Pak war would heighten tension in the region further complicating the situation. Thus, even under a difficult situation, the Carter Administration was taking into consideration Indian concerns.

But there seemed to be a growing opinion in the United States and among its allies that the West should face the perceived threat in South West Asia and adjoining regions with aggressiveness and assigning Pakistan more importance. John Biggs Davison who led a British Parliamentary delegation to Pakistan in 1979 is reported\textsuperscript{124} to have opined in an

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
interview to the Urdu Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on 29 September, that Pakistan's importance for the West had increased in view of the leftist take over in Afghanistan. *Pakistan Times* \(^{125}\) revealed that Davis had also called on the Western powers to assist Pakistan militarily so that it would be in a position to thwart the alleged designs of the Communist government in Kabul. William Safire wrote in the *New York Times* of 3 December 1979, that the Soviet action in Afghanistan, South Yemen and Pakistan was a concerted move to wrest control of the supply of the world's oil reserves and criticised the Carter Administration for not comprehending the magnitude of the Soviet threat. In the same vein, the *Los Angeles Times* wrote that American pressure against the Pakistani nuclear programme would "result in a further erosion of the American position in the area." \(^{126}\) Influential American Senators also expressed their fears of outside powers destabilising Pakistan. Senator John Glenn (Democrat) of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee, reflected this apprehension among Congressmen. In an interview with the Pakistani press, the Senator in an obvious attempt to warn the Soviet Union and Afghanistan against exploiting Pakistan's internal difficulties, assured Islamabad that the U.S. would "be inclined to take a lot more


\(^{126}\) *Los Angeles Times*, 10 April 1979.
interest and a lot more action" if Pakistan's territorial integrity were threatened.127 As indicated on several occasions in the present work, expressions by important American leaders of their deep interest in Pakistan's integrity always covered an equally fervent interest in the possible use of Pakistan for the promotion of American interests.

That Glenn, the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation and Federal Services and Committee on Government Affairs and one of the chief promoters of U.S. nonproliferation goals should view Pakistan as a nation whose strategic importance was increasing for the U.S., was an unmistakable signal that Washington would not allow Pakistan's nuclear programme to hinder the implementation of any scheme that may seek its support to counter alleged Soviet "grand schemes" in South West Asia. This determination was reflected in the American decision to increase its sale of arms to Pakistan. Despite all the furor raised in Washington regarding Pakistan's nuclear quest, Washington's arms deliveries to Pakistan in 1979 showed a more than 25 per cent increase over the quantity supplied in 1978.128 Similarly, in 1978 and 1979, the U.S. "Military Education and Training programme


128 In 1978 U.S. delivered Pakistan arms worth 6,662,000 and in 1979, the arms delivery amounted to 61,256,000. Foreign Military Sales and Military Assistance Facts, n.92, p.4.
including Military Assistance Funding" touched an all time high for the 70s.\textsuperscript{129} The U.S. had lost Intelligence gathering posts set up in Iran for monitoring Soviet activities after the fall of the Shah in January 1979. "Hoping to relocate these listening posts in Pakistan, in late 1979, the Carter Administration decided to reverse course and offer Pakistan economic and military aid at increased levels."\textsuperscript{130}

Influential Congressman continued to warn about consequences of an emboldened Soviet Union. Democratic Senator, Henry Jackson, declared that the burgeoning military strength of the Soviet Union would result in an "increasingly aggressive Soviet international policy."\textsuperscript{131} The mood in the Congress had transformed and it adopted an equally defiant posture. The new hawkishness soon surfaced in its relations with the Soviet Union. The SALT II Treaty which was awaiting Senate's approval ran aground in the face of entrenched opposition. The fears of the American Congress were also shared by the Administration. Secretary of Defence, Harold Brown, reflecting the growing mood in the Western capitals, concluded that the Soviet Union had become "more adventurous in their

\textsuperscript{129} In 1978, the amount under the head was $5,47,000 while in 1979 the amount was 4,68,000, Ibid., p.25.


\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Time}, 24 October 1979.
behavior.\textsuperscript{132}

Carter, who had in his election campaign promised to cut the defence budget made a \textit{volte face} in 1979 and requested the Congress for a five per cent increase in the defence budget after adjusting for inflation. To overcome the perceived inability of the U.S. military to intervene and sustain armed action outside the NATO region, a new force called the Rapid Deployment Force (R.D.F.) was mooted. Under this plan a force of 100,000 troops, including 40,000 combat soldiers was to be established to protect American interests in the Middle East and other areas.\textsuperscript{133}

Carter was responding not merely to the military threat as was portrayed to him. He was also reacting to the political crisis spawned by the inability of Washington to counter an "aggressive" Soviet Union. The President's critics at home, including some in his own party, pressed vigorously the charge that he had neglected American defenses and allowed the Soviet Union to forge ahead not merely in the nuclear field but also in its "conventional weapon" capabilities. In view of the mounting pressure, the embattled President shed his dovish image. Carter enunciated a strong policy and declared that Washington would not anymore be hopelessly hinged to the haunting fears of Vietnam-like situations. The

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.

American President declared that the U.S. "must understand that not every instance of the firm application of power is potential Vietnam" and communicated "clearly enough, that the era of the Vietnam complex in American foreign policy had come to an end."

This did not however mean that the American strategic perception of Pakistan had radically shifted. The new Cold War had not yet emerged from the rupturing veil of detente. Detente was still dangling on tenuous strings. The Vietnam war syndrome was certainly wearing off, nevertheless, the fears spawned by Vietnam War lingered on. But the indications were clear. The U.S., if confronted by an increasingly aggressive Soviet policy, would discard its fear of intervention, and seek more allies abroad in a way reminiscent of the Cold War years. Thus, alongside the increasingly assertive Soviet foreign policy and the turmoil in Iran, Pakistan by 1979 gained more attention than it had in the 1960s and larger part of the 1970s. In fact with each alleged Soviet role in Africa and the Middle East, there was a revival of American interest in Pakistan.

In the ultimate analysis, as events unfolded, there were growing indications that the U.S. would not delay the revision of its policy towards Pakistan. But evidently, a dramatic change in the American


135 Ibid.
perception had to wait for the Soviet Union's direct intervention Afghanistan by "invitation" of the Kabul government in December 1979. More precisely, it had to wait for the replacement of Jimmy Earl Carter, by the 40th American President, who as a Presidential candidate, promised to give the U.S. a newer and sharper clout discarding the worn out old.