CHAPTER - III
The political and strategic scenario in the Indian Ocean region in the Post World War II epoch changed almost completely due to the tremendous technological and economic advancement of the United States and the decline of Britain's economic and political power. Britain, had entered the World War I in 1914 as the world's greatest sea-power. Her particular victory received its acknowledgement in 1918 when the German fleet made its last journey across the North sea to surrender to the Royal Navy. But in the inter-war period the United States of America had already attained parity with the Great Britain in naval matters; and as the sea had long been Britain's business and minding it too exclusively led to the disastrous appeasement policy of the 1930s.

In fact the weakened economic power of Great Britain was overstrained by the British responsibility to maintain large military forces to defend her overseas colonial possession in the post-World War II era. The growing political awakening and the demand for national independence in the colonies could no


longer be contained and crushed by force. However, reluctantly
the British had to accept the hard facts and realities, agreeing
to grant independence to the colonies. According to Watt, the
transfer of power to India in 1947 altered nothing in British
strategic thinking about the Indian Ocean area. But it is
unsustainable as seen in the light of Lord Curzon's statement
as early as 1907 that when India has gone and the great Colonies
have gone, do you suppose that we can stop there? Your ports
and coaling stations, your fortresses and dockyards, your Crown
Colonies and protectorates will go too. For either they will
be unnecessary as the toll-gates and barbicans of an Empire that
has vanished, or they will be taken by an enemy more powerful.

Losing colonies is a tremendous set-back and disqualification for a maritime power. It is true that in theory, the
defence of the Indian Ocean remained a British responsibility
after the War, but in practice, the days of the British
thalassocracy were over; but it is unwarranted to say that
it opened another interregnum similar to what followed the
decline of Portuguese sea power in the seventeenth century and
the Indian Ocean is once more a naval void that apparently only
these three great naval powers can fill: the United States,
Russia or China. Certainly there is a sea of change between


the political, economic and strategic scenarios in the Indian Ocean in the seventeenth and the last quarter of the twentieth centuries. Now any outside power rivalry in the Indian Ocean region cannot lead to a political colonization and domination of this region, again.

Immediately after the World War II, great Britain started its political activity to retain and strengthen her political control there through dialogue and diplomatic persuasion. She helped Holland to resume control to her lost empire of the East Indies in 1945. The Malayan Union, Singapore Colony and the Straits Settlements were effected through Orders in Council in 1946; diplomatic representation was stepped up with Iraq. Trans-Jordan got a new constitution in 1946, Tanganyika was placed under the British trusteeship under a U.N. agreement; Orders in Council on Somaliland and the Trucial States were passed in 1946, for temporary provisional government of Burma, Order in Council was passed in 1947; an order in Council on constitutional amendment in Ceylon and the Indian Independence Act of "Parliament were passed in 1947". Great Britain and

Ethiopia exchanged Notes on Kenya-Ethiopia boundary amending the 1907 agreement. By an Act of Parliament Ceylon and Burma were given independence; Federation of the Malayan States agreement was signed in 1948. An Order in Council on Naval Defence of Mauritius was passed in 1948, and a Malayan Naval Force was created by an Order in Council in 1949.

A very significant Note was issued in February 1949 by which Great Britain transferred Marion and Prince Edward Islands in southern Indian Ocean region to South Africa. Orders in Council on administration of Eritrea, Somaliland, Bahrain, Kuwait, Murcat, Qatar, and the Trucial States were passed in 1949. By an Act of Parliament the phosphorous rich Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean was placed under Australian control. By an order in the Council the East African Naval Force was created in 1950. In 1950 Britain transferred its Heard and MacDonald Islands in the southern Indian Ocean to Australia.

In 1951 Britain strengthened its diplomatic relations with Yemen. It was in 1951, that by a Draft treaty Egypt and Great Britain abrogated the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance and the Sudan Condominium Agreements, and Great Britain and Muscat signed a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation in 1951; and an Order in the Council was passed on the Protected States of Fujairah and Kalba in 1952, and on Bahrain and the revocation of emergency in the Persian gulf in 1953; and Eritrea was transferred to Ethiopia in 1952. A proclamation on the boundaries of Brunei was issued in 1954; while Great Britain on behalf of Abu Dhabi signed an Agreement on arbitration on frontier and Buraimi disputes with Saudi Arabia; and an agreement with Egypt on the strategic Suez Canal Base in 1954. An Act of Parliament was passed on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean in 1955.  

31. State Papers, Vol. 161, p. 75 (later on denounced by Egypt, see: Vol. 163, p. 27).
32. State Papers, Vol. 162, p. 16; also see p. 36.
Sudan was terminated in 1955, and Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal company in 1956.

In 1957 an agreement was signed between Great Britain and Malaya, granting Malaya independence as Federation of Malaya within the Commonwealth, and Singapore was also granted Independence the next year. An agreement was signed between Great Britain and Maldive Islands concerning its defence and external affairs being handled by Britain, in 1960.

The 1960s saw most of the remaining British and other former colonies gaining their national independence. Britain did succeed in maintaining amicable relations with most of its former colonies who had attained national independence. She had large economic investments in the Indian Ocean region and pursued a subtle economic and commercial diplomacy instead of her thalassocracy and the gunboat diplomacy of the bye-gone days in this region. Inspite of the economic constraints and the domestic political pressure, Britain could maintain her naval defence structural presence in the Indian Ocean till the mid-1960s when the labour Government decide to finally withdraw the British military presence "East of the Suez".

The French attitude towards decolonisation has not been encouraging. Even after her withdrawal from important regions of the Indian Ocean by granting independence to Madagascar the Comoros, and Djibouti, she still retains the important island of Reunion, the Iles Eparses, the Terres Australes and the islet of Mayotte separated from the Comoros. Under the title of Territories or the Departments Francais d Outre-mer, considering them as the integral parts of the metropole France.

In case of Great Britain due to her maritime dominance of the Indian Ocean her possessions were safe with the security of her sea lanes of communications for the regular flow of her trade and commerce - whereas the French owned fewer uninhabited islands were installed bases providing rationale for extending military force in the area, although their presence is very peripheral. With the sudden collapse of the rigid Portuguese African Empire, France is the only other European power maintaining its maritime interests after Great Britain in the Indian Ocean region.

According to the deliberations in the French Senate, in addition to maritime space, the southern zone of the Indian Ocean embraces a set of French territories rather different by their legal status, area, population and economic interests, but whose scattered nature constitutes an important characteristic from a defence viewpoint. These territories are


significant for their economic, political and strategic value. Although they are scattered through the southern Indian Ocean, their exclusive economic zone and the territorial waters give France a wide scope for economic exploitation and the politico-strategic uses of the area.

It is not impossible that the marine sub-soil of these territories are rich in petroleum and it is noted that the permission for exploration of a wide area of 300,000 square kilometres around the Kergnelen archipelago was already granted in the 1970s. Nearly two-thirds of the oil supplies of France is routed through this area. The former Prime Minister of France, Michel Debré, who represents Réunion in the French Parliament remarked that France is still present in the Indian Ocean and keeping her options open for the future, and is prepared to recognize her chances and to take them. The French possessions are so scattered in the southern Indian Ocean that it is very difficult for the French authorities to connect them by cable communications or regular transport as most of the islands under the Terres Australes are almost uninhabited and are located between the 38°S and 50°S latitudes, and are in the proximity of the French claimed Terre Adelie on the Antarctic continent.

Besides these territories under her control, France maintains naval presence in the Myotte island and has legal

disputes over the islands of Tromelin with Madagascar; and through treaty regulations and defence agreements with Djibouti, the French Patrolling in the Indian Ocean has been both constrained and facilitated. France keeps a small naval presence with an adjunct air power based on the Reunion, and Mayotte Islands; which includes aviso-escorts frigates, patrol boats as logistic support and the French nuclear powered submarines regularly traverse the Indian Ocean waters.

As the flow of the French oil supplies is routed through these southern Indian Ocean possessions, the closure and the reopening of the Suez Canal has not been very significant for her. This longer route known as the route de rechange required the protection of ships passing through these comparatively isolated till recently until the British loaned base of Diego Garcia was constructed and commissioned by the USA. Thus the French forces in the Indian Ocean are no longer supported from an extensive network of Indian Ocean bases. Nonetheless ALINDIEN42 is the nearest approximation to British naval squadrons which for several decades dominated the area. The French defence requirements in the area are met through the arrangements of (1) Commandement Superieur Interanees du Sud de l'Ocean Indian (COMSUP based in La Reunion) for the defence of these French possessions in the southern Indian Ocean and the Southern Seas in general, their territorial waters and the

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(2) the Commandement de la Zone et des Forces Maritime de l'Ocean Indian (ALINDIEN) is responsible for the defence of the zone as a whole, with regard to the safety of the French maritime interests and to bring in its support, in the operational as well as logistic fields to the military and civil authorities of the Zone. 43

The geographical location and the physical and geological attributes of the French possessions in the Indian Ocean are very significant for the whole community of the Indian Ocean from the economic, political and strategic point of view and will play an important role in the years to come in context of the probable formation of a some sort of naval defence and strategic structure in the southern region of the Indian Ocean to meet the requirements of a treaty organization, which may be formed either in the Southern Atlantic Ocean or the Southern most tip of the Southern Seas in the future to protect the politico-strategic and economic interests of the Western countries, in the light of the uncertainty prevailing over the present future set up in the Antarctica when the Antarctic Treaty expires in 1991.

It is very significant that while Britain was a declining maritime power, she was helping the United States of America, the emergent (Anglo-Saxon successor to British power in North America) maritime power with global ambitions, right from the

days of the Great Britain and the U.S.A. Agreement and Joint Statement on lend-lease War Property\textsuperscript{44} signed on 6 December 1945 after the Manhattan Project, the U.S. - U.K. 'Atomic Weapon Research' Programme\textsuperscript{45} in August 1942. It was because of the United States assuming the maritime supremacy and the decline of British economic and political power and the consolidated efforts on part of the Soviet Union to play an increasing role in global maritime strategy. Britain had neither the will to go back to its "splendid isolation" nor was she permitted by the evolving politico-strategic scenarios to do so. Her decline was a fait accompli after the World War II.

In the Post-war period the United States of America signed several bilateral agreements on educational, economic and technical aid and cooperation with a number of newly independent countries of the Indian Ocean region. So the friendly help of Britain and the goodwill generated for the U.S.A. in these countries through the successful U.S. cultural and economic diplomacy, helped her to enter into several politico-strategic agreements and treaties with many of them. In 1947 India and the U.S.A. exchanged Notes on flights of military Aircraft.\textsuperscript{46} Great Britain and the U.S.A. signed an Agreement on Lend-lease Settlement regarding the surplus stores in the Middle East in 1948.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{44} State Papers, Vol. 145, p. 775, also see
\textsuperscript{45} Campbell, Christopher, Nuclear Weapons: Fact Book (Feltham, Middlesex: 1984), p. 36.
\textsuperscript{46} State Papers, Vol. 157, p. 735 (it was amended in May 1948).
\textsuperscript{47} State Papers, Vol. 151, pp. 100, 142.
The next year, the United States signed a similar agreement with Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{48} The 1950 U.K. - U.S. Agreement on Mutual Defence Assistance\textsuperscript{49} further strengthened U.S. interest in the Persian Gulf region, before the signing of the U.S. - Indonesian economic cooperation agreement notes, and the Franco- American Declaration\textsuperscript{50} on the Middle East in 1950. Thailand entered into a Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with the United States and Burma\textsuperscript{51} also signed Notes on a similar agreement with the U.S.A. in 1950. However, after much efforts Pakistan could also succeed in signing a Note with the government of the United States for the transfer of military supplies and equipment\textsuperscript{52} to be used in the immediate future by the military rulers of Pakistan against India. Australia and the United States signed a similar agreement\textsuperscript{53} note in 1951. India protested against the U.S. arms supply to Pakistan and signed a similar agreement with the United States in 1954,\textsuperscript{54} followed by Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia put the Dhahran Air Base at the disposal of United States.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{49.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 156, p. 784.
\textsuperscript{50.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 159, p. 204.
\textsuperscript{51.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 157, pp. 617 and 782.
\textsuperscript{52.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 157, p. 436.
\textsuperscript{53.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 158, p. 584.
\textsuperscript{54.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 158, p. 607.
\textsuperscript{55.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 158, p. 944.
The major multilateral collective Defence Pact, the ANZUS, was signed the same year, just before the U.S. Congress passed the Mutual Security Bill in 1951; and the signing of a Mutual Defence Assistance Notes with South Africa and Thailand. After this, several Notes of Mutual Security Assurances were signed by the U.S.A. with France, Great Britain, Portugal (all of them had colonial vestiges in the Indian Ocean), and Burma and Iran, Ethiopia, Israel in 1952. Egypt and the U.S.A. signed Notes on Military Supplies for Egyptian Military in 1952.

After the formation of CENTO, Pakistan and the U.S. signed a very important Defence Support Assistance Agreement in 1955 by which the U.S. grip on Pakistan in politico-strategic matters was tightened firmly, just before the Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference of the Afro-Asian Prime Ministers was issued on 24 April 1955. An agreement on sharing Atomic Information for Defence was signed by Great Britain and the U.S.A. in 1955. Pakistan and America also signed an agreement on Cooperation in Civil Uses of Atomic Energy; and Great Britain and the U.S.A. also issued a statement on the supply of Arms to Middle East in the wake of the Suez crisis. Thus the U.S.A. was able to enter and strengthen its position in this region with the active support and collaboration of Britain.

Hereafter the United States was very well entrenched here and exchanged Notes with Saudi Arabia on U.S. Rights at Dhahran Airfield\textsuperscript{62} and related military matters in April 1957; and signed an agreement with Australia\textsuperscript{63} on Atomic Information for Defence.

The United States was much benefited by the Pakistan-Muscat arrangement for transfer to Pakistan of Gwadur Enclave\textsuperscript{64} in 1958 just before the formation of the SEATO in 1959 in the eastern Indian Ocean; Muscat received the U.S. amity, economic assistance and consular rights in return in 1959 when the U.S. and Pakistan signed a Cooperation Agreement.\textsuperscript{65} After the French announcement of the explosion of nuclear device in February 1960; France and U.S.A. agreed on the civil uses of atomic energy\textsuperscript{66} by amending the 1956 agreement; but in 1961 France and the U.S.A. signed the agreement on co-operation in Atomic Weapons System for Defence.\textsuperscript{67} In November 1962 India and the U.S.A. exchanged Notes supplementing 1951 Military Assistance Agreement\textsuperscript{68} on account of the Chinese invasion of India and the Kennedy Administration issued a statement on U.S. Military Aid to India to repel the Chinese aggression.

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\textsuperscript{62.} State Papers, Vol. 163, p. 441. \\
\textsuperscript{63.} State Papers, Vol. 163, p. 191. \\
\textsuperscript{64.} State Papers, Vol. 163, p. 490. \\
\textsuperscript{65.} State Papers, Vol. 164, p. 327. \\
\textsuperscript{66.} State Papers, Vol. 164, p. 630 (Amended on 22 June 1962, see: Vol. 166, p. 926. \\
\textsuperscript{67.} State Papers, Vol. 166, p. 458. \\
\textsuperscript{68.} State Papers, Vol. 166, pp. 888, 1038. 
\end{flushleft}
After signing the first post-World War II agreement on frontiers with Afghanistan\textsuperscript{69} in June 1946, the Soviet Union started its trade and economic and diplomatic initiatives to establish relations with the Indian Ocean countries by giving an impression of herself as a peace-loving country when it enacted the law in Defence of Peace\textsuperscript{70} in March 1951. The Soviet Union and India signed a Trade Agreement in December 1953. The Anglo-Soviet and Franco-Soviet Alliance\textsuperscript{71} of 1942 were ann by a Soviet Decree in May 1955, and the Soviet Union signed an Agreement with Afghanistan on transit of goods and next month, just before the signing of the Soviet-Yemeni Treaty of friendship\textsuperscript{72} in October the same year.

Indonesia, in eastern Indian Ocean, signed a general agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation with Moscow in 1956; and the Soviet Union and Great Britain exchanged Notes on the Middle East after the Suez crisis and the \textsuperscript{73} Arab-Israeli conflict, and a Soviet-Egyptian Agreement on the construction of the Aswan Dam was signed in 1958. The Soviet President Bulganin, and the Prime Minister, Nikita Khrushchev paid State visits\textsuperscript{74} to India, Indonesia and Afghanistan in the Indian Ocean region in February-March 1960.

\textsuperscript{69.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 146, p. 565.
\textsuperscript{70.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 158, p. 955.
\textsuperscript{71.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 162, pp. 530-32.
\textsuperscript{72.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 162, p. 533.
\textsuperscript{73.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 163, pp. 57, 954.
\textsuperscript{74.} \textit{State Papers}, Vol. 164, pp. 588, 596, 682-87.
The Soviet Union and Egypt signed another agreement on Economic and Technical Assistance for the completion of the Aswan High Dam in August 1960 just after the exchange of the documents between the Soviet Union and the United States on the U-2 Intelligence Flight\textsuperscript{75} over the Soviet Territory and the resultant Soviet action. The political change and the constitutional proclamation of a Revolutionary command Council\textsuperscript{76} in Yemen in September 1962 was the only major and direct political gain so far for the Soviet Union in this area.

Thus it is evident that the approaches adopted by the Western nations led by the United States; and of the Soviet Union to penetrate the Indian Ocean politically were methodically altogether different however being quite similar in nature. These diplomatic developments in politico-economic and technical cooperation and assistance were subtly used by the great powers to gain and strengthen their own politico-strategic footholds in the countries of the Indian Ocean as the contracting parties. The post-War overstrained British economy provided a golden opportunity for the U.S.A. to increase and strengthen her growing maritime interests everywhere; while the strained relations between the erstwhile colonial powers and the newly-emerged independent States were well exploited by Soviet Union to generate and increase her political, economic and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean.

\textsuperscript{75} State Papers, Vol. 164, p. 708.

\textsuperscript{76} State Papers, Vol. 166, p. 1042.
STRATEGIC MOTIVATIONS
OF THE SUPER-POWERS

It is often said that in the years succeeding a great war, the navies that survive it are occupied more in the process of a reduction to a peace establishment than in their war potential, and it applies to the Royal Navy in the post-World War II period. At the end of the War the Royal Navy was assigned a primarily peace-keeping role in the colonies where the intense political process for national independence was going on; and only a cruiser squadron was maintained by the East Indies Fleet in the Indian Ocean. While in the United States the National Security Council had already been established in 1947, to give permanent form to the wartime State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee and provide the President with an authoritative advisory body for foreign and defence policy.

The advent of nuclear weapons and the realization by the U.S.A. of profound ideological conflict with the Soviet Russia promoted the coordination of the American foreign and defence policy and the victory in the War, too, had not eliminated the propensity of the armed services to adopt and proclaim different policies for defence, so it was necessary for the U.S. administration to keep them in line. The defence problems of


the British Commonwealth were conceived only in a theoretical framework considering the natural resources of the littoral member states, their problems of politico-economic readjustment to new circumstances in the arch of the Indian Ocean facing the ideological onslaught from the Soviet Union and China in the light of the effects of the growing air-power and the technological changes in the weapons system. 80

After the World War II, the British strength in the Middle East was more apparent than real and it induced the Americans to take more active part in the Middle Eastern affairs; and consequently the Middle East became a major concern of American Policy-makers. 81 As Britain was not financially capable of sustaining its maritime role overseas, the experts argued that she should see to it that her own interests prosper and that the international milieu is stable and a peaceful one. 82 According to Duncan Sandys, this stability (in context of the Indian Ocean region) was more a matter of psychology than of the actual British forces available for use east of Suez, was self-evident. 83 In early 1950s it was the declared policy of the United Kingdom to contribute forces for the defence of Africa, including Southern Africa, and the Middle East and her


negotiations with South Africa for the transfer of the Simonstown Naval Base\textsuperscript{84} in 1955. Therefore, with the loss of the colonies and control of the Middle East, Britain was no longer in a position to maintain her naval presence in the Indian Ocean except the southern and south-eastern choke-points. Similarly, "logistic support" is not, as it used to be merely a function of the supply departments, but involves a highly sophisticated integrated organization dealing with every aspect of the provisioning and maintenance of the fleet.\textsuperscript{85} So it further restricted the British options.

By the mid-1960s the technological innovations had altered the maritime milieu on and below the oceanic blue waters, as the ships swelling the fleets were of new make, model and construction\textsuperscript{86}, e.g. Polaris, submarines and the missile-armed destroyer leaders and the mouthballed ships were being activated to meet the requirements of the day, and by no means Britain was in a position to either exert its remnant maritime strength\textsuperscript{87} or strengthen it in the south-eastern choke-point (i.e. Singapore) in the Indian Ocean. With the advent of the large aircraft carriers and the nuclear-powered submarines Britain could not compete with the growing maritime strength of the two Super-powers and, therefore, favoured its Anglo-Saxon cousin, the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} Command Papers, 4520 (July 1955) p. 20.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Hawkins, Vice Admiral Sir Raymond, in a message to Navy (London) Vol. 71, No. 1, Jan. 1966, p. 4.
\end{itemize}
United States to have an edge over the Soviets by granting territorial leases in the strategically critical islands of the Indian Ocean. The British have been active partners in supporting an expanding U.S. Military presence in the Indian Ocean, a fact attested to by their original agreement to the American joint use of Diego Garcia and now to the proposed upgrading of these facilities.

It was in the early 1960's that the US Departments of State and Defense began thinking of longer term strategic requirements in the Indian Ocean area and this was the actual inception of the 'British Indian Ocean Territory, when in 1965 the British decided to sequester a number of sparsely populated or uninhabited islands which were the integral parts of the Seychelles or Mauritius; to form the B.I.O.T. The inability of Britain to maintain its defence forces overseas resulted in the Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson's announcement of 16 January 1968 that British forces would be withdrawn from the Far East and the Persian Gulf by 1971, but for the marginal amendments made by the succeeding conservative government could hardly be said to have revived the corpse. The Royal Navy,


once which used to be the guardian and protector of Britain and the British Empire, was talked about as not contributing to the national economy after the British withdrawal from the east of the Suez.

The run-down of the British forces in Singapore and Malaysia was completed and the Headquarters of the Far East Command closed on 31 October 1971; and the withdrawal of the British forces from the Persian Gulf was completed following the formation of the United Arab Emirates on 2 December 1971, and Headquarters closed on 16 December 1971; however a continued British maritime presence in the Indian Ocean was maintained for vigilance in this area of strategic importance with destroyers, frigates and for anti-submarine warfare, in collaboration with Australia and New Zealand. In 1974, the British government intended to withdraw its remaining maritime forces in the Indian Ocean and to terminate the Simonstown Naval Base Agreement with South Africa which had left the Commonwealth in 1961, and had agreed to a U.S. Plan to expand the Diego Garcia Base. In 1976 these forces were also withdrawn and the British naval tasks were met primarily by deploying groups of a cruiser/guided-missile destroyer, together with frigates, Royal Fleet

Auxiliaries in support and a nuclear-power submarine\textsuperscript{95} when possible.

The ships of the Royal Navy took part in the annual CENTO maritime exercise MIDLINK in 1976; and also conducted naval exercises with the French Marine and the Iranian and the U.S. navies. The ships of the Royal Navy also participated in the MIDLINK exercises in 1977. An angry outburst was reflected in 1980 when after the entry of the Soviet Forces into Afghanistan the British government stated that the West must make it clear to the Soviet Union and its allies that it is capable of protecting essential interests by military means should the need arise. That task should not be left to the United States alone. France has major defence commitments in Africa and retains permanent forces in the Indian and Pacific Ocean.\textsuperscript{96} These were the pleas given by some ambitious leaders of a former Imperial power.

Thus, with the decline of the British power, the United States gained maritime ascendancy with the active British collaboration and support; as Britain herself was incapable\textsuperscript{97} of carrying out the commitments beyond the NATO area. The U.S. involvement in the Indian Ocean, it is already mentioned, began during the World War II and since then it has been increased and strengthened continuously. According to the U.S. government, an identification of its interests in the Indian Ocean is necessarily complex; and the main U.S. interests are:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{95} Statement on the Defence Estimates 1975, Annex D to D/55/8/44/75/D.
\item \textsuperscript{96} Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980, Annex I to D/D55/8/44/75/D.
\item \textsuperscript{97} Younger, Kenneth, British Interests and Foreign Policy, in: The Political Quarterly (London) Vol. 38, No. 4, October-December 1967, p. 546.
\end{itemize}
the oil of the Persian Gulf; a quarter of the total membership of the United Nations and one-third of the entire humanity resides here; and, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran, Egypt and South Africa are the Indian Ocean littoral countries; and according to the U.S. government, it has been the pronounced U.S. Policy to assist in development of the Indian Ocean countries for political stability, conducive to the U.S. interests, and in addition to the B.I.O.T., there are other American security interests; i.e. safety of the air and sealanes of communication; and to check the Soviet moves and ambitions and thwart their political and strategic aspirations in this region, which is comparatively far off from the U.S. mainland on the Pacific-Atlantic littoral.

The U.S. maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean was motivated by the ambitious writings of Mahan, who believed that naval strategy has for its end to found, support, and increase, as well in peace as in war, the sea power of a country, and to achieve it the United States has a vast and enormous production industry, possesses a large fleet of merchant and naval ships and has market for its products. According to Vice-Admiral Rodgers, the United States is and always has been, a great commercial nation; which has never failed to assert its right to trade freely with the world and its Navy


will be the instrument for upholding these commercial
rights. \textsuperscript{100}

Before the World War II, the U.S. Navy had already
attained parity with the Royal Navy, while the Soviet Navy was
one of the four (France, Germany, Italy and the U.S.S.R.)
second-rank navies in the world. \textsuperscript{101} The American fear of being
overtaken by the Soviets in strategic and security matters is
deeply embedded in their psychology. At the end of the World
War II, the United States was supreme on the surface, below
the sea, and in the air above it, and if the once supreme
maritime strength of the U.S. eclipsed by the U.S.S.R., the
U.S. in fact, may become number two. \textsuperscript{102} So far the Indian
Ocean is concerned, the Anglo-U.S. (parleys on the lend-lease
facilities elsewhere had already started during the World
War- II) agreement on the Diego Garcia and other islands of
the Chagos Archipelago was almost finalized even before the
arrival of the Soviet naval ships. Thus, the United States was
adopting an offensive tactic to force the late-coming Soviets
to be on the defensive. However, the Super power rivalry much
much detrimental to the interests of the local States, had

\textsuperscript{100} Rodgers, Vice-Admiral William L; introduction to Dudley
W. Knox, A History of the United States Navy (New York:
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936) vii.

\textsuperscript{101} Pratt, I., Navies of the World, in: Walter Yust, (ed),
Ten Eventful Years (Chicago: University of Chicago

\textsuperscript{102} Hayward, John T., The case for a Modernized U.S. Navy
in: George H. Quater (ed.), Sea Power in the 1970's
already begun in the Indian Ocean region. Since separate U.S. Indian Ocean Command was already established in 1953 after the successful tests of Polaris A-3 submarine and consequently the task force Concord Squadron consisting of aircraft carriers patrolled in the Indian Ocean in 1964, much before the arrival of the Soviet naval ships.

By reading between the lines in the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov talks American experts try to conclude that the Soviet interests in carrying out a sphere of influence south of Baku and Batum in the general direction of the Russian Gulf were clearly stated in the secret protocols which emerged from those talks. After having increased and strengthened its naval presence in the Indian Ocean long before the final British withdrawal from the East of the Suez in 1971, the U.S. administration harped on the theory of a power vacuum in the Indian Ocean, which had to be filled up by a super power, and since the Soviet Navy is neither tactically capable nor willing to risk a nuclear war against the U.S. and since the Indian Ocean cannot be matched or challenged by the Soviet Navy.

The U.S. intention had already been conveyed to some Indian Ocean littoral countries in 1970 by the then U.S. Vice-


President Spiro T. Agnew. After the commencing of the Diego Garcia naval base and the deployment on it of the Trident-I and Trident-II along with other undersea long-range missile system for strategic offensive the land-based missiles of the Soviet Union have become increasingly vulnerable and, therefore, the Indian Ocean has become a focal point of U.S. foreign and economic policies and has a growing impact on the U.S. security. The U.S. maritime strategy of securing the command of the Indian Ocean by the sale of economic and industrial products (including those of military arms nature) in this area, and the powerful shipping lines, and the acquisition and maintenance of strategic naval bases in the Ocean has another significant advantage over the Soviet naval forces in this area due to American sea-based air power.

The naval superiority maintained by the United States has enabled her to augment its political clout in the countries of this region. She has already used her gun-boat diplomacy in the 1967 Israel-Arab conflict, in 1971 Bangladesh crisis by dispatching the nuclear powered aircraft carrier Enterprise (of the U.S. Seventh Fleet) to the Bay of Bengal; during the 1973 Israel-Arab conflict, the U.S. aircraft carrier Hancock was showing the U.S. flag, followed by the Kitty Hawk in 1974, and the U.S. aircraft carrier Constellation was in the Arabian


sea during the 1979 Yemeni crises. These exercises were undertaken within the framework of the pronounced U.S. policy of protecting its vital interests, even if that involved the use of military strength or military presence. 109 Most of this gun-boat diplomatic activity is done in context of the prevalent American thinking that the Soviet naval activities pose a challenge to U.S. national interests, and whether the U.S. Navy is capable of meeting its future military responsibilities, 110 and that the use of a naval quarantine in lieu of a blockade was one of the most and important and far-reaching aspects of the Cuban crisis. 111 However the show of Soviet naval strength in this region was also not invisible during crisis periods in the conflict areas.

Unlike the Western Powers in search of spices and trade with the Orient in the fifteen century, the Czarist Empire concluded a commercial treaty with Thailand the first Indian Ocean State, only in 1899 after its ships had already visited Singapore in 1865. Militarily, a Russian cruiser in collaboration with the Royal Navy, was attacked and sunk by fugitive German war-ship Emden in the Penang harbour during the First World War; while during the Second World War the very lines of communication to the Persian Gulf and India were opened up


by the Allied Powers by means of a temporary system of roads and railways\footnote{112} along which supplies were sent to the Soviet Union.

To contend that whether the Romanovs and their Communist successors have been noted or not for their liberal attitude towards public discussion of issues of foreign policy, strategy, and defence,\footnote{113} is to cast a euphemistic aspersion on the general developments and the Soviet system, is a digression here. The real strategic and security intentions of an administration or a government are usually wrapped in a subtle diplomatic verbiage even in open societies, too. Today, the Super powers are acting almost in the same manner as the foreign policy of Imperial Rome pursued the twin fundamental goals of creating a global empire that would comprise of all the countries of the known world and to defend its frontiers against the aggression from the neighbours.\footnote{114} Some area experts have gone too far to opine that much of the Soviet activity in the field of foreign policy is opportunistic in the way in which it is carried out, and is therefore difficult to assess let alone predict with any degree of accuracy.\footnote{115}

\footnote{114. Potemkine, W., ("histoire de la diplomatic") p.9.}
In the beginning, the Soviet strategy was of a purely political exploitation of the anti-colonial sentiments and movements in the Indian Ocean region just after the World War II. As this view is reflected in the writings of the contemporary Soviet scholars that the British colonialists were worried not so much by the working peoples' economic demands as by the political aspects of the situation.\textsuperscript{116} While speaking in context of Greece facing a Soviet sponsored internal insurgency and Turkey, under severe pressure from Moscow to relinquish control of the Dardanelles, the U.S. President Truman said that: it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.\textsuperscript{117} The behavioural nature of the Super powers is well reflected in these two aforementioned statements.

Contrary to the U.S. naval situation at the end of the World War II the Soviet Navy was in a paradoxical situation. Not only had the cost of the war been heavy in terms of both industry and manpower; it included in addition the ship losses, and wrecked the internal waterway, ports and other industrial facilities on which a nation's sea-power depends. Added to these debits was a poor war record as far as "sea activity" was


concerned. The Soviet rulers emphasized on the need for a strong economy to strengthen the Soviet naval power as an adjunct to the Red Army and its role in liberalizing the colonial areas as a political strategy to earn goodwill and cooperation of the new emergent independent countries of the South (i.e. Asia, Africa and Latin America). For this purpose, Stalin chose an un-orthodox strategic mixture of naval forces that combined with the forces suitable for a young school naval strategy, major elements of the other two strategies of "fortress fleet" and "fleet-in-being." This strategy relying mainly upon as the fleet-in-being is pursued to deny command the enemy; and Brodie has described that the U.S. Navy had given the world a lesson on what an inferior fleet can accomplish in the immense spaces of the Pacific, if shrewdly and aggressively handled.

However, the Soviets explain in the context of their system, that after the World War II, their navy was largely involved in peaceful missions aimed at rendering humanitarian aid to numerous nations that had suffered from natural calamities and imperialist aggression, as the U.S. imperialists are trying to gain a foothold in the Indian Ocean and adjacent areas as well, and today the Soviet Navy has emerged from


coastal waters and inland seas to patrol the World Oceans and has all the necessary means for combat on the high seas. It reflects the embittered Soviet view of the superiority of the Western deployment of maritime strategy and the Soviet tactics of winning political clout in the littoral countries. Due to its geographical position and the consequent continental outlook, the Soviet Union was pretty late in recognizing the importance of the sea in the political tug-of-war and it was only after the humiliating experience of the 1962 Cuban crisis and the 1967 Israeli – Arab conflict and the powerful demonstration of America's strategic mobility in S.E. Asia made Moscow realize that apart from strategic deterrents based more on the navy, the ability to deploy military forces over a great distance and their more or less permanent presence in the strategically decisive areas has become an indispensable attribute to superpower status.

According to Mitchell the Soviet research vessels first entered the Indian Ocean in 1967 and were followed by a small squadron, which is being maintained there since then to perform a flag-showing role and is accumulating operating experience in case probably U.S. submarines are ever deployed to the Arabian Sea to attack the Soviet targets; and it is unlikely that this Soviet Indian Ocean squadron is intended

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for action against Indian Ocean sea routes or to cut off Western Oil supplies.\textsuperscript{124} Moreover with the signing of the Indo-Soviet and Egyptian - Soviet treaties of friendship, it was assumed that in so far as Moscow has control of events, her approach to the development of Asian balance will, in the immediate future, be more caution and oblique than it is in other areas of the world.\textsuperscript{125} But according to the Western experts, the successive developments in the Horn of Africa belied this assumption; partially, and it is yet to be proved whether the Indian foxtrot class submarines were deployed\textsuperscript{126} along with the Soviet submarines in the Bay of Bengal during the Bangladesh crisis in 1971 when the U.S. aircraft carrier Enterprise was on the scene on a gunboat diplomatic mission.

U.S.S.R. and Egypt issued a joint communique\textsuperscript{127} on mutual cooperation in September 1965, the important mutual defence agreement signed between Egypt and the U.S.A. in April 1952, which was later amended in December 1952 was becoming irrelevant due to politico-strategic reasons in the region. However, this new politico-military agreement with the U.S.S.R. was also rendered redundant by the fresh politico-strategic realities by signing of the U.S.-Egypt agreement

\textsuperscript{124} Jukes, Geoffrey, op.cit., p. 41.


concerning the establishment and operation of an early warning system in the Sinai after the 1973 Israel Arab War, in September 1975. The dramatic changes in the Horn of Africa with the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia had changed the power equations brought by the development in the Arabian Sea region after the independence of Southern Yemen in the late 1960s.

With the withdrawal of the British from the East of the Suez, the United States had already strengthened its diplomatic and political position and was firmly entrenched here by signing security agreements with Australia in 1976 and 1977; with Egypt with Indonesia (U.S. military assistance and training pursuant to the International Security Assistance and Arms Control Act of 1976) in August 1976; and with Iran the important document signed was related to the safeguarding of classified information in May and June 1974; and another military agreement was signed in June 1975. A U.S.-Israel agreement concerning the establishment and operation of an early warning system in the Sinai was also signed in September furnishing of defense articles and services to Jordan came.

128. TIAS, No. 8156.
129. TIAS, No. 8757.
130. TIAS, No. 8419.
131. TIAS, No. 7857 and 8034.
132. TIAS, No. 8155.
133. TIAS, No. 8602.
with force on 23 February 1977; while a U.S. agreement with Kenya\textsuperscript{134} similar to the one already signed by the U.S. with Indonesia, in August 1976.

The U.S. and Kuwait signed two defence agreements in 1975 and 1977. Malaysia also signed a similar military agreement with the United States in March 1977. A number times and very regularly and promptly Pakistan has been given military aid and assistance, including even financial arrangements for the furnishing of military supplies, far-exceeding her defence needs. Without any break since 1951, in the post-World War II period, Saudi Arabia\textsuperscript{136} has been continuously receiving the latest in the American logistics and weapons systems in every aspect of its national defence, including U.S. military training missions. An agreement relating to the establishment of a U.S. Air Force management training assistance team in Singapore came into force on 24 February 1977. Since the signing of the U.S. - South Africa agreement on mutual defence assistance in November 1951, the Pretoria has been receiving arms supplies and arms technological know-how through several channels. In technical matters the United States and Sri Lanka signed an agreement in December 1983 for establishing six voice of America transmitters totalling 2500 KW, for its strategic use by the United States in the Indian Ocean region. Like

\textsuperscript{134.} TIAS, No. 8568.
\textsuperscript{135.} TIAS, Nos. 8066, 8444.
\textsuperscript{136.} TIAS, Nos. 7687, 6095, 7425, 7459, 7634, 8558.
Saudi Arabia, Thailand is another regular recipient of American defence equipments and arms since early 1950's under a mutual security agreement. Agreement on integrated communications system, and the storage of ammunition in Thailand were signed in January and March 1977. The U.A.E. has concluded important contracts in defence supplies from the United States. The Soviet moves are either in response to the U.S. or the long range strategic consideration is thus evident.

According to the U.S. Defence Department, the first Soviet aircraft carrier, Minsk along with two cruiser missile launchers and the largest disembarking ship, Iran Rogov, entered the Indian Ocean in April 1979; while the U.S. aircraft carrier Constellation was already sent to this region in March 1979. However, the Soviet ships of lesser significance had been in the Indian Ocean since late 1960's, when the Soviet cruiser Dmitry Pozharsky and a destroyer and a nuclear submarine paid a courtsey call to Aden and to Iraq, Somalia, Iran and Sri Lanka in 1968. According to Mitchell, the Soviet would be trying to fill up the power vacuum in the Indian Ocean resultant to the British policy of withdrawing from the East of Suez and because the U.S. would probably not be attempting

137. TIAS, No. 2619.
138. TIAS, No. 8139.
to fill up the gap\textsuperscript{141} which was not true, as the Soviets were already too late after the area being regularly patrolled by the U.S. naval missions.

According to Captain Lacouture, undoubtedly, the primary motivation for the Soviet naval deployments in the Indian Ocean is to engage in a contest for influence where the rewards are great and the risks small and in an area where countries are often less concerned with facts than perceptions, Soviet claims that their naval presence deters U.S. intervention can be a significant factor in political actions.\textsuperscript{142} Viewed in the light of the various bilateral and trilateral treaties and agreements already cited above, this argument is unsustenable. However, the Soviet strivings in scientific, fishing and for commercial success in this area do not act detrimental to other actors involved in the process. But in strategic context it is purely in terms of superpower naval rivalry in this Third World region.

National prestige, showing the flag, gaining political influence, gunboat diplomacy and the protection of friendly regimes, and of economic interests, could well be the motives of the big power presence in international waters, to utilize maritime power and strength. Some experts are of the opinion that the highest priority mission of the Soviet Navy is deterrence of nuclear war. If deterrence fails the objective is to maximize

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\textsuperscript{141} Mitchell, Donald W., op.cit. 545.

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damage to the U.S. and minimize it for the U.S.S.R.\textsuperscript{143} the importance the Soviets attach to damage limitation has led some observers to stress strategic defence as the primary motive for Indian Ocean deployments.

Apart from the oft repeated argument of the traditional quest for warm-waters, the other arguments by the critics of the Soviet projection of its maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean are advanced are that there is an apprehension in Peking that the Soviets are attempting to complete the encirclement of China,\textsuperscript{144} by deploying their fleet units in the Indian Ocean; and that China is emphasis on building a large and strong navy according to the Westerners are justified as the Soviet ships roam freely off the China coast and become more at home in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{145} These arguments are in fact misleading, and not sustenable, as they are conceived in terms of containment of China by the Soviet Union acting as the only hegemonic power in the Indian Subcontinent exercising its influence over India to offset the American force deployments in Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{146} Therefore, it is logical that the Soviet policy in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{146} Quester, George (ed.), Sea Powers in the 1970's (New York: 1975).\end{itemize}
strategic terms, and as dictated by its geographical location, shape and size, is now concentrated on the regions in its relative close vicinity with high level options.

According to Garthoff, the main aims of the Soviet Navy are said to be simply defense against Western naval forces and interference of Western sea-lanes of communication, and it is conceded that missile-firing submarines contribute to a strategic offense, but they are clearly only a supplement to land-based missiles.\textsuperscript{147} Reflecting on the events in the Indian Ocean after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, Henry Kissinger wrote - that the combination of Soviet actions in Ethiopia, South Yemen, Afghanistan, plus the general perception of an American geopolitical decline, had the consequence of demoralizing those whose stock in trade was cooperation with the United States, undermining their resolution toward potential revolutionaries.\textsuperscript{148} While Leonid Brezhnev had stated that the ideological struggle should not lead to a political and military confrontation.\textsuperscript{149}

The superpower involvement in the regional conflicts results in wide ranging politico-strategic developments, pressures and compulsions of diverse nature for the affected parties. These developments and changes are self-evident in


\textsuperscript{149} Le Monde: Selection Hebdomadaire (Paris) 16-22 June 1977.
the case of the allies and surrogates of the Superpowers is
even worse and detrimental to the local interests; and it
happens due to the heterogeneity and dissimilar perceptions
and goals set and pursued by diverse systematic approaches
adopted by the political entities in this region.