ABSTRACT

Two ideological blocs the Capitalist bloc led by United States and Communist bloc headed by Soviet Union emerged in the wake of World War II. Both started striving to expand their hegemony and the Cold War was the result of their mutual antagonism.

To have an upper hand in the global security system the Cold War strategy demanded that the US carried forward the containment policy outside Europe. Consequently, the US became actively engaged in the security affairs of South Asia. Initially, the US attempted to befriend both India and Pakistan. It was envisaged by US policy makers that if both countries were available it was fine. If not, at least one of them must be brought into the US global security system. When India turned down US proposal to become its satellite to serve its interest, the latter found in Pakistan a willing partner. The geographical location of Pakistan provided added strategic advantage to US to contain the expansionist policies and to encircle Soviet Union and China. Pakistan's strategic location is such from where US could fulfill many objectives, it could contain Soviet Union and pursue oil interests in the Persian Gulf.

Pakistan's perception about joining United States was absolutely different. The obsession of India always haunted the policy makers in Islamabad. Pakistan from its very birth perceives
India a threat for its very existence. It was in order to counter this threat and remove its sense of insecurity, that it moved towards the US. Moreover, Pakistan was desperate to establish a fair degree of parity in its military power vis a vis India. Thus, Pakistan in quest of military and economic assistance joined United States. It can be said both countries needed each other, though with divergent policy perspective and orientation.

To the United States strategic nexus with Pakistan was needed as it was supposed to facilitate a key element in the global chain of anti-communist alliance. However, Washington by making Pakistan a Cold War partner did not help in improving Indo-Pak strained relations. US defence pacts with Pakistan and its supply of sophisticated weapons to the latter unleashed arms race and in turn increased the probability of war in South Asia.

This work attempts to examine the factors which were responsible for changing US interests and priorities in Pakistan and latters dependence on the former, and causes which compelled Pakistan to acquire sophisticated arms and forge strategic relations with a Super Power far from Pakistan. The whole study is divided into five chapters. Each dealing with a specific period covering significant events of bilateral relations.

The First Chapter endeavours to present an overview of the evolution of US-Pakistan strategic relationship in historical
perspective, focusing how both countries came together, and how shrewdly Pakistan used the various opportunities intrinsic in the Cold War for becoming member of military blocs (CENTO, SEATO) which resulted in massive security assistance from the USA. It also gives a brief account of US military aid to Pakistan and implications of embargoes imposed in the wake of war with India in 1965 and 1971. This chapter ends with Symington-Glenn Amendment which terminated all US military aid to Pakistan in 1979 for its alleged attempt to acquire nuclear enrichment technology.

The Second Chapter attempts to analyse how the past deterioration in the strategic and security relationship between the United States and Pakistan over nuclear programmes came in for reappraisal. It also sees how fall of Shah of Iran and the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan ultimately become 'turning point' in US-Pak strategic relations, when Carter administration discovered Pakistan's strategic significance as 'Front Line State'. Moreover, this chapter discusses the genesis of the Afghan Crisis and its implications on the relations of the superpowers, and perception of Washington and Islamabad regarding Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and how this become the question of survival for Pakistan and for United States to maintain its superpower status.

The Third Chapter deals with the evolution of close US-Pak strategic relations during two consecutive terms of President
Ronald Reagan. How Afghan Crisis increased the bargaining position of Zia vis a vis Reagan administration. And how Pakistan managed to acquire the two massive aid packages of ($3.2 billion and $ 4.02 billion) excluding other military and economic assistance along with sophisticated weapons including F-16 fighter aircrafts. This Chapter also discusses nuclear issues which become a major irritant between two countries.

The Fourth Chapter tries to examine the factors which radically altered the US-Pakistan strategic relations. The end of Cold War and disintegration of Soviet Union diminished Pakistan’s strategic significance for US. The imposition of Pressler Sanctions and its impact on Pakistan has been discussed in detail. This chapter also analyses the efforts of Pakistani policy makers to wriggle out of Pressler Sanctions and subsequent passage of Brown Amendment is also dealt with. Finally the issue of shipment of Ring Magnets and MTCR are also mentioned.

The Fifth Chapter examines the Post Brown development in the US-Pak strategic relations. An endeavour have been made to deal with the major factors of co-operation and irritation such as issue of F-16, India and Pakistan Nuclear Test and how Taliban became a factor in US-Pakistan relations. Fourth Military Coup in Pakistan and US attitude towards it, Clinton’s visit to South Asia and bilateral relations is discussed. This Chapter ends with September 11, 2001 attack on America and its grave implications
on global security system and how ultimately Washington reinvented Pakistan's strategic significance.

The future course of US-Pakistan relations is hazardous to predict because of wide swing of the past half-century. What we can note are certain constant factors that will remain important. Geography will continue to give Pakistan strategic importance as the juncture of Western, Southern and Central Asia. There are three reasons why geo-strategic location of Pakistan will be important to the US. To tackle the growing influence of Russia-China-India in the region and preempt China, Iran, India axis. Pakistan's geo-political proximity to the Central Asian Republics and Middle East is also a plus for it. The US needs to garner support of a moderate Muslim country to fight International terrorism. As Pakistan is a leading Islamic state, the coming of an extremist Islamic regime in Islamabad would have profound negative impact not only on the sub-continent, but throughout the Islamic World. US interest lies in avoiding such a development.

Since India and Pakistan are nuclear weapons states, how Islamabad and New Delhi manage their nuclear rivalry will have an implications far beyond the subcontinent. Averting a nuclear holocaust on the subcontinent will be a key US policy goal. This will keep Pakistan and US engaged in the years to come. The future course of the US-Pakistan strategic relations would also
depend on whether the interest of the two countries are complementary or divergent. Further, American assistance to Pakistan would depend on the utility of Islamabad to promote US foreign policy objectives. What shape the Kashmir imbroglio takes would also have a bearing on the countries in future. It seems Afghanistan is going to loom large in near future on bilateral relationship as both countries have agreed to fight against the menace of terrorism.

It must be clearly understood by US-Pakistan policy makers that to establish reliable, creditable and durable relations both countries have to leave all real or imaginary apprehensions, fears, suspicions and mistrust. Irritants should be removed through diplomacy, co-operation, negotiation and attitude of give and take. US has greater responsibility to carry the burden of relations because of its power and influence. It is only then and then alone that lasting, durable, strategic relations beneficial for both can be ensured. Hence, a long term objective of conciliation and strategic friendship should not be lost sight of, which is essential for peaceful co-existence.