CHAPTER - III

PAKISTAN ‘REDISCOVERED’: THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY

The victory of Republican Party in the Presidential election reflected the change from liberalism to conservatism in American foreign policy. The assumption of power by Ronald Reagan as President brought sea change in US-Pak relationship. The process started by the Carter administration to forge a closes security and strategic relations with Pakistan was given a distinct momentum by the new administration. The United States under Reagan was firm for close relationship with Islamabad as a key partner in South Asia in opposing the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. The new administration decided that American response would not be half hearted boycott of sporting events and ineffective trade embargoes but whole hearted efforts to roll back the Soviets from South Asia, and full-scale support for Pakistan.¹

The Reagan administration believed that Carter’s efforts to construct a new world order had adversely affected American interests and image around the world. A fresh appraisal of the world strategic realities and challenges convinced Reagan that the Soviet Union still constituted a primary and formidable threat to vital US interests and that the promotion of these interest was becoming increasingly difficult. In such a scenario Reagan
administration decided that countries in strategic location needed to be supported with military and economic assistance to stem possible attack against them by the Soviet Union.

In a reappraisal of US policy towards Pakistan, Reagan administration neglected Carter's arms restriction on Pakistan, issue of non-proliferation and human rights, which loomed large on US Pakistan relations during past years. Thus, Pakistan because of new permissive policy frame-work, emerged as a strategically 'Front line' state in South and West Asia.²

Thus, change of guard in America brought cheers and optimism in Islamabad. The renewed interest of US in Pakistan enhanced Pakistan's bargaining position vis-à-vis USA. By recognizing its potential role in American foreign policy Pakistan was able to manoeuvre successfully on Reagan's strong anti communism, to continue on its nuclear programme, increase its security vis-a-vis India, military and economic aid to cope with the refugees crisis, consolidate the regime in Islamabad and most significantly, secure its Western flank against potential Soviet Afghan encroachment³.

For Zia regime, the implications of the Reagan Presidency were vast. With the Reagan administration, Islamabad found consistent partner with which to pursue goals in South Asia. For Reagan, an opportunity to confront the Soviet and force them out of South Asia represented a chance to re-establish containment as
a doctrine and America’s prestige as a force capable of initiating change in far corners of the world.¹

With the overthrow of Shah regime in Iran, the most important pillar of US strategy in the Gulf region had collapsed long before. Thus, Afghan crisis posed a great threat to the region. However, the United States had evidently recuperated sufficiently from the experience of the Vietnam war so that it was ready to try its hand once again at a major foreign policy objectives. This time America was determined to ensure that same mistakes and misperception were not committed. Here the administration found willing and capable allies in the Afghan resistance in Islamabad. US thought that since Pakistan had earlier been assigned this role in the 1950s and 60s it could again assume that role. Further the United States could pursue its foreign policy objectives, attempt to reestablished a measure of international prestige and confront the Soviet Union, without committing troops with the help of Pakistan and the Afghan resistance fighters. Hence, Washington found it self in a comfortable situation; it could engage in a major foreign campaign but still satisfy domestic isolationists. The Afghan crisis was an opportunity for the US to re-established much of what it had lost in the decade since Vietnam.

The coming of US-Pakistan as close friends resulted in substantial increase in the US arms and economic aid to Pakistan in the 1980s and a considerable strengthening of its defence.
capabilities. Pakistan accepted revised aid package which was earlier rejected by Ziaul Haque as "Peanuts".

Thus, the US establishment started to lay down the basic work that would facilitate the eventual extension of substantial military and economic assistance to Pakistan. In the large strategic interest of USA, the Secretary of the State Alexander Haig urged the Congress to soften the ban on aid to Pakistan imposed under Symington Amendments Act, which prohibited US assistance to countries which pursued nuclear enrichment technology and refused to give assurance that they were not developing nuclear weapons. Jane A. Coon Deputy Secretary and South Asia specialist, said that American now realizes that imposition of a ban on aid had not really accomplished the anti proliferation objective of the US policy. The sanctions had only led to a growing sense of isolation and insecurity in Pakistan.

The acceptable solution of nuclear problem was the foremost issue between two countries, which had bedeviled relations during the Carter years, with Pakistan making evident that it would not compromise on its nuclear programme. Washington, in great need of Pakistan replied that the issue would not become the centre-place of US-Pakistan relationship. Moreover, it said that if Islamabad did not develop nuclear weapons it would have made easier for Reagan administration to establish close relationship.
with Pakistan. This was a radical change in the US policy towards Pakistan, in effect a tacit understanding that America could live with Pakistan’s nuclear programme as long as Islamabad did not take the extreme decision of exploding a bomb.³

Another irritant in bilateral relations was Pakistan’s record of human rights and democracy. The Carter Administration had been critical of Pakistan on both of these. So Zia wanted to be sure that Reagan administration did not continue this type of interference in internal matters of Pakistan. General Arif told Haig, “we would not like to hear from you the type of government—we should have” In response, the Secretary of State said, “General, your internal situation is your problem”⁶

There was convergence of interest between US and Pakistan on the issue of covert aid to Afghan resistance fighters. Americans agreed, on maintaining the modus operandi, established during Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Reagan administration also accepted the Pakistan’s insistence that Central Intelligence Agency would serve only as a quarter master, to supply arms, equipment and munitions for the Mujahideen, whereas supply would be funneled through Pakistan’s inter Services Intelligence Directorate. It was further decided that CIA would train Pakistan’s intelligence agency in the use of weapons and equipment and ISI in turn would instruct the Afghan fighters. This was a great tactical move of Zia regime, as Pakistan did not want to lose its new found strategic
significance by giving free hand to CIA in dealing with mujahideen.

The Reagan administration’s understandably flexible and conciliatory approach towards Pakistan dissipated all the previous fears and suspicions in the minds of foreign policy maker in Islamabad. Now there was no issue of US ‘credibility’ and ‘reliability’. With this Pakistan give up long standing demand of security assistance to Pakistan under 1959 bilateral agreement. This was result of altered atmosphere ‘as Pakistan had already become strategically inevitable for America. So no need was felt to seek a security guarantee beyond a pledge made by Reagan administration against a communist attack. America-Pak strategic friendship now moved forward on a durable basis.

The Aid Package

The US military and economic assistance to Pakistan started when the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations voted on May 14, 1981 by 10 vote to 7 to lift restriction on aid to Pakistan and approved the administration’s request for $100 million in Economic Support Fund for 1982 and $600,000 for the International Military Training and Education Programmes (IMET) for Pakistan.

Thus, the rapprochement which had resulted from the Soviet intervention assumed the tangible form of aid based relationship.
Pakistan officially accepted the US economic and military assistance in September 15, 1981. Initially the Reagan administration offered a five year $2.5 million package to Pakistan which was later raised to $3.2 million beginning with Financial year 1983⁹. The new package included inter alia an additional $500 million worth of commodity assistance¹⁰.

The policy of $3.2 billion was divided equally between economic assistance and foreign military sales credit guarantees of $1.6 billion. Each of the $1.6 billion economic aid component of the package, $1 billion was in the form of a grant the remaining $600 million had a 10 years grace period and 20 years repayment period at 2 percent interest respectively. The military sales component of $1.6 billion carried an interest rate of 14 percent with a repayment period of 30 years with 7-10 years grace period on the principal.¹⁰

The American aid package was designed in large measure to meet Pakistan’s air defence need. A large proportion of the total military credit (some $1.1 billion) was to go for the acquisition of 40 F-16 aircraft. Pakistan made it clear that it regarded the F-16 transaction as a “test of American earnestness” and American political commitments. The high performance aircraft was considered by Pakistan as best suited to their defence requirement over the long haul.¹¹
Since there was need to modernize ground and naval forces, America promised 100 M48A5 tanks, 35 m88 AI recovery vehicle, 20 M901. I-two vehicle (together with 1005 1-Two missiles) 64 M109 A2 self-propeled Howitzers, 75 M198 towed Howitzers and 10AH-15attack helicopters. Other items which were under discussion included tanks helicopters, A-10 close support aircraft, APC's surface to air missiles anti aircraft and new naval ordnance.\textsuperscript{12}

This agreement with Pakistan was logical and necessary response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. President Reagan urged the Congress to approve the five year economic and military aid package, in precaution. As in case of failure to respond to Pakistan’s imminent need for external assistance at the critical time would “jeopardise important American Security interest”\textsuperscript{13}

Pakistan received massive military aid from USA during the Financial year-1984. In a fervent appeal to the Congress to keep the aid commitment to Pakistan at the agreed levels and not to make any cut the State Department officials said that the relation between the USA and Pakistan had been volatile and that it is crucial as we move to re-established our ties, that we do all we can to built trust and confidence in each other's reliability we need to alloy any lingering Pakistani doubt about the depth of our commitment to the revived relationship. He revealed that Pakistan has already made financial commitment to totaling $550 million in
1983 alone to be paid to American arms contractors for weapons purchase, and that any cuts in that would put them in difficulty.

Pakistan received $745 million from the Reagan administration during 1984 Financial year. Out of this aid $225 million was for economic assistance and remaining $520 million in military assistance. Besides, it was proposed to give $ 57.4 million by way of PL-480 assistance. In addition a budgetary provision of $ 800,000 had been made to train Pakistani military officers in USA.14

Pakistani establishment asked Reagan administration in December 1984 to be permitted to acquire the E-2C airbase early warning system, other wise known as Hawkeye to guide its long range F16 attack bomber. By the middle of November 1984 25 F-16 aircrafts had been delivered to Pakistan. USA was apparently impressed with President Ziaul Haque’s plea for more sophisticated weapons systems and war system. But Islamabad received set back in 1985 when its endeavour of obtaining Hawkeye was turned down by Reagan administration on the recommendation made by a SP visiting Pentagon team to Islamabad. The team was of the view that the Hawkeye-E2 aircraft for early warning border surveillance was not suitable for Pakistan15.

Beside routine on going aid package Washington on various occasions provided substantive aid to Pakistan to keep it focused and prepared to fight against any misadventure of Soviet Union.
President Ronald Reagan in October 1985 had asked the Congress to approve a $106 million aid package to Pakistan which was supplementary to the ongoing $3.02 billion aid package and $50 million AIM 92 Side Vinder missile sale.16

In the meantime, when it became evident over the years that the Afghanistan issue would persist beyond the completion of the six-year aid programme in 1987, the two countries initiated negotiations to conclude a new aid package even before the expiry of the old one17. As a result of these negotiations an aid deal of $4.02 billion was signed on March 24, 1986, a tremendous increase over the existing package, which further strengthened relations between Pakistan and United States. The package carried more relaxations on payment than the previous aid deal. It was more favourable to Pakistan because, it underlined Pakistan’s penciled stand on the Afghan issue and steadfastness against pressure18.

The strategic and security relations between US-Pakistan entered a new phase with purpose and resolve when Pakistani Prime Minister M.K. Junejo paid a visit to Washington in July 1986 to acknowledge the American aid package. President Reagan’s message at that time reaffirmed the US “commitment to Pakistan’s independence, security and territorial integrity. Washington and Islamabad expressed satisfaction over the successful conclusion of negotiation over six year period assistance package for 1987-1993.
President Reagan stressed that this unique multi-year programme provided tangible evidence of the durability and continuity of US commitment to strengthen Pakistan's defence capability in the face of Soviet pressure from Afghanistan. Reagan expressed his administration's admiration for Pakistan's courage in standing up to Soviet pressure through Afghanistan and for its selfless provision of humanitarian relief to the nearly three million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan.

During 1988 financial year Pakistan was proposed $670 million in economic aid and military sale package by Reagan administration, which was an increase of $12 million over its aid for financial year 1987. US administration proposed $666 million for financial year 1986 as aid for Pakistan but the Congress approved only $638 million, as in the house of Representative and Senate Committee, Democrats were in control. In the figure presented for the financial year 1988, Pakistan was to receive $290-92 million in military assistance. The bulk of it was in the form of military sales credits and 386-95 million in economic aid. However, it was not made clear that how the military funds would be spent but an airborne early warning system, sophisticated tanks and additional F16 fighters were under consideration.

**Nuclear Issue**

The dilemmas the United States faced in its relations with Pakistan have been political and strategic, the nuclear issue was
by and large the most serious. The US-Pakistan strategic alliance suffered a serious set back on nuclear issue in August 1987. When on July 10 the US authorities arrested a Pakistani born Canadian citizen Arshad Parvaiz in Philadelphia on charge that he tried to export to Pakistan weapon grade uranium. Pakistan officials, however denied any link to the suspect in that case. Before this another Pakistani Mr Nazir Ahmad was arrested in Houston while trying to smuggle Krytone electronic switches, that can trigger a nuclear bomb.

The Reagan administration expressed serious concern over attempts at an illegal export of the goods which would have increased substantially Pakistan’s ability to manufacture a nuclear device, and said that Pakistan needed to take concrete steps to restore its credibility and further asked Islamabad to give assurance that it was not trying to develop a nuclear weapon.

In 1985 American Congress passed a law (Pressler Amendment) that prohibited US aid to nations that possessed nuclear device. Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs sub Committee on Asia Stephan J. Solarz said that Pakistan appeared to have exhibited “a blatant disregard for American law if we do not enforce the law it will make mockery of our non-proliferation policy” Mr. Solarz Urged President Reagan to act and halt the aid to Pakistan.
In a surprise move US authorities took serious turn over Pakistan’s nuclear programme when it stalled all its aid to Pakistan till January 15, 1988 in the wake of latters attempts to smuggle out nuclear weapons oriented materials and its refusal to allow the inspection of its Kahuta nuclear plant. The two aid programmes which had been put off were the $540 million military and economic aid and the renewed $ 4.02 billion aid which was to commence from October 1, 1987, this was the first concrete action against Pakistan since 1979.

Thus, despite certain strong evidence available to Washington that Pakistan was involved in a clandestine weapon - oriented nuclear programmes, the Reagan administration accepted Islamabad’s argument that it was not going nuclear. The US Congress on the desire of Reagan administration cleared the $ 4.02 billion military and economic aid package for Pakistan. With the approval of both Houses the aid to Pakistan resumed for the next six years.

The Reagan administration continued to certify that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear device in order to satisfy the Congressional requirement for release of aid. The most repeated and persuasive justification which the US government offered for aid to Pakistan was the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. The aid programme was defended as a part of an overall American policy of
making available efficient and comparatively low cost aid programmes to friendly countries in order to help them make better use of their scarce resources and meet security threats within or on their borders.

Strengthening of Pakistan was viewed as the key to its ability to maintain its integrity and stand against potential external threats. The most immediate and potential external threat Pakistan then faced was the Soviet threat from Afghanistan. It was argued that Pakistan's nuclear programme was in large part prompted by its sense of insecurity, further aggravated by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan US aid was expected to reduce the sense of insecurity, and consequently the chance of Pakistan going nuclear. The Reagan administration repeatedly cautioned Congress that any restriction on aid to Pakistan to curb its nuclear programme would be self defeating.\textsuperscript{21}

It was in US national interest to ensure sustained support to the Afghan resistance through Pakistan so that they could survive the Soviet might and put up a struggle against the Soviet forces. Consequently prompting Moscow to withdraw as a part of negotiated settlement. Termination of aid to Pakistan, the Reagan administration forcefully argued, would have seriously undermined the Afghan resistance forces and would have damaged US strategic interest in the area.\textsuperscript{22}
With the clearance of $4.02 billion US military and economic aid package in October 1988 for the next six years, Pakistan proceeded with its plan to buy 100 more F-16 aircraft. What was significant in this deal was that the new rates quoted for each F-16 at $10.5 million which was much lower than the $25 million a piece Pakistan paid for the 40 F-16 purchased under the first military economic aid package of $3.20 billion which ended in September 1987. Till January 1988 out of the 40 F-16 aircraft that were to be supplied to Pakistan during the first aid package period, so far 35 F-16 aircraft were reported to have arrived.

The United States Congress approved $445 million military and economic aid to Pakistan for the financial year 1989. A greater share of the aid of $230 million was allocated for military supplies which the balance of $215 million was in economic assistance. In the financial year 1988 Pakistan was given $480 million of which $260 million was in military supplies. The reduction in the aid for 1989 was the result of US budgetary constraint which had affected all the recipient countries.  

Recognizing the Reagan administration's zeal to fight communism and desire to re-establish its prestige, Pakistan found an opportunity to maximize its own status and act as a broker in the Afghan crisis. It was successful enough in this effort that it was able to play a leading role in negotiating a settlement.
Geneva Peace Negotiations

Pakistan joined the Geneva negotiation held under the UN auspices to find a political solution to the Afghan conflict, despite certain reservations of the US administration and Congress. The US authorities were skeptical about the chances of achieving a settlement at Geneva for they believed that the Soviet side was not serious in negotiation. However, the American administration publicly extended full support to Pakistan's viewpoint. This support enabled Pakistan to negotiate a political solution to the crisis from strength and with confidence. This support also served a diplomatic purpose. Any opposition from Washington in this context could have propaganda advantage to Soviet Union. The Reagan administration affirmed US support to a political settlement which would lead to restoration of genuinely independent, non-aligned Afghanistan with a government acceptable to the Afghan people. American officials of and on supported international efforts for a peaceful settlement as long as these efforts were consistent with the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on Afghanistan.

Pakistan and the United States maintained regular consultations with each other on Afghanistan issue including the UN sponsored negotiation. They proceeded in co-ordination with each other and the cooperation was so close that many Pakistanis
dubbed Islamabad’s Afghan policy as hostage to the American aspirations. It was argued that the negotiation, settlement to the Afghan conflict to the Geneva talks was not possible unless Pakistan removed its “American connection”. This argument was seemingly predicted on the perception that the United States would not seek settlement of the Afghan issue in isolation from other global issues.

The extent of American influence on Pakistan’s Afghan policy, in general, and American role in influencing the Geneva negotiations, in particular, is difficult to determine for various reasons. However, one can safely say that Washington’s support to Pakistan was a significant factor which enabled it to resist Soviet-Afghan pressure and participate in the negotiation with confidence. The then foreign Minister of Pakistan, Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, acknowledged that US support to his country for its efforts to find a political settlement to the Afghan issue was a source of strength.

The Smooth course of Pakistan-US close cooperation and coordination on the Afghanistan issue came under serious strain on the question of formation of an interim government prior to the signing of the Geneva accords. During the last round of Geneva negotiations, Pakistan refused to sign the accords unless there was a prior agreement on interim arrangement in Kabul. This
standpoint evoked a very discouraging response from the US administration and several Congressmen. Both the countries looked at the question from such conflicting perspective that it tended to erode the mutual cooperation of the Afghan issue. The difference were so serious and importance of the issue of the interim government was so great for Pakistan that prior to putting signature on the Geneva agreement the Pakistani authorities publicly expressed frustration over American attitude and exhibited a sense of betrayal at the hands of the United States.

Pakistan complained that the United States was not fully endorsing its proposal of the interim government. President Zia was on record saying that the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev delinked the issue of a coalition government from the withdrawal only a day after his meeting with President Reagan in December 1987 and that this was a result of a deal between superpowers which sullied the reputation of his country. It was widely speculated that the United States had struck a separate deal with the Soviet Union over the interest of Pakistan and the Afghan resistance.

Pakistan's insistence on the formation of an interim government emanated from its concern with the presence of three million Afghan refugees on its soil. It was apprehended that if the Afghan war continued even after the agreement and the
consequent Soviet withdrawal, the refugees would not go back to their homeland and Pakistan would continue to shoulder their burden. It was clear that the Geneva agreement would not bring an end to the war in Afghanistan. What Pakistan wanted was not only an appropriate but an effective solution which could ensure the return of the refugees to their motherland.

Not only the Zia government but certain hawkish elements in Washington were also opposed to signing of the Geneva agreement without installing an interim government in Kabul. However, the US authorities were opposed to linking the formation of the interim government to the Geneva agreement. At the time when the issue of the interim government was high on Pakistan’s agenda, one senior US official stated that there “is no interest of Washington in trying to promote or construct an interim government in Kabul”. Another American official opined that the United States did not support Pakistan in making the formation of the interim government in Afghanistan a pre-condition of the Soviet withdrawal. For the US, Soviet withdrawal was the issue. Washington feared that any effort to set an interim government was likely to cause further delay in the agreement and consequently in the withdrawal. The United States also opposed the idea because the popular view in Washington was that the Najib government would collapse once the Soviet forces left
An understanding between the superpowers on the broad contours of the settlement could also account for US opposition to the Pakistani proposal. In private the US government reportedly put pressure on Pakistan to delink the formation of the interim government from the Geneva accords. This is not to suggest that the United States was altogether indifferent to Pakistan’s concerns. At time, US officials publicly appreciated the proposal as a good idea and sought to assure their Pakistani counterparts that the United States was not averse to the idea of an interim government as was proposed by Pakistan. The US administration discussed it with the Soviet authorities. As a result, both the superpowers agreed that Diego Cordovez would provide his good offices in his personal capacity in promoting an agreement between mutually antagonistic Afghan parties on a broad-based government. After American assurance that negotiations would continue towards this goal, Pakistan signed the Geneva accords on April 14, 1988. It was pledged that the parties to the Geneva accords would support and facilitate this process. These assurance provided Pakistan a way out from an isolated position in the Geneva talks.

The above analysis suggests that apparently differing perspective on the question of the interim government did not
cause a crack in Pakistan-US relationship. But differences forced the Pakistan government to modify the position on the question of interim government. Even during this period of serious differences, Pakistan and United States maintained a regular and close dialogue and officially expressed a unity of views regarding the Afghan issue. At one stage, when both the superpowers were locked over the symmetry issue, the Soviet Union expressed its readiness to pull out its troops without US guarantees. This was interpreted in Islamabad and Washington as a Soviet ploy to induce Pakistan to sign the agreement, and oust the United States from the whole process. Pakistan declined the proposal, and suggested that both the superpowers should agree on the symmetry issue. This analysis is not meant to determine whose interests were protected at what cost, rather to suggest that through different stages Pakistan and the United States managed to amicably resolve their differences on the Afghan issue and successfully worked together towards the conclusion of the Geneva agreement and the consequent Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

**Post-Geneva Accords Phase**

The Geneva Accords in April 1988 and the subsequent Soviet pullout in February 1989 were the obvious result of the successful Pakistan-US collaboration against the Soviet Union on the Afghan
issue. According to one viewpoint, popular among Pakistani analysts, the Zia ul Haque regime's confrontational posture towards the Soviet intervention did not correspond to the national interests of the Pakistan, rather it was designated and pursued to suit American interests and requirements. Until shortly after the Benazir government assumed power in December 1988, there had been a hope that any democratic government succeeding the Zia regime through a genuine electoral process would question and change the basic premises, assumptions and the framework of Pakistan’s Afghan policy. Hence, a genuine political process was likely to disturb Pakistan-US cooperation on the Afghan issue. A political process tending to complicate the process of Pakistan-US collaboration on the Afghan situation was certain to strain bilateral relations. It was widely believed that American interest in Pakistan would wane and its aid programme would not outlive the Geneva accords and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Contrary to this pessimistic projection American as well as Pakistani officials sounded positive about Pakistan-US relations in the post-Afghanistan era. Before and after the conclusion of the Geneva accords and the Soviet withdrawal, US officials continued to underscore that Pakistan would not become irrelevant to the United States in the post-Afghanistan era. They claimed that while the Afghan issue was an important factor the rapport between countries went beyond this issue. Pakistan was assured that it
would continue to receive a high level of aid even after the Soviet withdrawal. During his Presidential campaign, George Bush pledged that he would preserve and further strengthen Pakistan-US relations. He retained his commitment to Pakistan in these words: "Long after the last Soviet soldier leaves Afghanistan, the US-Pakistan partnership will endure an important bilateral and regional association." The then Pakistan Prime Minister Muhammad Khan Junejo expressed similar sentiments at the conclusion of the Geneva agreements. Pakistan and United States, he hoped, would remain steadfast in support of the Afghan nation's right to a government of their choice. He visualized that the effectiveness and success of co-operation between the two countries would strengthen the government and people of Pakistan in their resolve to further fortify their partnership with the United States for peace and stability in the region. Even after the dismissal of the Junejo government, Islamabad expressed hope for a continued aid relationship with the United States in the post-Afghan period.

Benazir government did not exhibit any immediate indication to reorient Pakistan's Afghan policy and disturb the existing relationship with the United States. If anything, there was a hint of further improvement in Pakistan-US relations. Reaffirming her election pledge to continue to assist Washington, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto urged the Americans to continue to support Pakistan. Despite the fact that she vehemently criticized the former military regime and its legacies and did not entirely agree with Pakistan's Afghan policy, she lauded Pakistan-US collaboration of the recent past, appreciated the goodwill nurtured in the two countries in their joint collaboration in support of the freedom of Afghanistan and did not upset or modify policy on the Afghan issue. Contrary to fear expressed by some, Ms. Bhutto assured the Bush administration of her determination to support the Afghans resistance and also urged Washington not to abandon the Afghans in the critical post Soviet withdrawal period.

Instead of falling apart as was speculated, Pakistan and the United States moved closer in their approaches towards the Afghan issue. Though Benazir pursued more or less the Afghan policy of the previous governments, including the emphasis on the military dimension, she gave the impression that her government was all out for a political solution of the Afghan issue. The political settlement which she envisaged contained the removal of the Najib
regime as an essential element. During her visit to Washington in June 1989, she exchanged views with the Bush administration on the prospects of a political solution. The Bush administration supported the idea of the political settlement that would lead to the establishment of a non-aligned representative government replacing the "illegitimate" Najib regime. The visit revealed the unanimity of views between the two governments on the question of resolving the Afghan settlement.

The Reagan administration in view of all these new developments in Pakistan and outside proposed a large amount of $626.7 million military, economic aid to Pakistan for 1990. This included $50 million of development assistance, $80 million of PL-480, $20 million of Economic Support Fund (ESF), $240 million of foreign military sales grant, $1 million IMET programmes as well as $5.7 million for antinarcotics. Testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Sub Committee on Asia and Pacific, Mr. Haward Schaffer the US deputy Secretary for the near East and South Asia said that "Even after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, Pakistan remained vital for achieving our goals of a non-aligned, independent and stable Afghanistan and to our broad goals in South and South West Asia. For these reasons we must continue to honour our commitment to support Pakistan's security and economic needs."
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33. Shahi, Pakistan’s Security and Foreign Policy, p.134.


38. Shahi, Pakistan Security and Foreign Policy, p. 91.


50. Ibid.