CHAPTER - III

FOUNDATIONS OF INDO-US RELATIONS
The two countries—India and the USA whose democratic traditions and rule of law stand as a source of inspiration to millions of people in the world, had closer and intimate contacts dating back to the year 1492, i.e. when Christopher Columbus discovered America in the course of his search for a new route to India. Formal relations, however, did not begin until India achieved its independence on 15th August, 1947. Prior to this, American contacts with India had started before the American Revolution through soldiers and seamen who had lived both in the American colonies and in India.¹ The first official contact between the USA and India commenced in the Seventeenth year of American independence, on November 19th 1792, with President Washington's nomination of Benjamin Joy of Boston to be the consul at Calcutta and other parts and places on the coast of India and Asia.²

Since then the US and India have been maintaining relations of one kind or the other in fields like commerce, culture or diplomacy. American interests in having Consular relations with India grew out of the commercial needs for such Indian commodities as cotton goods and spices. The


first American flag-ship to enter in Indian port was "Chesapeake" of Baltimore, which left the US in 1786 and returned with goods in 1792.¹ A merchant of Salem, Massachusetts had sent his four vessels to Bombay, Surat and Calcutta ports in 1786 where they exchanged commodities and had a favourable response and treatment from the East India Company. This increased the frequency of visits to Indian ports by the American vessels bringing goods from Baltimore, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Salem.

The US formally obtained the most favoured nation treatment in Indian trade by the Jay-Treaty of 1794 with Britain and in 1800 twelve vessels loaded at Calcutta alone for Boston and American imports from India were valued at about three million dollars.² American did a profitable illicit business carrying the illegal fortunes which East India Company's servants had amassed and expanded their trade by supplying Indian commodities to the European Continent, in contravention of the Jay-Treaty which allowed only direct India-American trade.

However, by the end of the nineteenth century the US was effectively kept out of the Indian market by the British Government of India and in 1900 only 1.7 per cent of

1. Ibid., p. 73.
India's imports came from the USA. The early part of the 20th century witnessed the Anglo-American competition in world trade on the Indian soil. Despite British resistance, the US was able to increase its share in India's imports from 1.7 to 3.8 per cent between 1900 and 1911.¹

With the establishment of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1810, the first American missionaries—Mr and Mrs. Judson, Mr and Mrs. Newell, Mr. and Mrs. Nott, Mr. Godden Hall and Mr. Rice—arrived in Calcutta in 1812, only to be expelled later from the port by the East India Company. Then missionaries came to Bombay and established the American Marathi Mission in 1815.² The number of missionaries in India in 1885 was just 139 by the end of the 19th century it rose to nearly 1500 and by 1922, it shot up to 2,478.³

The American missionaries wanted to establish religious schools, publish religious literature in Indian languages and convert people from various religions (especially Hindus) to Christianity. Through relief campaigns the missions forged a bond of obligation with the

¹. Ibid., p.5.
general population and this paved the way for mass conversions.¹

Indo-American contacts developed through intellectuals also. Eminent Americans like Emerson and Thoreau were profoundly influenced by Indian literature.² To quote Stephen N. Hay: "The writings of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman and of the Sanskritists Hopkins, Lanman and Whitney, helped instil in nineteenth century Americans a respect for India's cultural heritage".³

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, two important Indian intellectuals P.C. Mazumdar and Swami Vivekananda visited the USA. In 1883 the Brahma Samaj leader P.C. Mazundar lectured in many American cities. Swami Vivekananda one of the most renowned Hindu religious reformers, spoke eloquently about American attitude towards freedom and liberty at the world Parliament of Religions in 1893 in Chicago. He founded the Vedanta society in New York and established the Ramakrishna Mission on 1st May, 1897 in California, and enabled the Vedantic movement to spread in America. He left an everlasting image of Indian culture and heritage in the minds of American people.

¹ Phelps, Myron, H. Hindu Ideals and their Preservation, p. 15-16.
Another Indian intellectual, Rabindranath Tagore visited the USA in 1912-1913, 1916-1917, 1920-1921 and again in 1930. In the words of Stephen N. Hay, "On his part, Tagore carried back with him to India many ideas and impressions from the United States, and consistently advocated closer relationships between the Eastern most and the Western most branches of the Indo-European family".¹

Of India's political leaders Lala Lajpat Rai was the first to visit the USA. In 1905 he went there in order to tell the American people about the need for Indian independence. He was much influenced by American life and American democratic institutions.² In 1916 he wrote a book in the USA entitled "The United States of America: A Hindu's Impression".

Lajpat Rai was a great admirer of the USA. He was however, provoked to write something against the USA in his book "Unhappy India", a rejoinder to Katherine Mayo's book "Mother India" in which she had given a distorted picture of India.³

The book thus created a wrong and bad impression about India on the American people. As a result majority of Americans thought of India as a land of Sanyasis, naked fakirs, bejewelled princes and poor people.

Lajpati Rai, in his reply brought home the point that even American life was not without its dark spots. He wrote:

"Miss Mayo's mentality is the mentality of the white races as a whole against the black or brown or yellow peoples of Asia. She is only the mouthpiece of the oppressors of the East. The awakening of the East has frightened both Europe and America. Hence, this historical exhibition of temper, and this studied, deliberate, infamous propaganda against a race so ancient and so cultured."\(^1\)

During the freedom movement the USA vigorously supported the Indian demand for independence.\(^2\) An organisation called the Society for the Advancement of India was formed under the leadership of Myron H. Phelps to espouse this cause, and it maintained contacts with the congress office in London. At that time, many American anti-imperialists opposed their own government's actions in the Philippines and Cuba, and some of them were also interested in the Indian freedom movement. But President Theodore Roosevelt who represented 'big stick policy' and 'dollar diplomacy' felt it necessary to defend imperialism in India in words that have few parallels even in British statements. This was the first and only official statement

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from America on Indian freedom before the second world war, and it came from no less a person than the President himself.

In the 20th century, several prominent US citizens advocated the cause of India's freedom.¹ Among them was one William Jennings Bryan, a top American political figure, who visited India during the partition of Bengal, wrote a pamphlet on British rule in India making a passionate plea for Indian independence. It contained a frontispiece showing Indians tied to cannons with British soldiers standing by to shoot.

During the freedom movement, several hundred sikhs, many of whom had fled the motherland to escape British tyranny following the kuka movement, and also to earn money, had settled down in the USA. By 1913 a group of Indian patriots formed the Hindustan Ghadar party with its headquarters in San Francisco to gain the US support for the freedom movement in India. They also started a weekly called "Ghadar" which came out in two editions, Hindustani and Punjabi. Later, with the cooperation of some important American citizens, two societies—namely the Friends of Freedom for India and the Indian Freedom Foundation—were established.²

President Woodrow Wilson took some interest in the Indian independence struggle, especially at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, where representatives of the Nationalist Movement were present in an unrecognised capacity, along with a British-appointed delegation of Indians. Even though it was not independent, India became a member of Wilson's cherished League of Nations. This was welcomed by the USA which supported the inclusion of Indian representatives in various international conferences and agencies. The USA specially invited India to become a signatory to the "Kellogg-Briand Pact" of 1928.¹ In these and other ways, the USA showed an interest in India and welcomed all steps by the British Government to extend further measures of self-government to India.

Mahatma Gandhi's emphasis on non-violence and his unique method of fighting against British rule through "Satyagraha" attracted attention in America. His simple living and high ideals drew admiration from the American people. The Dandi March of Mahatma Gandhi to break the salt Law got front page coverage in all the important newspapers of the USA. To quote the Baltimore Sun, "There is no other political leader in the world today who could dare so deliberately to put aside all traditional instruments of leadership and put his faith in a ceremony so simple that it appears almost trifling".²

2. Baltimore Sun, 14th March, 1930.
During the Second World war the US Government realised the importance of India in the context of the war. This period marked the beginning of Indo-US official relations. The strategic importance of India as a base of operations against Japan was one of the chief factors which forced the US administration to take interest in the Indian political problem. In the early part of 1940 President Roosevelt tried to persuade Prime Minister Churchill to pledge Indian independence on the basis of Atlantic Charter and later he sent his personal emissary, Louis Johnson to India during the Cripps Mission to act as an intermediary. When Louis Johnson participated in the Cripps Mission, many Indians were happy, as the US for the first time, showed a concrete interest in the solution of the Indian political problem. Even the Indian National Congress favoured Johnson's role as a helpful one, despite the negative results of the negotiations.

By the end of 1944, when the military situation improved and American fears on that score were reduced, the US interest in an Indian settlement waned.

The USA from that time confined itself to making occasional statement supporting every step the British took towards negotiating with Indian leaders. Popular Indian

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reaction to this policy was demonstrated during the meeting of the Royal Indian Navy Ratings in February, 1946 when the US flag was burnt in Bombay along with the Union Jack. Further the US Department of State applauded the decision that the British Government eventually took to partition India, where as many Indians felt a shock of surprise. It appeared to them that the US' primary interest was Anglo-American concord rather than India's welfare.

It is, however, felt that the USA had sympathised with the Indian cause and that this sympathy, though not active, did serve as a morale-booster. As such, it should not be underestimated. Even Sitaramayya, despite the view expressed above, admits that "America has done ample justice to this ancient land short of intervening in her affairs and employing her good offices with Britain to secure independence for India."¹

A new era of Indo-US cordiality began with the greetings from President Harry S. Truman to the Indians on the occasion of India's independence. On 14th August, 1947, he sent a telegram of good wishes to Lord Mountbatten in which he observed: "We welcome India's new and enhanced status in the world community of sovereign independent nations, assure the new Dominion of our continued friendly and good-will and reaffirm our confidence that India,

dedicated to the cause of peace and to the advancement of all peoples, will take its place at the forefront of the nations of the world in the struggle to fashion a world society founded in mutual trust and respect".¹ Soon after the attainment of independence by India, the two countries, started a relationship based on full cordiality and goodwill.

The foreign policy of a country is a reflection of its domestic policy and is formulated mainly to suit it. The aims and objectives of the foreign policies of India and the USA have been generally alike in the post-war period particularly with regard to the maintenance of their sovereign and independent status in the world; the pursuit of peace and security; support for the U.N.O.; support for the right of self-determination of the nations (non-self-governing territories), and a feeling of anti-imperialism and anti-racialism.² Historical heritage had contributed to these similarities. Both India and the USA became independent from British rule through national movements. Nationalism and democratic ideals were the two important factors. Moreover, the leaders of Indian National Congress were inspired by the same sentiments which brought American freedom in the eighteenth century. The American declaration

of Independence had been the main guideline before the Indian patriots.

The high ideals of democracy, i.e., the state should act only with the consent of the governed as expressed through political parties and free elections, free press and independent judiciary prove that the fundamental rights and the constitutional guarantees have been observed in both the countries.\(^1\) Public opinion plays the role of a major force behind the governmental action in restricting the legislation and implementing the laws for the welfare of the citizens. In both the countries the civil power prevails upon the military power.

Though the objectives and the ideals are some what the same, the two countries differ in their methods, measures and policies to secure them. There had been so many issues on which India and the USA had divergent views because of historical factors, geographical situation, political and economic status and national interests of the two countries.

The two countries differed in their views on the issue of international communism\(^2\). The USA considered

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communism a menace to world peace. India however, did not subscribe to this view. India thought that there was a greater threat from communist infiltration and subversion than from communist aggression. The USA tried to check the spread of communism through many measures such as extending aid to several countries and promoting regional and other military alliances such as the NATO, the SEATO and the CENTO. In this way, the US refused to recognise the Communist China and its acceptance of China's membership of the UNO was based on this thesis. India's thesis was different from that of the USA. She did not like all that.

The two countries also differed on the issue of colonialism. Wherever its national interest is at stake, the US would certainly favour any of the colonial powers, whereas India is totally opposed to any form of colonialism. The USA supported her NATO ally Portugal during the liberation of Goa by India. India has always been condemning the USA whenever it has voted in the United Nations with the colonial powers against the Asian-African and Latin American countries.

On the issue of racialism also, the views of the two countries did not coincide. In the USA racial


discrimination is still being practised in various forms. When India brought the issue of Racial Discrimination in South Africa to the UN, the USA supported the South African stand and urged that International Court of justice should decide whether the General Assembly was competent to deal it or not. Though it professes anti-racialism, the US has not been following a clearcut policy.

Further, the policy of Non-Alignment has been very much misunderstood in America. This was evident during the first official visit of Nehru to the USA in October 1949. America had hoped to cash in on Nehru's visit to Washington and bring him to the western fold. But Nehru indicated that India would follow the policy of Non-Alignment in world affairs. This unequivocal declaration of Nehru raged to ground what little hope the Americans entertained of aligning India. It created disillusionment in America and Nehru came to be regarded as anti-American and pro-Russian. From then onwards, American attitude on Kashmir has gradually turned in favour of Pakistan and the US decided to make Pakistan a military ally to fill up the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the British from India.

The Indonesian crisis of 1949 put to acid test the reciprocity between the two countries in international

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affairs\(^1\). India, being an Asiatic country pleaded strongly for Indonesian independence and outrightly condemned the so-called Dutch "Police action" of December 1948. The Dutch troops moved strictly to capture the capital, Jakarta and took into their custody the Republican leaders including president Sukarno and premier Hatta. The USA and Australia called for an immediate meeting of the security council, where the delegates of India, Australia and the USSR called Dutch action a deliberate act of aggression. Ambassador Phillip C. Jossup, Deputy US Representative in the Security Council, expressed strong resentment and condemnation of Dutch action in Indonesia.

Another important factor which strained Indo-US relations was the problem of Kashmir.\(^2\) India's relations with other countries had, to some extent, been guided by her intention to obtain their support on Kashmir. Indo-US relations, therefore, had become very critical during the times of US support to the Pakistani case on Kashmir. The US has got involved in the Kashmir dispute eversince India referred it to the United Nations in 1948. When it was brought to the security council, the USA largely followed


the British line which was coloured with sympathy for Pakistan mainly because of the logical implementation of the Mountbatten formula about accession of the princely states which should have brought Hyderabad to the Indian Union and Jammu and Kashmir to the Pakistan.

The USA managed to convert Pakistan's aggression on India into an Indo-Pakistan question. The USA expected that the USA would at least appreciate India's case, for the USA maintained a cryptic silence about India's complaint. Instead of declaring Pakistan as an aggressor, the American delegate laid emphasis on the need to settle the issue by means of a plebiscite in Kashmir. He argued that plebiscite was one of the conditions of Kashmir's accession to India. Thus from the very beginning, the viewpoint of the USA was against the Indian stand on the question. Not only that the policy adopted by the USA appeared to strengthen the case of Pakistan in the world forum.

During the Korean crisis, Indo-US relations went from 'good' to 'bad' and vice versa. Basically India's stand on the issue was similar to that of the USA. Both countries strove to promote peace in the Far East and to prevent an extension of the Korean war, but they differed over the method of achieving their objective.  


India's approach to the problem of Korea was based on the following considerations:

1. North Korea was an aggressor,
2. The war must be localised
3. Ways and means must be found to end the war at the earliest movement; because the Korean war had the explosive possibility of becoming a large scale world war, and
4. the future of Korea must be decided by the people of Korea without any outside interference. \(^1\)

On the other hand, the US viewed the situation in a different way. Unlike India, the Americans thought that international communism was trying to achieve by force what it could not otherwise achieve, and so there was to be no appeasement. "It is that appeasement of dictators... the sure road to world war", said President Truman in his Radio Address, on September 1, 1950. \(^2\) The US aims and objectives in regard to the Korean crisis were:

(i) Preservation of peace and security through the United Nations in Korea,

(ii) to prevent the fighting started by communist imperialists in Korea as it might expand into a general war,

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(iii) belief in freedom for all the nations of the Far East including Korea. Because the freedom of Korea was at stake, the US was fighting under the United Nations for it in defence against aggression, (iv) to teach the nations who acted as tools for the communist dictatorship down its dark and bloody path and to task them to follow the American way of freedom the way of mutual cooperation and internal peace.¹

In the beginning the U.S. Government and Public welcomed the acceptance by India of the two security council resolutions², which respectively called on North Korea to withdraw to the 38th Parallel and cease hostilities, but she abstained from vote when the US sponsored resolution "Uniting for Peace" came up in the General Assembly because India thought that the US intention was to retaliate against communist countries in the name of forming the United command under the UN symbol. Besides her desire was that the Korean war should remain localized, and that in case of extension she should not be obliged to be involved in it. This position India has maintained all along.

India opposed and American-sponsored resolution accusing China as an aggressor and voted against it along

1. Ibid., pp. 409-410.
with six other countries. The UN General Assembly adopted the resolution by a vote of 44 to 73.¹

The analysis given above makes it clear that both Americans and Indians desired peace in the area but they differed in the ways to secure it. While India continued to secure peace and to reduce the threat of a bigger war in East Asia, the USA desiring to avert a new world war, strove for a settlement that would discourage communist aggression anywhere. In Indian opinion the only wayout was withdrawal of all foreign troops from the two Koreas, the opening of talks between the two Governments and ultimately the holding of internationally-supervised elections in both the halves.

India's reluctance to favour the Japanese peace Treaty created misunderstanding between India and the US. The United States hardened its attitude towards China by signing a peace Treaty with Japan at San Franscisco on September 8th, 1951.² This was a step forward to re-arm Japan against the communists and to protect it from falling into the hands of the communist bloc either through military aggression³ or internal revolution.⁴ The Treaty provided for the inclusion of Japan in the Western defence system.


2. Documents on International Affairs, 1951, pp. 611-629.


Japan's proximity to China and the Soviet Far East together with the territorial settlements connected with a Japanese Peace Treaty had made it an East-West issue.

India refused to participate in the San Francisco Conference, for the signing of the Treaty though she was invited by the USA. The reasons were: i) that the treaty was being signed without the participation of communist China, which should take part in any settlement of Far Eastern Affairs, ii) it included US-Japanese security arrangements which in India's opinion were a threat to peace in Asia, and iii) it failed to specify the return of Formosa to China which was a just demand. The USA was very much displeased by the stand taken by India regarding the signing of the Japanese peace treaty. On the otherhand, Pakistan's endorsement of the US approach was welcomed in the USA and it also enabled Pakistan to move closer to the USA.

The Indian attitude towards Communist China and Lenin's statement that communism's road to Paris leads through Peking, Shanghai and Calcutta further raised the doubts of the Americans about the survival and operation of India's foreign policy of Non-Alignment.  

1. Documents on International Affairs, 1951, pp. 611-625.
American commentators on Indian foreign policy held that by her aloofness from the cold war, India was equivocating in plain issue of right versus wrong.

In order to meet the assumed threat of international communism or to speak to communist nations from a position of strength or for defending the 'free world', the United States decided to supply arms to such nations as were in agreement with her containment policies pursued. Pakistan's bitter animosity towards India and its proximity to Soviet and Chinese borders was viewed by the Pentagon officials as a vital source to contain communism in South Asia and insisted to have a fresh look on Caroe Thesis.¹

Ayub Khan, the then Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army visited the United States in the fall of 1953, advocated the Caroe Thesis and emphasised that the supply of arms was imperative to protect the interests of the United States in that region. Senator Joseph Mc-carthy, whose influence then in the State Department was at its height, also pleaded for the supply of arms to Pakistan.²


India seriously opposed the proposal of US military aid to Pakistan on the following grounds: i) It would be detrimental to be goals of India's foreign policy of keeping as great an area as possible free from the cold war, ii) It would create inseparable complications in Indo-Pakistani relations and add to India's security problems, and iii) It would increase western dominance in Asia.

On 24th February, 1954, the US president Eisenhower announced that the USA, "gravely concerned over the weakness of defence capabilities in the Middle East", was complying with a request by Pakistan for military aid while assuring Nehru at the same time that the action "is not directed in any way against India" and that he was recommending to congress the continuation of American economic and technical aid to India. He also gave a categorical assurance that the arms supplied to Pakistan would not be used against India. Inspite of all these assurances there was a violent reaction in India to the proposed military aid. Nehru rejected the American offer of economic aid and siad: "If we object to military aid being given to

3. Ibid., pp. 400-401,
Pakistan, we would be hypocrites and unprincipled opportunist to accept such aid ourselves"\(^1\).

Prominent congressmen also criticised the US military aid to Pakistan. Senator Pell said, "that the encouragement of military development was a 'self-defeating policy' on the part of the USA."\(^2\) The newly established military relationship between USA and Pakistan fundamentally changed their foreign policy orientation towards each other as well as towards India. Changes came over even in the attitude of other countries like the Soviet Union. The USSR came out with its full-fledged support to the Indian case on Kashmir in the UNO, though it had remained neutral earlier. During their state visit to India in December 1955, the Soviet Premier, Bulganin and the First Secretary of the CPSU, Nikita Khrushchev, supported Indian and Afganisthani claims concerning Kashmir and Pakhtoonistan respectively, against Pakistan.\(^3\) On the otherhand the American administration failed to foresee that the Military aid given to Pakistan would not be able to check the expansion of communism in Asia. Subsequent events proved that Pakistan

1. _Parliamentary Debates_, 1954, Vol. I, No.12, part. II, Col.970. It was also public opinion in America that India would not accept military assistance from any foreign power because of her policy of Non-Aligment.


itself was drifting towards the camp of the communist powers as it developed friendly relations with China and also tried to befriend the Soviet Union. Thus the enormous US military aid to Pakistan became meaningless. Pakistan freely used the US arms against India in the Several Indo-Pakistani contests and the USA could not prevent it.

The Indo-American relations, suffered a very serious setback in 1954, with the US arming Pakistan and Pakistan joining the American sponsored alliance system, first in the Manila pact (SEATO) and then in the Baghdad pact (later CENTO).\(^1\) India opposed these unholy military alliances on the ground that they would not promote peace as the US viewed it but only increase international tensions.

In 1954-55 India and the United States got further estranged over Indo-China. India was critical of French activities in South-East Asia and of U.S. support of the French and Bao Dai. It also blamed the United States for India's exclusion from participation in the Geneva conference in 1955 that tried to reach an agreement on the future of Vietnam after the French defeat at Dienbienphu. While India could not send an official delegation, its representative, V.K.Krishna Menon, was quite outspoken in

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his criticism of the U.S. for its refusal to adhere to the Geneva accords and for its encouragement to the South Vietnamese regime, thus making it impossible to carry out the proposed elections to determine the future of Vietnam. Later, when an Indian was appointed chairman of the International Control Commission on Indo-China, the United States dubbed him as biased and suspected that he was likely to side with the communist members of the commission.

During the two major world crisis of 1956, India and the United States were both opposed to the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt,¹ but they were far apart in their reactions to the Hungarian crisis, with the US immediately and strongly denouncing the Soviet invasion and brutalities in Hungary, and with India observing silence in the beginning and later expressing mild disapproval of the Soviet action.

Nehru made a second official visit to the US in December 1956, which, however, went of unexpectedly well; or at least it appeared to be so. Nehru and president Eisenhower apparently established a good working relationship. In public statements, Nehru called Eisenhower a man of peace, and he referred to the "friendly and cordial relations" that had existed between India and America "even

before India gained her independence."¹ Eisenhower in return praised Nehru and India for adhering to the democratic path in their efforts at nation building.²

The Indo-US relations showed a sign of relaxation during 1957-59 though US commitment to Pakistan had deepened. The electronic intelligence gathering system was established in Northern Pakistan to monitor signals from the Soviet Union. Air fields were constructed to accommodate the U-2 reconnaissance aircrafts. One of the U-2 aircrafts was shot down by the Russians in 1960. A bilateral agreement was signed between the United States and Pakistan with a promise to meet any "aggression" against Pakistan.³ These developments however, had a greater impact on Indo-US friendship. Nevertheless, Nehru had confidence that the US supply of arms to Pakistan was not directed against India.

President Eisenhower's state visit to India in December 1959 created a general impression that the United States assistance would be liberally distributed, whatever might be its economic problems. His desire to bring Pakistan and India together at the negotiation table to solve their

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problem bilaterally and not to take a definite stand on local or regional matters, indeed, promoted a better climate in Indo-US relations.\textsuperscript{1} Ambassador T.N.Kaul's appraisal, written several years later, is probably accurate: "His visit created a very good impression and aroused great enthusiasm but it was based more on sentimental and emotional emphasis than on a mutuality of interests and outlook."\textsuperscript{2} However, the fundamental differences between India and the United States still persisted.

Nevertheless there was a marked improvement in Indo-American relations in the first three years of the 1960s. This was mainly due to the growing Indian friction with China, India's disillusionment with the Soviet Union, the advent of the Kennedy administration in the United States, and the prompt American emergency military assistance to India after Nehru appealed for aid following the Chinese attack in October 1962.

Kennedy's victory over Nixon in the American presidential elections in November 1960 was welcomed in India. His eloquent inaugural address to "my fellow citizens of the world", helped to strengthen the impression in India,

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and elsewhere, that the young American president was speaking for a new generation on behalf of all humanity, not just on behalf of the United States.

These first impressions remained among Indian masses who had probably heard of Kennedy more than any other American (his picture could be seen in many humble but throughout the country); but at the official level, disappointment soon set in. Indian leaders were shocked by the Bay of Pigs fiasco and disturbed by the strained meeting of Kennedy and Khrushechev in Vienna and flare up of another Berlin crisis, during which the infamous Berlin wall was erected by the Russians.\(^1\) Even the expected chemistry between Nehru and Kennedy, two great world leaders who were supposed to have so much in common, did not withstand the test of personal contacts. Nehru's third official visit to the United States in November, 1961 was in almost every way a disappointment to both leaders. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. records that Kennedy described his meetings with Nehru as a "disaster", and schlesinger observes: "Nehru, alas, was no longer the man he had once been."\(^2\)

Tensions between India and the US (and between Nehru and Kennedy) mounted in the following month, when Indian troops entered the territory of Goa and liberated it from Portuguese rule.¹ The USA had never been inclined to appreciate India's stand on Goa, perhaps because Portugal was a member of the NATO and an ally of America. From the beginning there had been some negative official and unofficial reactions in the USA regarding India's struggle for Goa.

After the Indian troops "liberated" Goa from Portuguese rule, Kennedy was particularly annoyed that Nehru had not given even a limit to him of the impending action in Goa, and he instructed Ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith to do everything he could to arrest the contemplated Indian military action. Galbraith was able to persuade Nehru to postpone the action, but not to abandon it since Nehru was under irresistible pressure to take forceful measures to end "the last vestige of colonialism" on Indian soil.²

After a few months, the difficulties of late 1961 seemed to be placed in some prospective, and relations between the two countries began to improve once again.³ When

the Chinese launched an attack on India in the Northeast Frontier Agency and the Ladakh section of Kashmir in 1962 the Kennedy administration responded promptly to Nehru's appeal for military supplies and equipment. The attack led to the forced departure of V.K. Krishna Menon, probably the Indian who irritated Americans more than any other, from his post as Minister of Defence, the extraordinary admission of Nehru himself that he and other Indian leaders had been "living in a world of our illusion" and the unusual step by the great champion of India's independence, Non-Alignment and self-reliance urgently requesting other countries to come to India's aid in its hour of crisis. Many Indian parliament members told Americans that now they knew who their real friends were and vowed that they would never forget the prompt assistance that the United States had provided.

This strong pro-American feeling soon began to wane as India gradually recovered from the rude shock of Chinese aggression and as the United States and Britain exerted pressure on India and Pakistan to seek a resolution of the Kashmir dispute. India felt that the Western powers were taking undue advantage of its predicament and trying to force it to take decisions which it did not want to take.

Under Anglo-American pressure, India and Pakistan held several meetings on Kashmir, but neither country was in any mood to compromise, and in the late spring of 1963 the talks were suspended indefinitely. Nehru and other Indian leaders expressed an interest in obtaining large-scale military assistance from the United States on a long-term basis, and Kennedy and some of his pro-Indian advisers, notably Bowles and Galbraith, favoured this proposed new departure, but the congress and vocal sections of American public opinion were not in favour, and instead of the seizeable military assistance India had requested, the United States provided only about $100 million worth of such assistance, on an intermittent basis. Two years later, when the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965 broke out, even this aid was suspended.  

In 1963 two other developments caused further estrangement. President Kennedy's creeping involvement in Vietman, and the murder of Ngo Dinh Diem, allegedly with the knowledge or even complicity of the United States, shortly before Kennedy himself was assassinated, created a very unfavourable reaction in India.

Another episode was the much discussed case of the Bokaro Steel Plant. India had made overtures to the United

1. Ibid.,


States to seek the bulk of the financial and technical assistance needed to set up the fourth steel plant in the public sector (the other three had been built with the assistance of Britain, West Germany, and the Soviet Union). President Kennedy and his ambassador to India, Prof. Galbraith, responded favourably, and the Indian government expected that the American assistance would be forthcoming. But as opposition in America mounted against the offer to save further embarrassment to itself and to president Kennedy, the India government withdrew its request. The Soviet Union seized the opportunity and offered assistance to the Bokaro project, thus gaining more goodwill and support in India at the expense of the United States. The whole incident resulted in bad blood between India and the United States.

Kennedy's assassination was widely mourned in India, both individually and nationally. To Indians, the change from an administration headed by a good friend who was genuinely interested in India and other developing countries to one headed by a man who was believed to dislike Indians and to be a parochially minded American nationalist was most unwelcome. However, for the first year and a half of the Johnson administration during which Jawaharlal Nehru died and India was absorbed in the task of carrying on without its great leader, there were no major difficulties in Indo-American relations, even though the warmth that had often characterised them during the Kennedy years had gone.
In 1965 and 1966 major differences again cropped up leading to a further decline in the Indo-US relations. The year 1965 was the year when America involved itself more and more in Vietnam, resulting in disastrous consequences, and when India and Pakistan went to war for the second time, on the Kashmir issue. In April, prior to the large-scale fighting of August-September, Indian and Pakistani troops were engaged in military skirmishes in the Rann of Kutch and the Indian government then lodged a formal protest, against the alleged use of American military equipment against India.

In the same month, the White House announced the postponement of the state visits by President Ayub Khan of Pakistan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Sastri of India, scheduled to take place on April 25th-26th and June 2-3, respectively. It was widely criticised in the Indian Parliament and in the press. According to Bowles the 'postponement' was due to the fact that Shastri "had made a mild suggestion that the bombing of North Vietnam (by the US-SM) was un-likely to bring peace".  

During the Indo-Pakistan war of August-September, 1965 India again protested, in stronger terms, against the

2. Ibid., p. 120.
Pakistan use of American arms against India. It reminded the Johnson administration of President Eisenhower's assurance to Nehru that Pakistan would not use American arms against India and if it did, the United States would take steps to prevent it. The US cut off its assistance to both India and Pakistan, an action that had little impact on the course of the fighting but was greatly resented in India.

The United States preferred to solve the crisis through the aegis of the United Nations. But the Soviet Union offered her good offices to find a solution to the Indo-pak dispute. The Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, Alexei Kosygin sent identical messages to the Prime Minister of India and the president of Pakistan on 4th Sep. 1965 in which he stated that: "Both sides could account on its (Soviet Union) willing co-operation or to use the accepted expressions on its good offices" for a peaceful settlement of their differences.

At the instance of the Soviet Union the leaders of India and Pakistan met at Tashkent on 4th September, 1966 to agree to the so-called Tashkent Declaration. It was a major diplomatic triumph for the Soviet Union and its prestige

2. Latif, Sherwani Ahmad, India, China and Pakistan, council for Pakistan studies, Karachi, 1967, p. 120.
reached a new high. As time passed, however, the declaration was widely criticized in both countries, especially in Pakistan, where Z.A. Bhutto led the attack. Less so in India, partly because Lal Bahadur Shastri who had signed declaration, died of a heart attack at Tashkent the day after it was signed, and any criticism of it, therefore, seemed to many Indians to be a reflection on a dead leader.

When Mrs. Gandhi succeeded Shastri as Prime Minister in January 1966, the United States, like other countries and the Indians themselves, was cautious in its appraisal of the likely course of the new administration. In March India was quite critical of a US announcement of a decision to resume sales of certain 'non-lethal' military equipment to India and Pakistan - a move that Pakistan had been trying to persuade the United States to adopt and that India opposed, for it would benefit Pakistan more than India.¹ In the same month, however, Mrs. Gandhi made a 11-day state visit to the United States at the invitation of President Johnson, and this visit was pronounced a success in both countries. Both Mrs. Gandhi and Johnson were in their elements. She called Johnson "a man of peace" and impressed by Mrs. Gandhi, he is reported to have said that of all 21 visits by heads of state or government during his administration, "The Indian Meeting was the most

¹ Mukharji, Sadhan, India's Economic Relations with USA and USSR, Bookland Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1978, p.46.
satisfying ..... No meeting had accomplished so much for so many.¹

At a White House dinner in honour of Mrs. Gandhi, Johnson proposed that an Indo-US Educational Foundation be established to be financed mainly from counterpart funds credited to the U.S. government from the rupees that had accumulated from the sale of PL-480 shipments of foodgrain.² Mrs. Gandhi welcomed the proposal, and it was incorporated in the joint communiqué that was issued at the end of her visit; but when she returned to India, she found that there was a great deal of opposition to the proposed foundation, and in July, by mutual consent, the much-publicised plan was quietly shelved. One tangible outcome of the visit, which may have been at least partially a result of Mrs. Gandhi's persuasiveness was that immediately after her visit, President Johnson won the approval of congress for an emergency shipment of 3.5 million tonns of foodgrains to India, which was experiencing a serious food shortage, in addition to the 6.5 million tonns that had already been approved for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1966.³

1. Times of India, April 4, 1966.
2. Memorandum, Dean Rusk to the president, "Briefing papers for the visit of India's Prime Minister", 21 March, 1966, Department of state, released under Freedom of Information Act.
Two other events in 1966 created a great deal of resentment in India towards the United States. For some time, the World Bank, in which the U.S. had a major voice, and the American government had been advising India to devalue the rupee, on the ground that this currency was greatly overvalued and therefore particularly weak in world markets. Some of Mrs. Gandhi's economic advisors also made the same recommendation. With great reluctance, Mrs. Gandhi yielded to these pressures, and on June 5th the Indian government announced a huge devaluation -36.5 per cent of the rupee. This was a case where Mrs. Gandhi was persuaded-influenced- to take a step that she did not want to take, one which, unfortunately, turned out to be a near disaster from India's point of view.

The increased attractiveness of India’s exports was more than offset by the rise in the costs of imports and in prices of many essential commodities in India. The World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the United States or any other country did not give any extra assistance to India as Mrs. Gandhi generally had been led to expect. Hence, the Indian Prime Minister, the US and the World Bank came under considerable criticism for the drastic devaluation and its consequences. The experience apparently strengthened Mrs. Gandhi's resolve to resist American and

other foreign influence and to emphasize a policy of nationalistic self-reliance.

An even greater strain on Indo-American relations came in the fall of 1966. President Johnson, whose sensitivity to Indian criticisms of his policy in Vietnam was well known, in reaction to a reference to, "imperialists in South Asia" and "condemned the US bombing on N. Vietnam" in a joint communique signed by Mrs. Gandhi at the end of a state visit to the Soviet Union in July, applied a so-called "short-tether" policy to US grain shipments to India, even though India was experiencing a severe drought and an accompanying shortage of food. His "stated aim was to keep recipients on a short lease in order to force their attention towards domestic agriculture" and "to force other countries to share the burden of food-aid for India". But these crude attempts to coerce India to change its attitude towards US actions in Vietnam and to change its development programme did not achieve the desired results. Instead they served to stir up widespread anti-American sentiment in India.

In early 1967, the government of India "began to sign economic cooperation pacts and trade protocols with Soviet bloc nations", and Indo-American relations grew

increasingly distant.\textsuperscript{1} President Johnson was further offended by India's criticism of Israel during the six-day Arab-Israeli war, in the official greeting that the Indian government sent to Ho Chi Minh on his seventy-seventh birthday, and by Mrs. Gandhi's presence in Moscow for the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. One tangible evidence of his displeasure was the continuation of his "Short-Tether" policy regarding food shipment to India. Ironically, however, in the late 1960s, which on the whole was not a good period in Indo-American relations, US aid to India reached an all-time height, eventhough it was made available erratically and was accompanied by considerable criticism and obvious influence attempts.

A number of developments in 1970 affected Indo-American relations more adversely and added new strains. The major strain was that the United States was about to resume arms sales to Pakistan, which had been largely suspended since 1965. In October, the US lifted ban on arms sales only to a limited degree and was described as a "one-time limited exception"\textsuperscript{2}. The US decision was sharply criticised in India by government officials, the press, and large

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segments of articulate public opinion. The New York Times, for example, in an October 11 editorial, warned that this decision would exacerbate tensions in the subcontinent and lead India to seek additional arms aid, mainly from the Soviet Union.\(^1\)

With the assumption of office by the Nixon Administration in 1969, there was a drastic change in the US foreign policy regarding the containment. The ideological aspect was muted, and the rapprochement was reached between the USA and China. Several factors made possible a Sino-American reconciliation in 1970. China's cultural revolution was over. During the previous year there had been fighting on the Sino-Soviet border and Soviet threats of nuclear attack.

Besides above factors, Herold C. Hinton, an American authority on China, cited the following three major premises of China on which the Sino-American detente was built.

1. China primarily wanted to reduce the likelihood of Soviet attack and, at the same time, she also wanted to feel free of at least an American threat.

2. that progressive liberation of Taiwan was possible only with a friendly United States; and

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1. Ibid., October 11, 1970.
3. to restructure its economy, China needed western trade and technology as a substitute for the Soviet aid of the 1950s.¹

Added to these China intensely desired to contain the growing Soviet influence in Asia by Joint Sino-American efforts. In this context Pakistan came in handy as a collaborator and tool of their plans. This naturally put India, all the more, in a position of insecurity, and it made her to look to other channels for help.

India thought that the Sino-US rapprochement might affect the South-Asian Power balance.² In short, the South Asian power system was this: Pakistan was militarily allied with the USA; but she had good and friendly relations with China. Pakistan was never very close to the Soviet Union. India had strained relations with Pakistan since 1947 and with China since 1959, while she was friendly both with the USA and the Soviet Union. Since the closing days of the 1950s China and the Soviet Union developed a rift in their mutual relations. From 1949 the US considered China as its adversary in Asia.


In July the world learned for the first time about Yahya Khan's "courier role"¹ in the secret arrangements that had been going on for several months for Dr. Kissinger's (Nixon's national security advisor) visit to Peking, which was to prepare the ground for a visit by President Nixon, and Khan's role in arranging for the "opening" to China—a historic watershed in Sino-American relations in particular and in international affairs generally.

Early on the morning of July 9, 1970, Kissinger boarded a Pakistan International Airlines Plane in complete secrecy, and a few hours later he was welcomed in Peking. On July 15th, in what Kissinger called "the announcement that shook the world", President Nixon, in a brief television statement, announced that Kissinger had "held talks in Peking from July 9 to 11", and that he had accepted in invitation, conveyed to Kissinger by Premier Chou-en-Lai "on behalf of the Government of the people's Republic of China... to visit China at an appropriate time before May 1972".²

Indian reactions to the Kissinger visit to China and Nixon's announcement were sharply critical. India's

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1. This role has been well described in G.W. Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Major Powers: Politics of a Divided Subcontinent*, New York, Free Press, 1975, p. 55.

ruling party member in the Lok Sabha, Mr. B.R. Bhagat, stated in the Lok Sabha, on July, 1971, that if by normalization of Sino-US relations president Nixon thought that China and the USA "should strike another balance of power in Asia, he will be mistaken". He continued that if it (Sino-US rapprochement) is either to contain the USSR or to create a new power balance here..... I think that will be worst of things to happen."¹ The Government of India thought that the existing power balance in Asia was upset following the development in Sino-US relations, Mr. Dinesh Singh, apprehended that the "pressure from Sino-US detente will freeze the power balance on the Indian Subcontinent"². The new undeclared axis in South Asia between Pakistan, China and the USA, New Delhi envisaged, might not be a welcome development for India which was considered by both China and Pakistan as their adversary.

As a result of the Sino-American rapprochement, India was isolated in South Asia. So that it would not be able to play any role in the subcontinent. The New York Times of August 30th 1971, commented that the "growing

1. Lok Sabha Debates, 6, July 20th 1971, pp. 192-193. Mr. Bhagat was the Minister State for External Affairs of India in 1967-68.

rapprochement" between the USA and China left for India a "desperate sense of isolation".  

Under these circumstances India could not expect that the USA would shield India against an attack on her by China. Moreover, President Nixon stated at Guam on 25 July 1969 that "we will keep our treaty commitments in Asia". And in his foreign policy report to the US Congress on 18 February 1970, he stated: "We shall provide shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us, or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security....

It could be inferred from Mr. Nixon's policy that as the US had no (military) "commitments" to India and as India was not (militarily) "allied" with the US she could not expect any help from it if she were attacked by a power like China with conventional weapons. Secondly, as the US did not consider India as "vital" to the US security in Asia, the US was not expected to run the risk of war with China in the interest of India.

4. Ibid., p.141.
The impending thaw in Sino-American relations added to the alarm in India over the Pro-Pakistan position of both the US and China in the South-Asian crisis, raising fresh apprehensions of a possible Sino-American-Pakistan axis against India. Kissinger had already warned the Indian government that if war broke out in the sub-continent, China might intervene and if China attacked India this time, India should not expect the US to provide military and other support, as it had done in 1962.

In fact, India perceived that the Sino-US detente might upset the South Asian power balance, adversely affect her security, increase the intransigence of Pakistan and encourage Sino-Pak combined attack. Hence, India could neither welcome the changed China policy of the US nor look upon it with equanimity.

At this juncture India concluded the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union on 9 August, 1971, though the talks for such a treaty were initiated as far back as 1969. With a view to meeting the threat from, what New Delhi thought, Pindi-Peking-Washington Axis. The timing of the treaty is quite significant since it closely followed President Nixon's open announcement on 15th July 1971 of his plan to visit China.

From India's point of view one of the objectives behind this Treaty was, perhaps, to maintain the power balance in South Asia with the help and co-operation of another Great power. As Mr. Dinesh Singh, former Minister of External Affairs, observed in the Lok Sabha on 20th July, 1971:

"I believe that the pressure from Sino-American detente will be to freeze the power balance on the Subcontinent. It will be their effort to keep...Pakistan as a lever against India. And if we want to break out of this, we have got to build our strength". 1

The Treaty served as an effective deterrent to Pakistani adventurism backed and supported by American overlordship and Chinese hegemonistic designs in this region. According to the Soviet leader Brezhnev, "in the event of attack the treaty provides for effective measures to be urgently taken by both contracting parties to guarantee peace and security. This commitment is aimed at serving the cause of defending peace and preventing of unleashing of aggressive acts". 2 Hence, the Soviet Union was in a position to help India boost her economic, industrial and military strength which could be used, primarily, to contain China (and Washington too) in this region.

From India's point of view, the Treaty was a contrivance to deter Pakistani threats on India and also to deter China and America from direct intervention in the Indo-pak conflict of Dec. 1971.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, there were, however, no adverse official reaction in the U.S. against the Treaty. In the news conference later in Washington on 12 November, 1971, Mr. William Rogers, the then U.S. Secretary of state, said that Mrs. Gandhi "assure us that their Non-Alignment policy will continue regardless of the recent Treaty that was signed with the Soviet Union. We have no reason to doubt that".¹ Commenting on the future of Indo-US relations Mr. Rogers said in a news conference on 23 December, 1971:

"Relations depend on mutuality .... India has taken the position they are Non-Aligned and they have assured us on several occasions that they are going to continue a policy of Non-Alignment. We will be watching events with considerable interests to see what happens."²

This statement of Mr. Rogers had an obvious reference to the Indo-Soviet Treaty. The implication of the statement was simple; it was that the Indo-U.S. relations

2. Ibid., 66, January 17, 1972, p. 55.
would depend on the Indo-Soviet relations and on India's adherence to the policy of Non-Alignment.

The real U.S. reaction to the Indo-Soviet Treaty could be known from the memoirs of Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kissinger. Mr. Nixon came to the conclusion that, India deviated from the path of Non-Alignment. "Mrs. Gandhi had gradually become aligned with the Soviets..." \(^1\)

Mr. Henry Kissinger observed that India and the Soviet Union "were brought into a natural defacto alliance" by the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship which he called as a "bombshell".\(^2\)

The U.S. felt that in the new context of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, the future of Indo-Soviet relations would depend upon the behaviour of India in its relations with the U.S. India at heart did not welcome the U.S. policy to normalise its relations with China. She desired that the U.S. should pursue its earlier policy of containment of China and should take measures to see that China could not play any part in the South Asian politics. But the development of Sino-U.S. detente belied India's hopes.

On the other hand, the U.S. was, perhaps, not unaware of the feelings of India regarding the Sino-U.S.

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rapprochement. The U.S. expected India to realize that Washington's new policy towards China was not aimed at all against India; it was set according to the U.S. officials, against the new context of international situation arising out of the Sino-Soviet dispute. The Soviet Union, in the U.S. estimate, was the main adversary all over the world, and that was the reason why the U.S. decided to exploit the Sino-Soviet rift to its own advantage by normalizing realtions with China. The U.S. felt hurt when it saw that instead of understanding the U.S. position, India concluded a Treaty with the Soviet Union, a move not conducive to the U.S. interests in Asia.

It is, however, since the Bangladesh issue erupted that there has been a continuously widening gap between the Indian opinion, official and non-official, and the American administration.1 Between 7 December, 1970 and 25 March, 1971 it continued to be a domestic matter although the issues involved were of great constitutional and democratic important. The democratic world looked on in amazement at the nonchalance, even indifference, with which, the Pakistani President, aided an abetted by Z.A. Bhutto, set aside the will of the people of East Pakistan as expressed in the first free election held in December, 1970.

The Awami League of Mujibur Rahman won 160 of the 162 seats in East Pakistan—an all-time world record—and thus secured a majority of seats in the National Assembly, obtaining the democratic privilege, may right, to constitute the government. On the pretext of talking, Yahya Khan, the then President of Pakistan bought time to transfer troops from West Pakistan on the night of March 25, 1971 as he flew out of Dacca and Bhutto had himself smuggled out. Mujibar Rahman was arrested and the army started on its 8-month long orgy of murder, rape and loot.

This action converted a domestic issue into an international one. The trek of helpless men, women, and children started to enter India in ever-increasing numbers bearing woeful tales of man’s inhumanity to man rivalling the Nazi butchery of the thirties. The military dictatorship murdered a democratic act. In the process it tortured to death more than a million people and squeezed out in less than six months more than 9 millions of its people to find temporary shelter in India. The characteristics of Pakistani army were described by the Guardian as "Callous, careless of life, indiscriminate of slaughter and at heart sickeningly supercilious".¹

After the crackdown of 25 March, 1970, India took a cautious stand on the spiralling crisis in East Pakistan.

India had to take into account the national and international repercussions the crisis connoted for her.\footnote{1} But in view of the Universal sympathy in the country for the flight of East Bangalis, Mrs. Gandhi made it clear that India would participate in any international effort in alleviating the sufferings of the people.\footnote{2} As a first step India decided not to close the borders with Pakistan as she was anxious to render humanitarian assistance to the refugees who might come in. The following reasons were responsible that India to allow the refugees to enter in its territory:

i) It was India's traditional policy to give shelter to those victims who had suffered persecution at home for any cause, whether religious, political or cultural. This country had welcomed Jews, Parsis and others who had to leave their country to escape persecution by their rulers.

ii) it had been a policy of India since 1947 to allow persecuted people from either wing of Pakistan to enter Indian territory whenever they felt forced to leave Pakistan, and iii) Public opinion in India could not have allowed the government to watch passively the massacre of Hindus in Pakistan.

When India was faced with the tremendous and growing burden of refugees, suggestions were made in certain

\footnote{1. Statesman, 28th March, 1971.}

\footnote{2. Ibid.}
quarters that India should go to war with Pakistan. Their plea was that a war with Pakistan would not cost India half of the expenditure that it had been actually incurring on the maintenance of refugees. But the government of India was not so simple minded about a course of action that affected the country and its economy in so many different ways.

Moreover, a war with Pakistan was likely to create communal tension. It was for these reasons that India postponed giving diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh as any such step was bound to bring on a full scale confrontation with Pakistan. In this context Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi said in Lok Sabha on May 24, 1971: "We are convinced that there can be no military solution to the problem of East Bengal. A political solution must be brought about by those who have the power to do so.... the great powers have a special responsibility. If they exercise their powers rightly and expeditiously then only we can look forward to durable peace on our subcontinent.\(^1\) Therefore, India's intention in solving problem was political rather than military.

But the United States viewed the crisis quite distinctly.\(^2\) Through out the days, following the outbreak of

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1. Lok Sabha Debates, 5, May 24, 1971, vol. 2, col. 188.

the civil war on March 25, 1971, the U.S. Government took Bangladesh crisis as an internal matter of Pakistan and maintained diplomatic silence.

Although the U.S. Consul General in Dacca Arthur K. Blood had been giving "detailed reports" on the atrocities committed by the West Pakistani army and also recommending the immediate evacuation of American citizens from East Pakistan, the State Department did not respond.¹ The U.S. Ambassador in New Delhi, Kenneth B. Keating was "burning the wires" with his detailed reports to the State Department on the tragedy in East Pakistan caused by the oppressive action of the West Pakistani military. But the officials in the Department, maintained that the reports were fragmentary and even conflicting. So the U.S. deliberately supported the West Pakistan.

India's Minister of External Affairs Mr. Swaran Singh stated in the Lok Sabha about the U.S. interference in the Bangladesh crisis:

"as such to Bangladesh as to Vietnam..... we shall not allow any other country or combination of countries to dominate us or to interfere in our internal affairs. We shall to our maximum ability to help other countries to maintain their freedom from outside domination....."²

On August 6, 1971 in Washington, Senator Edward Kennedy in an interview with newsmen, assailed U.S. President Nixon for opposing a House of Representatives' measure to cut off economic and military aid to the West Pakistan Government until the situation returned to normal in East. He charged the Nixon's administration with following politically oriented and senseless policy towards the East Bengal refugee problem. In his view, "It made no sense" to provide the West Pakistan Government with military supplies which help create refugees while spending millions of dollars to aid those refugees.¹ He forthrightly stated that Pakistan was committing genocide in East Bengal and that all the refugees who had fled away from their country had the overwhelming desire to free from Pakistan's rule.

During his visit to New Delhi in July 1971, Kissinger did not spell out the views of the U.S. administration.² He gave no assurance either about stopping further US arms aid to Pakistan or about bringing pressure on the Pakistan Government for a political settlement of Bangladesh. The Nixon Administration's pro-Yahya activities and postures went on throughout the period from March to December 1971. The basic policy of the US Government towards the emergent State of Bangladesh was governed by the

desired by the desire to preserve the territorial integrity of Pakistan.

The US administration's continuing "tilt" towards Pakistan, and its failure to speak out publicly against the atrocities in East Pakistan, alienated many in the US, as well as in India and elsewhere. Influential American newspapers, including the New York Times, and the Washington post, continued to criticize the South Asia policy of the administration.

In this superheated atmosphere, Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the United States in early November (as part of three week visit to several Western capitals to seek understanding and support in order to avert the necessity of restoring to stern measures against Pakistan) had little chance of success, even if she, Nixon and Kissinger could have overcome their personal antipathies and their divergent outlooks and values. She had two meetings with President Nixon and Kissinger described them as "without a doubt the two most unfortunate meetings Nixon had with any foreign leader."

She made it clear to Nixon that "India never wanted war with Pakistan. But at the same time India could not ignore Pakistan's warlike postures". Mr. Kissinger

2. Indian Express, November 5 & 6, 1971.
observed "The Nixon-Gandhi conversation.... turned into a classic dialogue of the deaf. The two leaders failed to hear each other not because they did not understand each other but because they understood each other only too well .... Nixon had no time for Mrs. Gandhi's condescending manner" and Mrs. Gandhi was apparently turned off by what she regarded as Nixon's refusal to consider the realities of the South Asian crisis and the dilemmas facing India.\(^1\) At a White House dinner on the evening of November 4, Mrs. Gandhi expressed her views quite bluntly: "For those who value democratic principles", she said "we expect understanding and may I add, a certain measure of support .... Our people cannot understand how those who are victims and who are fearing a burden and have restrained themselves with such fortitude should be equated with those whose action has caused the tragedy".\(^2\)

At the end of the White House talks that she was impressed by Nixon's sincere desire to help in the East Bengal crisis. But she firmly rejected any suggestion to withdraw Indian troops from the Pakistan border, saying that after two aggressions from Pakistan and one from China, "I think it is my duty to see that we are not unprepared".\(^3\)


India rejected Nixon's proposal for a meeting of the Security Council as it felt that no justice could be expected from the Council which did not come to know about the plight of the Bangladesh refugees then in India. Mrs. Gandhi-Nixon talks failed. No joint communiqué was issued. Both sides made a sustained effort to understand each other's viewpoint but the chasm was too wide to be easily bridged.

Finally open warfare came to the sub-continent as a result of the action by Pakistanis not the Indians—although of course the Pakistanis claimed that they were forced to take this action because of India's provocation. On the evening of December 3, Pakistani planes suddenly attacked a few air fields in India, with remarkably limited results. The President of India declared a state of emergency. On December 4, Indian troops moved into East Pakistan in support of the Mukti Bahini and on December 6, 1971, she recognised the people's Republic of Bangladesh and Pakistan broke off diplomatic relations with India.¹

Soon after the beginning of the war between India and Pakistan, President Nixon took two steps: (i) suspension of economic aid to India and (ii) the order to the Seventh Fleet to enter the Bay of Bengal and rescue Pakistani soldiers who were likely to be trapped by the Indian army.

On 6 December the US suspended $87.6 million of aid to India that was in the pipeline. This time Washington did not announce a simultaneous stoppage of aid to Pakistan as it did in 1965. In India it was taken only as a projection of President Nixon's animus against India. Nixon made a grievous miscalculation in thinking that suspension of aid would make India reverse the course of its policy in regard to East Pakistan.

When the suspension of aid failed to intimidate India, Nixon took another step to send the nuclear naval unit, the Seventh Fleet, to the Bay of Bengal. The Fleet entered the Bay of Bengal on 12 December and remained there until 20 December, even three days after the surrender of the Pakistani troops. Washington maintained that the Seventh Fleet was sent to evacuate American nationals from Dacca. But the truth was different. Jack Anderson, an American journalist gave four reasons about the purpose of the Enterprise: 1) to compel India to divert both ships and planes to shadow the task force; 2) to weaken India's blockade of East Pakistani ports; 3) to divert the Indian aircraft carrier, Vikrant, from its military missions, and 4) to force India to keep planes on defence alert reducing

their offensive operations against Pakistani ground forces.¹
So during the crisis it was quite obvious that the US motive
was to support the Pakistan as against India.

The role the US played in the UN was unworthy of
the status of a country like America. All through the crisis
it assumed a leading role in moving resolutions in the
Security Council to thwart the national uprising in
Bangladesh. The US Ambassador in the UN, George Bush openly
accused India of "clear-cut aggression". On December 5 two
resolutions introduced in the Security Council, calling for
a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani
troops from each other's territory, were vetoed by the
Soviet Union.²

But two days later a similar resolution was
adopted by an overwhelming majority (104 to 11 with 10
abstentions) by the General Assembly.³ India was opposed to
these resolutions, presumably because it was not willing to
withdraw its troops from East Pakistan until it had forced
the Pakistani troops thereto surrender. Instead, it wanted
the UN to declare Pakistan the aggressor. Curiously enough,
it was the communist bloc and not America which defended the

1. The minutes of the relevant WSAG meetings were first published by Jack Anderson in New York Times, January 5 and 14, 1972 and later in Anderson, The Anderson Papers.
struggle for democracy in East Pakistan. If there had been no American arms aid, no military junta would ever have thought of denying the democratic rights of the people in Bangladesh.

In the US, Kissinger followed a very tough line in the Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) meetings in December always intimating that he was acting simply as an agent for the President. In a meeting on December 3, even before the Indo-Pakistan war began, he complained: "I am getting hell every half an hour from the President that we are not being tough enough on India. He want to tilt in favour of Pakistan. He feels everything we do comes out otherwise". ¹

India was extremely sorry about the role played by American administration under Nixon in the Bangladesh crisis. For about twenty years the military regimes in Pakistan had been supported by the US Government not because it had any genuine respect for them but because it would help retain its influence over the country.

A survey by correspondents of the New York Times in seven capitals in Asia, conducted at the end of the Indo-Pakistan war, indicated that,"the war that brought victory to India and dismemberment to Pakistan profoundly damaged the moral influence and big-power leverage of the US in Asia",

and that "the Soviet Union emerges with great strategic and diplomatic gains from the first major confrontation in which its two big-power rivals, China and the US both opposed her."¹

Apparently Nixon and Kissinger found some solace in their belief that the adverse consequences of their policies and actions during the South Asian crisis, and especially during the final stages, in terms of influence and prestige, would not be long-lasting, and that in a short time a more satisfactory relationship with both South Asian countries would be possible.

In the changed realities of the subcontinent, President Nixon expressed his desire to improve relations with India. In his Annual Foreign Policy Message to congress on 9th February, 1972 he said that "we are prepared now for a serious dialogue with India on the future of our relations. Such a dialogue, he said 'will depend not on any identity of policies but on respect for each other's views and concerns. This should go both ways. If India has an interest in maintaining balanced relationships with all major powers we are prepared to respond constructively"; Nixon said, and added : "Of interest to us also will be the posture that South Asia's most powerful country now adopts

towards its neighbours on the subcontinent'. Further he assured that while U.S. interest in Indian democracy had not diminished it made no sense to assume, however, that a country's democratic political system or its size, "requires our automatic agreement with every aspect of its foreign policy".2

In the light of the statement it was understood that the US was interested to improve relations with India during the Post-Bangladesh crisis. Inspite of having diametrically opposite views on the Bangladesh issue, there was an underlying desire on the part of each nation not to let relations deteriorate further, in a mature relationship found on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual interest. The U.S. positively related its recognition of India's regional role and welcomed India's return to a posture of more genuine Non-Alignment.

On March 20, 1972, Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs stated, before the House of Committee on Foreign Affairs: "India has indicated a desire to renew better relations with the U.S. and on our part we reciprocate this desire and are ready for a dialogue with India on subjects of mutual

2. Ibid.
concern. The pattern of our future relations will be shaped by the outcome of our discussions with India.... In this way, the U.S. played positive role towards the Simla Agreement which was concluded between India and Pakistan on 3rd July 1972 without the interference of any third power.

Indeed there was a mood of reconciliation. Many Americans who had written off India as a Soviet "stooge" started entertaining second thoughts. In India itself it was becoming increasingly clear that, since a dismembered Pakistan had ceased to be a threat, the Soviet Union was no longer so crucial to India's strategic interests. The Indo-Soviet Treaty was advertised as having marked the beginning of a "sophisticated" stage of Non-Alignment. It was an acknowledgement of the positive role of an external power in safeguarding India's interests. Americans were coming to realize these subtleties of Indian diplomacy.

In view of improving better relations with India, President Nixon appointed Daniel P. Moynihan as American Ambassador to India on 9 February, 1973. He played a key role in creating an atmosphere of good-will and better understanding between two countries. Elegant diplomatic notes of Moynihan to the President generated a climate of 'rejuvenation' and reassertion of friendly ties between two

nations. On his strong recommendation, the US wrote off an accumulated sum of Rs. 16,640 million it was holding in India in local currency under PL 480 deals.¹ With the removal of this major irritant mutual relations between India and the US grew up in a guarded manner.

An unexpected chill crept into Indo-US relations following Mrs. Gandhi's sharp criticism of the US policy in Vietnam at the "One Asia Assembly" in New Delhi on 6 February 1973. She said: "The very manner of ending the Vietnam war may create new tensions. The ceasefire should not lull us into comfort that there will be peace all the way. To many nations, peace itself has often been war by other means. A little later she said: "would this sort of war or the savage bounching which has taken place in Vietnam have been tolerated for so long, had the people been Europeans?"² Her statement was bitterly criticised by the US Govt., State Department spokesman Bray said that Mrs. Gandhi's statement "contradicts the recent communications from New Delhi suggesting a desire to improve the relationship between the two countries."³ Mrs. Gandhi's speech was given wide publicity in the American press. The New York Times Correspondent from New Delhi described it as

a bitter attack on American policy in Asia.¹ "Although Mrs. Gandhi's tough comments on US policies in Vietnam and Asia have been made before, her speech came as something of a surprise", commented the correspondent.² It clearly suggested that American military actions were motivated out of racial considerations. This was said to be the unkindest cut which the Americans could not easily bear.

On 3 May, 1973, President Nixon issued the annual "State of the World" message to the Congress. It contained the clearest statement yet made on the totality of Indo-US relations. He described India thrice as a "major power" and affirmed that the US respected it as a major country. It also noted that there had been serious differences with New Delhi over US policy in Indo-China. But with the end of the war, the President said this problem would be reduced. As chairman of the International Control Commission for Laos and Cambodia and country with a stake in peace, India had an opportunity to play an important and positive role in consolidating peace.²

Despite constant reiteration of a desire for an improvement in relations by both sides, a new Indian policy towards the US did not emerge.³ There were serious

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2. Ibid.
differences between the two countries on the issue of India's nuclear policy. When India exploded her first nuclear device at Pokharan in Rajasthan on 18 May, 1974, the US mass media strongly assailed India for its vast expenditure of money on nuclear programmes ignoring the basic needs of its people. Although India declared that the Nuclear test was purely for a peaceful purpose, the State Department considered it as unfortunate.

There was strong pressure from the Congress and environmentalist lobbies to make the nuclear factor the main item on the agenda of Indo-American relations.¹ Some American analysts even saw the danger of a nuclear India threatening the stability of the region to the detriment of U.S. strategic interest. The chief area of disagreement was the Non-proliferation Treaty, which India refused to sign. Even during Janata rule, relatively a better period for Indo-American relations, this disagreement persisted.

The official visit of Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger, to India from 27 to 30 October 1974 opened new vistas of hopes for better ties between two countries. The perception of Dr. Kissinger about India now appeared somewhat different from that of the Bangladesh crisis period in 1971. Realistic in his approach, Kissinger was prepared to

recognise the "Pre-eminent" status of India in the subcontinent. In view of India's size and military potential, the American administration was fully convinced that the theory of military parity between India and Pakistan was irrelevant and outdated. There is little to be gained from an attempt to redress the natural military dominance of India over Pakistan by supplying Pakistan with military equipment.

He stressed the need for close cooperation and correct understanding between the two countries. "We can now build our relationship free of post distortion and conscious of the interests and values we share."\(^1\) He further remarked that American objectives were consistent with those of India. "We are nations whose values and aspirations are so similar that our disputes are often in a nature of a family quarrel."\(^2\) Regarding India's policy of Non-Alignment, he stated that "The United States accepts Non-Alignment. In fact America sees a world of free, independent, sovereign states as being decidedly in our national interest. Support of national independence and of the diversity that goes with it has become a central theme of American foreign policy."\(^3\)

1. Dr. Kissinger's address, ICWA, New Delhi, 28th October, 1974, official Text, USIS, p. 6.
2. Ibid. 
3. Ibid. p. 7
To move forward in the direction of improving and strengthening ties between the two nations, a joint commission was set up for scientific, cultural and economic cooperation and an agreement was signed by Henry Kissinger and Y.B. Chavan on 28th October, 1974 in New Delhi. It was hailed high as a "constructive approach" in genuine improvement of relationship between two great countries.¹

The U.S. administration is impressed by India's capability of taking independent decisions without any fear or pressure from any outside power. This was demonstrated by India on two occasions, during the Bangladesh crisis of 1971 and at the time of Nuclear explosion in May 1974.

But within less than four months of Dr. Kissinger leaving India, there came a big shock. The U.S. announcement lifting the 1971 embargo on the sale of arms to India and Pakistan in February, 1975, despite India's strong protests. Some analysts said, it was an indirect result of India's nuclear explosion of 18th May, 1974 and an intensification of Pakistan's pressure on the U.S. for the supply of more sophisticated weapons.²

There was a roar of protest in U.S.A about the imposition of emergency by Mrs. Gandhi on 25th June, 1975.³

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In August 1975 President Ford cancelled his proposal visit to India because of emergency conditions obtaining in India.

A number of newspapers in U.S.A. described the imposition of the emergency as "dictatorial" and observed that Mrs. Gandhi had thrown her opponents in goal to save herself. They called her a 'tyrant', who had assumed "a role like that of Catherine the Great". One newspaper wrote that "the world's most populous democracy has become the world's second largest totalitarian state." And yet another newspaper stated that "those amendments cut to the very core of democracy".¹

However, there cannot be much doubt that these denunciations acquired sharpness because of U.S. dislike for Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi and her policies. As time passed, Mrs. Gandhi appeared to be firmly in control and without any serious challenge to her position and there developed in the U.S. a certain appreciation of the brighter side of the emergency. In mid-August 1975 William S. Border contended in an article in the New York Times that Mrs. Gandhi's policies had given her powers to help millions of starving masses.² During the emergency Mrs. Gandhi seemed to


be answering Western critics of India as a soft state with demonstration that her government could be as callous as others in the Third World. In short, at every phase of her first term in office, Indo-U.S. relations were characterised by ambiguity.

With the assumption of the U.S. presidency in 1976 by Jimmy Carter, Indo-U.S. relations showed signs of improvement. The Democratic administration regarded India as a natural and potentially important ally. The Carter Administration sought to take a long range view of international politics than had its predecessor, to avoid viewing Third World areas solely in East-West or purely strategic terms but in relation to their own priorities and needs. India was clearly an important test of this approach, for it was not only a major state in its own right but a democratic state influential in the Non-Aligned Movement. Thus President Carter moved beyond conceding India's regional predominance, which his predecessor had done, to positively welcoming India as a "regional influence".

In fact, India and the USA had conflicting national interests in Asia. As a result there had been stress and strains in Indo-US relations which oscillated between high expectations and deep suspicion. As India considered that the new US policy towards China, its tilt towards Pakistan during Bangladesh crisis, and its nuclear
policy adversely affected her national interests, she expressed displeasure over it in many ways but India never cut off its relations with the USA. On the other hand, although India became a country of secondary importance in the US global strategy because of its developing relations with China, and although India's actions between 1966 and 1977 sometimes went against the US interests, the US did not sever its relations with India. Between 1966 and 1977 both India and the USA severely criticised the policies of each other, but neither of them was found to think in terms of breaking its ties with the other. During this period, it was true that the primary purpose of the US behind its policy to normalise relations with China was not to threaten India's security, but to protect its interests in South-East Asia against the Soviet Union who was USA's enemy. Therefore, it is essential to discuss Non-Alignment as a factor in Indo-US relations. The factors that caused differences between India and U.S., on many issues, were primarily the Pakistan and mainly the misunderstanding of India's policy of Non-Alignment by USA for a very long time.