CONCLUSION

In the post-second world war period, regions of South and West Asia have played crucial role in the overall global strategy of the United States. These regions assumed tremendous strategic significance in the wake of cold war rivalries hotly chased between Washington and Moscow and the presence of petroleum in Persian Gulf region. Under Truman doctrine, United States focussed its attention on the countries which had geographic contiguity and proximity to Soviet Union and People's Republic of China, the two main bastoons of communism and arch rivals of the United States. Since the main plank of Truman doctrine was the global containment of communism, hence Washington devised the strategy of sponsoring regional military alliances involving countries geographically proximate to Soviet union and China to serve as an afront to the expansion of communism.

In West Asia's Gulf region, Iran and Iraq responded positively to US overtures in early 1950s. Iranian response was primarily motivated by Shah of Iran's personal ambition to cultivate United States as an ally because Washington had helped him in restoration of throne. Besides, the Shah of Iran wanted to strengthen his own position within the country as well as to make Iran as the strong
power in the region. Such a mission could be accomplished by acquiring sophisticated weapons from the United States. Thus mutuality of interests brought Washington and Tehran closer to each other which got reinforced in succeeding years.

When by mid-1950s United States implemented its tactical policies of sponsoring regional military alliances and conclusion of bilateral defence pacts, Iran readily expressed its willingness. Iran, along with Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan became the member of central Treaty organization (CENTO) following the change of regime in Iraq, it withdrew from CENTO even before it was formally launched.

In South Asia, India and Pakistan were the major countries which could play significant role in preserving US strategic interests in the region. The partition of Indian subcontinent in August 1947 which led to the emergence of India and Pakistan as two sovereign independent countries had proved instrumental in envisaging bitter and acrimonious relations between the two countries mainly on the question of Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently Pakistan started looking for outside support to attain which military parity with India was bigger in size and endowed with better resources than the former.
India's response to US overtures was rather cool because Indian leadership had declared, even prior to the attainment of independence, its opposition to military pacts and to pursue the policy of nonalignment. However, a mutuality of interests between United States and Pakistan as complementary and supplementary to each other could be discerned when Washington had started looking for regional allies to implement Truman doctrine. By mid 1950s, Pakistan had joined CENTO as well as signed mutual defence pact with the United States. Consequently Pakistan started receiving economic and military assistance from the United States.

Once having become an "ally" Pakistan continued to receive sophisticated weapons from United States during 1960s and 1970s. India's pleadings that such a massive doses of American arms to Pakistan could not enable the latter to stem Soviet expansion in the region but would be used against India had almost no impact as American leadership which continued arming Pakistan to the teeth. Following the outbreak of sino-Indian hostilities in 1962, in which India suffered a military debacle Pakistan started improving its relations with China. During the sino-Indian hostilities, United States and U.K. provided some military assistance to India to enable the latter to
meet the aggression. However Pakistan opposed the supply of American military equipment to India pleading that it would portend serious threat to Pakistan's security.

Following the outbreak of Indo-Pakistan war in 1965, United States imposed embargo on the supplies of American arms to both India and Pakistan. However, despite the embargo, Pakistan continued to receive US arms clandestinely while India was denied arms. In view of Pakistan's acquisition of arms, mainly from the United States, India sought sophisticated arms from Soviet union to have strategic parity with Pakistan. The growing friendship between Pakistan and China also enabled to the former to receive military assistance from China.

In the wake of Indo-Pakistan war, Soviet Union used its good offices to help ending hostilities through Tashkent agreement. Moscow tried to wean Pakistan away from United States and China by offering economic and military assistance. However, India, which continued to receive arms and economic assistance from Soviet Union, opposed Soviet move to render military assistance to Pakistan. The Soviet-Pakistan honeymoon proved temporary and soon Islamabad turned towards Washington and Beijing.

The advent of Nixon administration in Washington in 1969 brought Pakistan into focus as the main custodian
of US strategic interests in South Asia. The role played by Pakistan in facilitating negotiations between Washington and Beijing earned it the goodwill of both sides which reciprocated by making available massive economic and military assistance to Pakistan.

The onset of 1970s inaugurated significant changes at international level which had their impact on south and West Asian region. Sino-American rapprochement and growing friendship between China and Pakistan on the one hand and between US and Pakistan on the other was seen as the emergence of US-Pak-China axis against India. The British announcement with regard to withdraw their forces from east of Suez raised the question of the perceived threat to US regional interests.

The fall of Shah regime in Iran and advent of the Islamic revolution in Iran in early 1979 and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 proved a turning point in the US global strategic posture in general and its policy towards South and west Asia in particular. These twin developments marked the erosion, both in a political and a strategic sense, of the so-called Vietnam syndrome and paved way for geo-political assertiveness. Within United States, the domestic pressure for use of force in support of US foreign policy goals started gaining ground. Manifestation of this transition in American foreign policy could be
discerned in Soviet-US dealings, where it led to the relegation of detente into oblivion and created renewed tensions. Utility of military force as a policy instrument became pre-eminent feature of US policy towards third world.

The events in and around south west Asia played significant role in catalysing such a transition in US foreign policy. During the 1970s no other region outside of traditional US alliances assumed so vital significance for the security of the United States and its allies as South West Asia. The US and Western interests entailing access to oil, containment of Soviet influence and the preservation of conservative regimes in the region, had evolved steadily since the end of second world war. However the relevance of these interests assumed added significance during the 1970s as a consequence of number of factors, the increasingly critical dependence of the Western consumer countries on Persian Gulf oil as the result of rising consumption and shrinking domestic reserves and possible threats to American regional interests in the wake of British decision to withdraw from east of Suez. American apprehensions of a possible collapse of the conservative order in the Persian Gulf region from the pressures of rapid socio-economic change were aggravated by the potential for increased competition from the Soviet Union backed by its growing naval capability.
The new awakening and solidarity among the Arab oil producing countries, who seemed determined to wrest control of their oil resources from western multinational and subject to their availability to the satisfaction of their economic and political demands, added to the uncertainties being faced by the US policy makers towards west Asia. The demonstrated (willingness) and ability of the Arab Oil producing countries to use oil as a political weapon ended hitherto successful effort by policy makers in Washington to keep the issue of oil supply from the Gulf separate from the Arab-Israel conflict and forced them to take greater cognizence of Saudi Arabia's sensitivy toward US support for Israel.

While this realization was beginning to take hold, the October 1973 war and the accompanying oil price-hike led to a considerable strengthening of US economic stakes in the Gulf region. The emergence of the Gulf countries as significant financial powers with huge reserves of surplus revenues, which could be recycled to the West either in the form of import of goods and services or investments in Western financial markets, became another factor in the emergence of the Gulf from the backwaters of international politics to the forefront of the U.S. global strategic agenda.
Though the Arab oil embargo underscored threats to U.S. access to Persian Gulf oil posed by deliberate action by the producers, the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, highlighted, in the American mind, the threats of disruption, which might be caused by domestic instability and external intervention. But the impact of the twin crises on American strategic perceptions touched more than the question of a cutoff in the flow of oil. The American view of the perception of the events of 1979 in South West Asia was marked by an unprecedented degree of alarm and pessimism. The fall of the shah of Iran was a major setback to the US regional, indeed, global position, under mining basic economic and strategic interests of the Western countries. Besides, the Iranian revolution also aggravated the Carter administration's fears about the possible collapse of pro-US regimes in the so-called arc of crisis. Similar apprehensions were aroused by Afghanistan crisis mainly pertaining to the possibility of Soviet expansion into the Persian Gulf. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reinforced perceptions of an alleged Soviet "Geopolitical Offensive" aimed at eventual domination of the whole region and control of Western access to raw materials.

The American response to these problems and crises was in the form of added emphasis on military force as the instrument for protecting Western interests. The Nixon
doctrine, which had been applied to the Gulf in a situation where alternative options were severely restricted by the Vietnam debacle survived as the basic framework of US policy on the aftermath of the first "oil crises". However at the same time it had become evident that the United State was not averse to changes in its strategy as it concerned the use of military force in pursuit of its regional goals. Ford administration's threats to retaliate against embargoes with military action represented the first important move away from the policy of relying on local stooges.

However continued adherence to the Nixon doctrine became further complicated consequent upon growing resentment within the US policy making organization, shah of Iran's "hawkish" stand on oil prices, and the congressional and media disapproval of the official policy of liberal compliance with the Shah's persistent quest for American Weapons.

In this sense, the Nixon doctrine could more properly be described as a stop-gap arrangement "imposed" on the United States by the Vietnam predicament. Of course, the policy makers in Washington might not have perceived it as such at the time of the British withdrawal. The Vietnam syndrome did not discourage the ford administration's statements relating to seizure of Gulf oil fields, nor did it allegedly disuade the moralistic carter administration from developing the blueprint for a global intervention force, with the
During 1970s, the US strategy towards south-west Asia was primarily governed by the Nixon doctrine under which Washington tried to prop up local surrogates by providing massive military assistance to safeguard vital American strategic interests in the region. In the South Asian Context, the early years of 1970s witnessed the emergence of Bangladesh crisis in which US played dubious role by rendering uninterrupted economic and military assistance despite the overt embargo on supplies of arms to both India and Pakistan.

In view of US-Pak-China axis at the time of Bangladesh crisis, India had entered into a treaty of peace and friendship with Soviet Union in August 1971 which served as a deterrent to both Washington and Beijing from directly intervening the Indo-Pakistan war in December 1971. The massive supplies of American arms to Pakistan made India to procure armaments from Soviet Union, France and U.K. However, Carter administration's insistence on linking US economic and military assistance to Pakistan with latter's nuclear programme made Islamabad to seek arms from China as well. The resultant outcome of these developments was the exacerbation of arms race in south Asia. In the wake of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, United States tried to build up Pakistan as "frontline" state which could safeguard vital
strategic interests of the United States in the region.
The loss of Iran as American surrogate was also a contributory factor which enhanced Pakistan strategic significance for the United States.

As regards West Asia and Persian Gulf region, United States policy was strictly governed by national interests and to keep the region out of Soviet sphere of influence. Unqualified support to Israel and help build it up as a powerful regional military power served as a pressure tactics to impress upon other Arab and Gulf regimes the need for relying on Washington. When the oil producing countries successfully used oil as a political weapon, United States used "Sale of American arsenal" as a leverage for recycling of petro-dollars back to American Coffers.

Intrigued by personal ambitions to acquire military might and to emerge as the regional "policeman", as shah of Iran did, perceived threat perceptions by local regimes from the neighbours because of intra-regional rivalries and Israel as the main determinant of security perceptions, led most of the countries of West Asia to seek sophisticated weapons from the United States, and other Western countries. However countries like Egypt, Syria and Iraq sought weapons from Soviet Union and other sources mainly France.

The US strategy, during 1970s, met with satisfactory success in West Asia where it managed to safeguard its
vital strategic interests, dump its armament and recycle the petro-dollars, reduce Soviet influence especially after the signing of camp David accord and winning Egypt to American fold. The fall of Shah regime in Iran did serve a severe blow to US strategy but it soon succeeded in propping up Saudi Arabia to assume that role in the Persian Gulf region. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan provided another opportunity for the United States to prove the indispensability of Washington against perceived Soviet threat to the region. The renewed American interest in Pakistan in 1979-80 in the aftermath of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was more proximate to American strategic objectives in the Persian Gulf rather than an independent policy move for South Asia.