Indo-US Relations during
Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s Second
Term as Prime Minister
CHAPTER: 2


In January 1980, the general elections held in India bringing Mrs. Gandhi and her party back to power. The guidance of the Indian foreign policy was, therefore, back in the hands of the Congress Party. Mrs. Gandhi came back to power was virtually coincided with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, which had taken place in last week of December 1979. This was the period of intense tension between the two super powers in which India's sympathy was regarded, in western circles, in favor of Moscow though the fact was that India had never approved of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

During 1980s, there were changed in the regional and international environment, as well as in the leadership of both India and the United States as in January 1981, Mr. Reagan became the US President. These changes brought also certain changes in Indo-US relations. Although, the two leaders tried to evolve friendly and co-operative relations, but did not success much, these relations were lacked warmthness and depth. In fact the relations between the two countries got strained due to their different perception in foreign policies and different stands on various issues. India refused to rally on the side of United States in its anti-Soviet crusade over Afghanistan and advocated withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan at appropriate time. The decision of US Government to provide arms aid and sell sophisticated weapons to Pakistan despite strong protests from India also contributed to tension. In addition to the above, several factors also contributed to the straining of relations between two countries.

The above strain included, denial of critically needed nuclear fuel for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station on the plea that India had not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and refused to accept full scope safeguards (US did not insist on similar conditions with regard to China); growing military presence of USA in the Indian Ocean and the Indian demand for dismantling of the US base in

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Diego Garcia and its return to Mauritius; India’s strong advocacy of New International Economic Order and restructuring of the international monetary institutions; the presence of a feeling in India that USA was trying to disrupt its unity and stability by encouraging agitations in Assam and Punjab, etc.

However, despite the above irritants, the leader of the two countries showed keenness to improve relations. The regular exchange of visits by high level official of the two countries was a clear proof of their desire to improve relations.

During Mrs. Gandhi’s second tenure as Prime Minister, her major foreign policy deal with the crisis in Afghanistan, coping with heightened levels of Pakistani subversion in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, and adjusting India’s relations with the superpowers in which the temperatures of the Cold War was increased by the United States. Therefore, India must adjust her relations with USA as well as carry on a good relationship with the Soviet Union.

Mrs. Gandhi’s task during her period was that she had to orchestrate India’s role in the Non-aligned Movement which was becoming ideologically amorphous and was subjected to inner contradictions and even military conflict between member-states exemplified by the Iran-Iraq war which commenced soon after her coming to power. Her government had to restore India’s external economic and technological linkages which had gone bad since her declaration of emergency in 1975. She had also to define Indian attitudes regarding the fallout of the Iranian Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war in Gulf and the West Asian region².

Under Mrs. Gandhi’s leadership, India’s approach to the US has been three stranded. Firstly, to win support for the vital interests of India’s security, international independence and economic development. Secondly, persistence in policies to further its basic goals even in the absence of US supports. Thirdly, to preserve of cordial and fruitful bilateral relations in areas of mutual interest and attempts to insulate them from other disagreements.³

During 1980-82, Mrs. Gandhi maintained a steady dialogue with

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Washington, while the situation in Southwest Asia threw all bilateral problems into sharp relief. Her position on the former Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan changed appreciably over the year from sympathetic understanding to criticism of the former Soviet move and her opposition to the escalation of US naval and military presence in the region remained constant.4

During the early 1980s, Indo-US relations were overshadowed by American perceptions about the implications of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. During the last year of President Carter in power, the US was facing the crisis of the American Embassy hostage in Tehran. However, this crisis was defused when Reagan became the President of the United States. His policy towards South Asia was that by giving indirect military assistance to anti-Soviet Afghan guerrillas, renewing full economic and military assistant to Pakistan as well as providing humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees. This US move was much reflected in criticism and opposed by India.5 India was also criticized by the US as pro-Soviet Union.

Mrs. Gandhi’s moves towards the USA have been consistent with her pragmatism and her acceptance of oscillation in all relationships. India’s policy of non-alignment demanded cordial relations with both the US and the former Soviet Union. The lacunae in India’s economic and technological development could best be filled from the west. India sought the sympathy and cooperation of America in its international campaigns against racism and for the amelioration of human beings. At the same time, Indira Gandhi’s overtures to the US have always been inhibited. Her natural reserve of conduct and herself confessed inability to express gratitude in any tangible manner, have frequently been interpreted as coldness and toughness in the more exuberant American culture. Her own experiences as well as those of her predecessors led to suspicions of US intentions which she was quick to voice.

Deprived of forthright reassurance at her own level, and with her attention drawn to revelation about covert US activities in various parts of the world, Mrs. Gandhi wondered why the US was destabilizing her government or inciting anti-Indian sentiment in the region. Her public statements irritated Washington and

4 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
5 J.N. Dixit, n. 2, p. 150.
further reduced her chances of receiving favourable attention from the US.⁶

Therefore, this chapter will attempt to focus on many important facts and events, particularly on various aspects of the issues of Indo-US relations during Mrs. Gandhi second term as Prime Minister 1980-1984. It will discuss the divergence in strategic perspectives which prevented the formation of an otherwise logical partnership in the world affairs in which two countries had sharp differences on Pakistan, West-Asia, South East Asia, Indian Ocean and other areas where US military policies were opposed by India. It will also take up the nuclear factors as an irritant in Indo-US relations. The different over New International Economic Order will also be discussed.

Before proceeding to highlight the major issues of Indo-US relations during 1980 -1984, it is relevant to focus the general environment & important visits made by top official leaders of both countries and examine its consequences.

**General Environment and Diplomatic Exchanges**

There were a large number of visits of important dignitaries to both the countries during Mrs. Gandhi’s period. In spite of some shortcomings, each brought in its wake the hope of an improvement in Indo-US relations. The first visit by an official of the Reagan Administration did not raise any such hopes. Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick, the US Representative to the UN, has always been regarded in India as “hardliner” in those US policies which are unacceptable to India. Thus, her visit appeared to be an “unfortunate choice”, especially since it was the first contract between the Reagan Administration and India.⁷

In the beginning, another diplomatic issue which cast dark shadows on the relations was the appointment of a career foreign service officer (FSO), Mr. Harry Barnes, as the US Ambassador to India. Since his appointment took place after several months of his predecessor, Mr. Robert Goheen’s departure, India had “some reservations” to that. Secondly, the Reagan Administration had gone against the previous practice by sending a career FSO and not a ‘distinguished private citizen’.

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⁶ Surjit Mansingh, p. 3, p. 71.
As such, the Indian government saw these acts as the US's attempts to downgrade the relations with India.\textsuperscript{8}

Again the relationship was suffered, when in November, India rejected the appointment of Mr. George B. Griffin as the Political Counsellor in the US Embassy,\textsuperscript{9} on the ground that he had provided information about the situation in Kabul to foreign reporters in Delhi and had been involved with dissident Bangladeshi groups during his visit to Calcutta in 1971. He was also accused of having connections with the CIA. The US, however, protested against the imposition of these charges. The spokesman of State Department said that, since “this action was taken at a time when Griffin was a target of a Soviet disinformation campaign” it was “particularly regrettable”. It was indicated that India had followed the Soviets in condemning Mr. Griffin. However, India denied any influence of the Soviet Union in this regard. In retaliatory, the US also refused to accept the appointment of an Indian FSO to the post of Political Counsellor in the Indian Embassy in Washington.\textsuperscript{10} Thus, this reflected in tension in Indo – US relations.

Mrs. Gandhi met President Reagan at Cancun, Mexico

In October 1981, Mrs. Gandhi, President Reagan, and other heads of government from key industrialized and developing nations held a summit at Cancun, Mexico, to consider global economic issues. The Indian and American approaches differed drastically. India pressed for concessions on debt, aid, and trade policy by the industrialized nations, vigorously supporting the call of the Non-Aligned Movement for a new world economic order that would favour the developing world. Strongly opposed to these ideas, the United States stressed the importance of enlarging the scope for private enterprise and capitalism to spur economic growth for the Third World.

At this Summit, Reagan and Mrs. Gandhi also had a private meeting. Although the two apparently discussed little of substance during this get together, the personal chemistry between the Prime Minister and the President was positive.

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., p.89.
\textsuperscript{10} Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, p. 90.
and the Indo-American diplomatic atmosphere began to improve.\textsuperscript{11}

The meeting was significant since the two countries have been trying to resolve bilateral differences such as nuclear cooperation and trade and assistance from multilateral agencies such as the IMF. But the most important issue that concerned India was the US decision to supply F-16 aircraft to Pakistan in utter disregard to India's sensitivity and the concern expressed by several non-aligned countries over the induction of sophisticated arms into the region. Mrs. Gandhi gave President Reagan documents of Pakistani 'offensive arms' purchases which included sophisticated laser weapons and deployment of forces which could only be for an attack on an immediate neighbour and not the Soviet Union.

Reagan also raised two objections, one related to the Indian request for unprecedented loans by India from various financial institutions controlled by developed countries. Reagan seemed to be under the impression that India was borrowing the money to buy arms. Mrs. Gandhi informed him that these were being asked on the basis of India's capability to repay and no other political considerations were involved. Secondly, in replying to Reagan's query on Indo-Soviet treaty, he was assured that it was not and had never been an offensive instrument and that Indo-American relations had improved in spite of the existence of the treaty. Mrs. Gandhi clarified that the treaty had in no way affected India's own nationally determined paths, nor had they even been influenced to speak in defence of the Soviet objectives.\textsuperscript{12}

In the meanwhile, a settlement of the Tarapur problem was proving as elusive as ever. In keeping with its lower priority on nonproliferation, the Reagan administration signaled its interest in finding a quiet solution. On 2 March 1981, the US Embassy in New Delhi presented an aide memoir on Tarapur seeking Indian views "informally and without commitment..... on an orderly disengagement." In April, Indian Atomic Energy Chairman Homi Sethna and External Affairs Secretary Eric Gonsalves traveled to Washington for talks. Even though they learned officially


that the United States would no longer ship fuel for Tarapur, the Indian visitors described the Reagan team as more pragmatic than its predecessors, "who got themselves painted into a corner with President Carter's idealism over trying to stamp out nuclear proliferation".\textsuperscript{13}

The question worse at that time was that would India continue the safeguards after the United States pulled out, and who would replace the United States as the supplier of enriched uranium fuel? A second round of talks in New Delhi in July did not advance a solution. A third round in the fall also failed to bridge the gap. When Ambassador Barnes arrived in New Delhi, the Tarapur negotiations seemed near the breaking point. The Indians were threatening to denounce the agreement, to cancel the safeguards, and to fuel the reactors with indigenously produced mixed oxide or enriched uranium obtained from the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{14}

However, Indira Gandhi's desire for better relations with Washington, decided to avoid further bilateral trouble over Tarapur, overruling those pressing for a break with the United States. In December, the Prime Minister publicly ruled out unilateral action on Tarapur as she told the parliamentary consultative committee any decision to terminate the fuel supply agreement would be taken in the context of "the national interest and overall bilateral relations with the US."\textsuperscript{15}

As the United States feared that the Soviet Union would replace her in supplying fuel to India. In the early 1982, the Tarapur negotiation made some progress. The Indians dropped the idea of repudiating safeguards. The United States gave up its demands for perpetual safeguards beyond the expiration of the supply contract in 1993. France would replace the United States as the fuel supplier—a far more preferable substitute politically to Washington than the Soviets, who were the most likely alternative. Although some details remained to be ironed out, the dispute that caused rancor for nearly a decade seemed near solution.\textsuperscript{16}

In the spring of 1982, Barnes proposed that President Reagan invite Mrs. Gandhi to the United States. Since Indira's action on Tarapur suggested an interest

\textsuperscript{13} Dennis Kux, p. 11, p. 387.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 11, p. 388.
\textsuperscript{15} The Hindu, 23 December 1981.
\textsuperscript{16} Dennis Kux, p. 11, p. 389.
on her part in better relations, Barnes believed an official visit might advance the process, especially given the indications of good personal chemistry with Reagan. When Washington approved an invitation, the Prime Minister accepted with alacrity. She had, in fact, been eager for an invitation ever since returning to office in 1980.\textsuperscript{17} Except for a one-day stop to see a friend in New York, in 1973, Mrs. Gandhi had not been to the United States for eleven years, since the ill fated November 1971 meetings with Nixon during the Bangladesh crisis.\textsuperscript{18}

As if to underscore her interest in strengthening ties with Washington, Mrs. Gandhi decided she would defer paying a visit to Moscow until after she had been to the United States, some of her advisers were even opposed to this, as it might displease the Soviets.\textsuperscript{19} Indian rhetoric regarding US arms to Pakistan also began to taper off. In addition, to create a positive atmosphere for the US visit, the Indians recognized that their protests were not going to alter US policy toward Pakistan.

The Indians were in any case more confident of their ability to meet a military threat from Pakistan. The standoff in the 1965 Kashmir War and the victory in 1971 had made clear India's military superiority over its neighbor. New Delhi knew that its armed forces could, if necessary, deal with Pakistan, even a Pakistan bolstered by the latest US weaponry.\textsuperscript{20}

**Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the United States**

In the midst of growing strains in the relations of the two countries, a new trend was seen in the diplomatic relations when Mrs. Gandhi accepted the invitation of President Reagan to visit the US where she paid a state visit from 27 July- 5 August 1982.\textsuperscript{21} Her visit was significant in being her first foreign trip since her return to power in January 1980. When the Prime Minister arrived in Washington at Andrews Air Force Base, she was greeted by George Shultz, the new Secretary of State, Mrs. Gandhi was welcomed by a smiling and relaxed Ronald Reagan.

Reagan spoke of his hope “to broaden and deepen the dialogue we begun last

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{20} See for detail in ibid., p. 389-390.
\textsuperscript{21} The Pioneer, 25 July 1982.
autumn at Cancun” and of “renewed recognition of the mutual important of strong, constructive ties between India and the United States.” In replying, Prime Minister Gandhi described her Journey as “an adventure in search of understanding and friendship….to find a common area, how so ever small, on which to build and enhance cooperation.”

By the visit of Mrs. Gandhi, President Reagan described the coming of Mrs. Indira as a “dialogue of discovery”. He emphasized that India and USA were both strong independent and proud nations and that their relations were based on enlightened national interests. From all accounts the visit was eminently successful in softening the extremely rough edges of the relationship, extending contacts and advancing better understanding of India’s position and viewpoint. It was not the specifics but the intangibles that were important.

However, Mr. Reagan reiterated the sentiment. He cited some international issues on which both shared common views—an early withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, peace in the Indian Ocean, settlement of the Iran-Iraq crisis and establishment of peace in the Middle East and expressed the hope that “during this visit, we can weave together all these threads of common interest into a new and better understanding between our two countries”.

During the visit, many bilateral, regional and global issues were discussed. They included the superpower relations in view of the Afghan crisis, the Iran - Iraq war and ways of a peaceful solution, US role in solving the Lebanese problem, the East-West relations, arms control, US with Pakistan and India, Indian relations with Pakistan and China and US, attempts to improve them as well as the Indo-US economic relations. They also considered ways in which India and the US might strengthen their collaboration in the fields of science, technological transfer, agriculture, trade and educational exchange. Mrs. Gandhi’s visit generated a better climate of goodwill for India and provided opportunity for more rational explanations for India’s policies.

22 Dennis Kux, n. 11, pp. 390 - 391.
Mrs. Gandhi was understood to have conveyed India's concern over Washington's supply for sophisticated military equipment to Pakistan. She questioned the American justification of the Afghanistan issue for the military assistance programme to Pakistan. The arms were not going to be used against the Soviet Union. She said because of the acquisition of sophisticated arms by Pakistan as India had to increase her own defence expenditure.\textsuperscript{25}

Regarding to US arms aid to Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi asked "Against whom would Pakistan use this military hardware? They cannot be used against Afghanistan because the Soviets are there and they cannot be used against the Soviet Union." As India faced three aggressions by Pakistan, she said that she "saw no rationale or logical reason for arming Pakistan." Recalling the efforts made by India right from 1949 to arrive at a no war pact with Pakistan, she said that India sincerely believed that it would be in the interests of countries in the subcontinent to resolve their differences through negotiations rather than use of arms.\textsuperscript{26}

Mrs. Gandhi emphasis on self-reliance and made it clear that India was not seeking military aid from USA or any other country. She added that India was trying to be self-reliant in arms manufacture and diversifying its sources of supply.

For the crisis in Afghanistan, Mrs. Gandhi explained to Mr. Reagan, India's position concerning Afghanistan. She was believed to have said that India had maintained that there should be total non interference in the affairs of any country by outside powers and wanted foreign troops to withdraw from Afghanistan. She said "the USSR felt that the Government in Kabul could not be anti-Soviet".\textsuperscript{27}

Mrs. Gandhi told the pressmen that India and the US had differences on foreign policy, but each country decided its foreign policy having regard to its geographical location and historical necessities. She underlined both in her meeting with President Reagan and at the National Press Club, the need for increased external assistance on concessional terms to maintain the pace of development. If there was any kind of reduction in this, it would mean that India was being punished for doing well on the economic front. She also countered the American argument

\textsuperscript{25} See detail n. 23, p. 119.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
that institutional aid should go to the least developed areas and pointed out that India had many areas as less developed countries in the world. India was resorting to commercial borrowings for meeting debt service obligations. But many of the programmes like rural employment could be implemented only through concessional finance, she said at the Press Club.\footnote{Asian Recorder, 27 August - 2 September 1982}

Mrs. Gandhi also invited a group of American businessmen to visit India and see things for themselves. The Organization for Private Investment for Asian Development, which encouraged private investment, was to sponsor the mission of American executives to India in 1983.\footnote{V.P. Dutt, n. 23, p. 120.}

The result of the visit was that the two leaders announced the Tarapur settlement, rather akin to a no fault divorce. Under this, France was to replace the United States as the enriched uranium fuel supplier and India would continue the safeguards on the plant. Second, Reagan and Mrs. Gandhi launched an initiative for science and technology cooperation. Third, they named 1985 as “the Year of India, during which a mammoth Indian art and cultural exhibition would tour the United States.\footnote{Dennis Kux, n. 11, p.391.}

However, the visit had also succeeded in its basic aim of creating a “better understanding of India in the US“, though the foreign policies of both the countries had not undergone any changes. An Indian Diplomat stated “We move from unenlightened disagreement to enlightened disagreement, when you know why you’re disagreeing”.\footnote{Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, p. 92.}

Even the US acknowledged the change in the relations in the aftermath of Mrs. Gandhi’s visit. Mr. Schneider, the US Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs said “The visit of Prime Minister Gandhi here this summer and the solid progress made on the initiatives announced at that time demonstrate the interest on both sides in seeking a better understanding and finding ways to strengthen the already extensive ongoing ties”.\footnote{Schneider, “To the Subcommittees of the House Foreign Affairs Committee”, 9 October 1982, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents ’82, No. 454, p. 899.}
During the visit, however, Mrs. Gandhi failed in convincing the US to stop arms-supplies to Pakistan or from decreasing its contributions to the World Bank. Some frequent irritants were also continued to remain. India repeated its resentment over American administration’s decision in August 1982 to extend fresh credit for arms sales to Pakistan. The US expressed its unhappiness over Mrs. Gandhi’s statement during her visit to Mauritius regarding Indian Ocean states which supported for Mauritius’s sovereignty over Diego Garcia.33

The visit of Mrs. Gandhi to Moscow in September 1982 also annoyed Washington. Her interactions with the Soviet leaders and the agreements envisaging defence and economic cooperation between India and the USSR further strengthened the American impression of India’s pro-Soviet leanings.

US Secretary of State visit to India in 1983

In 1983, another important visit to India was made by the US Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, the purpose of his visit was to work out ways and means for improving Indo – US relation and to preside over the meeting of Indo – US Joint Commission.34 He made a few statements before he left for India which was meant to suggest America’s desire to improve relations with India; one of the steps they wanted to take was to supply safety related spare parts for the Tarapur atomic plant which could not be obtained elsewhere.35

During his visit Shultz was reported to have assured the Indian leaders that the US was prepared to sell sophisticated military equipment to India without too many conditions. But the Indian government did not agree to the proposal on the ground that apart from the high price factor involved there was no firm guarantee of an assured supply of essential spare parts and ammunition on the required scale under the existing US laws and procedures besides the known disinclination on the part of Washington to transfer advanced technology and let India manufacture such weaponry indigenously under license.36

There was another serious reason attached to India’s refusal. India did not
want to get caught in this trap of indirectly justifying the US arms supplies to Pakistan by purchasing weaponry from the same source even if the equipment was sold without any stringent conditions. In order to stress India’s contention that US arms supplies to both countries could create so many complexities that relations between the two countries would get irreparably damaged.

But for this issue, the extensive discussions that Shultz had with Mrs. Gandhi and P.V. Narasimha Rao were more in the nature of amicable conversation rather than serious discussion aimed at narrowing down the divergences of opinion. But the American guest continued to harp on American views of regarding India as a stable force to maintain peace in the subcontinent.37

For India, the Shultz visit had not rise any hope of change in the near future in the US policies of arming Pakistan even at the risk of starting a new arm race in the subcontinent. On other issues also, Shultz’s response was not at all encouraging. The US had already opposed further flow of concessional financial assistance to India through multilateral channels like International Development Authority (IDA); it had also stood in the way of the Indian request for two billion dollar loan from the Asian Development Bank and even denied transfer of technology for industrial purposes. He had no valid answer to give to these Indian grievances; all that he did was to listen intently, put some questions to seek more clarification from the Indian side and finally promised to convey his impressions to President Reagan on his return to Washington.38

Shultz’s visit had been reflected in the understanding reached over the supply of spare parts for Tarapur plant but it was under so many uncertainties that no one on the Indian or American side was prepared to hazard any guess as to how it was going to be settled, particularly in the face of growing Congressional opposition in Washington.

Shultz left on 2 July on his way to Pakistan; before leaving he described his trip as a very fine visit P.V. Narasimha Rao said that wide ranging discussions with him were satisfactory and promising to sustain the impression that despite persisting

37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
differences over several issues, the talks had helped to clear up some of the misgivings and doubts on either side.\textsuperscript{39}

Finally, after the visit, the two countries had not succeeded in settling the issues of arms supplies to Pakistan, supply of spare parts for Tarapur, and the US attitude on World Bank assistance for India. As anticipated, these differences came in the way of talks. However, one important achievement was the announcement by Mr. Shultz that the US was prepared to supply the spare parts for the Tarapur Atomic Reactor,\textsuperscript{40} which India was not able to secure from other countries.

**Indira and Reagan hold talks in New York**

As an effort to maintain regular contacts between the leaders of the two countries Mrs. Gandhi made it a point to hold talks with Reagan when she was in New York in September 1983 to address the 38\textsuperscript{th} session of the UN General Assembly. The meeting took place on 26 September after Reagan had addressed the UN General Assembly session. He did not mention India specifically in his address but his reference to what he called pseudo- non alignment must have hurt Mrs. Gandhi. Since she was the chairperson of the non aligned movement he must have known that any unfavourable reference to it was bound to affect Indo-US relations.\textsuperscript{41}

Another incident that marred the significance of this meeting was the growing conviction in official and non official American circles over India’s reaction to the downing of a South Korean civilian airliner by the Soviet missile earlier in the month in international waters off Soviet Asia causing death of 269 innocent passengers. Critics reminded that it was like India’s refusal to condemn the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956.\textsuperscript{42} Although 44 nations had asked to address the representative did not care to speak. In general, Indian government’s statement on the affair was called ‘mealy mouthed’ by the American officials.

Mrs. Gandhi’s main mission was to conduct the deliberations of a mini-summit from 27 to 29 September which was attended by over 25 members. The non aligned conference held in New Delhi earlier in the year conceived the idea of a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, pp. 94-95.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Tribune, 10 October 1983.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Indian Express, 20 September 1983.
\end{itemize}
mini-summit during the 38th session of the UN General Assembly. This became all the more relevant in the context of heightened international tension prevailing then following several international developments including the latest super power dispute over the Korean plane disaster.\(^{43}\)

The Soviet Union, for the first time in 26 years, decided not to send its Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to attend the UN session. Most of the NAM countries viewed Gromyko’s absence as an unfortunate development though they were wary of taking sides in the super power disputes.

The success of Mrs. Gandhi’s visit to the USA lay in another field. In spite of the virtual rebuff she received from most of the heads of state and government who did not attend the mini NAM summit the impression left behind by her was that she was not a leader who wilted under opposition attack. The US visit helped her to project the image of a strong and determined world leader able to hold her own in hostile conditions.\(^{44}\)

**US Vice-President George Bush visits to India: 1984**

On 13 May 1984, the US Vice-President George Bush made a four days visit to India. Along with his visit he brought with him a personal message from Reagan to make the customary assurance of goodwill for India and renewed assertion that the armed supply to Pakistan would not have any effect on the security of India.

There was another favourable factor to give a good start to Indo-US relations. By the time of Bush’s visit India’s economic relations with the US had much improved particularly in the field of trade; import – export and investment.\(^{45}\)

During the talks, Mrs. Gandhi sought Bush’s assessment of the recent visit of President Reagan to China. He explained some of the Reagan’s commitments to China made during his visit. The fact that Washington had offered nuclear collaboration to China in return for the guarantees which, for India, were found inadequate, only lent greater evidence to India’s long standing charge that the

\(^{43}\) The Hindu, 23 September 1983.

\(^{44}\) Tribune, 4 October 1983.

\(^{45}\) Hindustan Times, 12 May 1984.
nuclear non proliferation regimes discriminated against nuclear non weapon states.\textsuperscript{46}

When his attention was drawn to the ‘double standards’ that the US had applied in not seeking from China the sort of nuclear guarantees that it was demanding from India for the fulfillment of its contractual obligations in regard to the Tarapur plant, Bush merely said that he was satisfied that China would not use any nuclear equipment supplied by the US for enhancing its military potential. This he obviously said without going into the details of the understanding reached with Beijing.\textsuperscript{47}

Bush tried to reduce Indian criticism by offering arms for India from the USA. The US insistence on the right to choke off the supply pipeline at any moment and exaggerated Pentagon fears over the risk of sophisticated American arms falling into Russian hands. Besides, the American arms were several times more arm expensive than the Russian variety. The US would supply arms to India at market rate whereas to Pakistan it gave at a throw away price.

However, Bush made no promises which his administration had no intention to live up to. He did not say that it would cut off military assistance to Pakistan in case Islamabad acquired nuclear weapons. All that he said was that the US had communicated to Pakistan its views on non-proliferation. Whether mere communication of views would serve any purpose was a doubtful proposition. Similarly he had not held out the assurance that his country would do all in its power to see to it that Pakistan did not use weapons supplied by it against India.\textsuperscript{48}

On the other hand he reminded that India was also purchasing arms from some other countries and that his government could not properly dictate to India that these weapons would be used only against a specific power. At the press conference he dismissed suggestion of a guarantee that the arms provided to Pakistan would not be turned against India pointing out that it would in any case be meaningless as experience in 1965 and 1971 had shown.\textsuperscript{49}

However, despite several visit made by leaders of both the countries, Indo –

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, 16 May 1984
\textsuperscript{47} For detail see, The Hindu, 16 May 1984.
\textsuperscript{48} The Times of India, 16 May 1984.
\textsuperscript{49} The Hindu, 17 May 1984 edit.
US relations during the second term of Mrs. Gandhi 1980-1984 did not show much improvement. Even leadership of both countries tries to show how much they desire to improve relationship with each other by expressing and visiting each other throughout the period. This was due to many factors, both internal & external as well as differences over various issues in both international and regional issues, which will now be focused again as follows

**Major Issue during 1980-1984**

**Afghanistan Crisis**

The world was stunned and the superpower relationship shaken when about 80,000 Soviet troops entered and intervened militarily in Afghanistan in December 1979 to support Babrak Kamal regime and oust President Amin. This was viewed by President Carter with great concern. President Carter linked the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan with the general crisis in the Persian Gulf region for which he held Moscow responsible. The collapse of the monarchy in Iran in February 1979 and its take over by a bitterly anti Islamic fanatic, Ayatollah Khomonie was an ominous development which subsequently led to the storming of American embassy in Tehran by his young cohorts and taking 50 US employees as hostages in protest against the asylum given to the former king of Iran. The US has begun to think that the US forces could not stop a Soviet threat towards the Gulf through Iran unless some steps to fortify the area were taken.

Before Soviet’s invasion, the Afghan Government, led by President Amin, accused Pakistan, Iran, the USA, Egypt and the People’s Republic of China of aiding the opposition. It is very important here to note that six months before the Soviet invasion the US Government had initiated a plan to depose the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) Government; US President Jimmy Carter offered substantial aid to fund the anti-PDPA movement. Amin negotiated for protection from the USSR, which included the dispatch of Soviet troops. There were already a large number of Soviet military and civilian advisers in Afghanistan by the

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51 Shri Ram Sharma, p. 1, p. 43.
52 W.B. Fisher, p. 50, p.53.
53 Ibid., p.55.
Soviets within less than a year. Later on, Amin also wanted Afghan control over Soviet troop deployment; thus, he was ousted from power. He was accused of subverting the Saur Revolution. His attempts to liquidate the party (600 PDPA officials were executed without trial or investigation) made him unpopular and appear as a traitor to the cause.\(^{54}\)

The Soviet was of the view that its intervention in Afghanistan was justified on the grounds that the 1978 Treaty of Friendship justified their armed assistance, as did a provision in the UN Charter of 1951. However, the USSR had little support.\(^{55}\)

Another reaction by President Carter was that at a press conference on 28 December 1979, he described this move of Soviet as a grave threat to peace. It was also observed by the National Security Council that this created a threat to both Iran and Pakistan and would drastically modify the balance of power in favour of the Soviet Union. They viewed it as an extension of Brezhnev doctrine and qualitatively a new event in that it was the first time since World War II that the Soviet Union had used its own armed forces beyond the Warsaw Pact to impose its authority over a third world country.\(^{56}\)

The day after the Soviet intervention, President Carter picked up the telephone to speak with Pakistan’s President Zia Ul-Haq to offer US support and to revive the moribund US security commitment under the 1959 bilateral agreement. Pakistan ceased to be a nuclear delinquent and become a “frontline state” against the Soviet expansionism. The Carter administration and the Congress acted to unfreeze arms sales to Pakistan with Rep. Clement Zablocki (D.,Wisconsin), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, arguing that the Soviet threat overrode nonproliferation concerns. In the Senate, parallel moves were launched to get around Symington amendment bars to a resumption of military and economic aid to Pakistan.\(^{57}\)

The US was not prepared to go to the length of coming to a direct war with the Soviet Union. They wanted to achieve their objective by a more subtle move that

\(^{54}\) Ibid., p.53.  
\(^{55}\) Ibid.  
\(^{56}\) Shri Ram Sharma, n.1, p. 44.  
\(^{57}\) The Statesman, 3 January 1980.
is by supplying the latest weapons to the anti-Kabul forces to escalate the conflict. By this way, the Soviet Union would be forced to commit more and more forces in the country. The US also presumed that prolonged fighting in Afghanistan would discredit the Soviet Union in the third world countries.

The politics of the Cold War led Mujahideen recruits to fight on the side of USA, as that country attempted to defeat the Soviets. The Mujahideen received generous military funding from the USA and, later, also from Saudi Arabia. In March 1980 US President Carter offered US $30 millions in economic and military aid and later $ 50 millions to be extended over two years. President Zia of Pakistan, however, rejected these offers (but was satisfied when US President Ronald Reagan subsequently offered him a $ 250 millions package of economic and military aid, plus an option to buy 40 F-16 jet fighter aircraft, to crush the ‘evil empire’. Zia’s Afghan policy from 1982 was directed by the Inter-services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) of Pakistan which received huge fund from USA and influenced by the substantial funds provided by the CIA. These policies were to affect ruinously, not just Afghanistan’s future, but also that of Pakistan. (by 1987-88 US aid had increased to $ 630 millions, a level at which it continued until the fall of Kabul in 1992)\(^5\)

Further, the Soviet troops threatened the strategic interests of the US. As President Carter stated “the region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance, it contains more than two thirds of the worlds’ exportable oil. The Soviet effort to dominate Afghanistan had brought Soviet military forces to within 300 miles of the Indian Ocean and close to the Straits of Hormuz, a waterway through which most of the world’s oil must flow. The Soviet Union is now attempting to consolidate a strategic position. Therefore, that poses a grave threat to the free movement of Middle East oil”. The US was thus, prompted to proclaim the Carter Doctrine, warning the Soviets that ‘An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force’.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) W.B. Fisher, n. 50, p. 55.

The President tried to prevent further erosion of the west's strategic position through stepped-up punitive measures such as the blocking the export of 17 million tons of grains, stopping the sale of high technology equipments, delaying the opening of the new Soviet consulate in New York, postponing talks of cultural programs and boycotting the Moscow Olympics, the last action joined by Germany, Japan, and China.\(^{60}\)

Regarding to India, the Soviet ambassador Yuri Yoionstov called on Ram Sathe Foreign Secretary on 28 December and handed over to him a message from the Soviet government informing him that at the request of the Afghan leadership, Moscow had sent to Afghanistan a small military force to enable Kabul to resist external aggression and interference. He further assured that the dispatch of the Soviet forces was in terms of the Soviet-Afghan Treaty as well as Article 51 of the UN charter which provided for individual or collective self defence in the case of external armed attack. He had the guts to tell the Indian Foreign Secretary that the Soviet action could be likened to India's armed intervention in Bangladesh in 1971.

However, the Indian government issued a note which stated that as a country committed to the principle of non-alignment, India supported the sovereign right of the Afghan people to determine their own destiny free from foreign interference, the government of India was opposed to any outside interference in the internal affairs of one country by another; the government also hoped that no external power would take steps which might aggravate the situation and that normalization would be restored in Afghanistan as early as possible.

As regards India's reaction to the entry of Soviet troops the official spokesman said that the government was observing the situation and assessing whether the Soviet assumption that they extended their help on the request of the duly constituted authorities in Kabul was right or wrong. The government even admitted that they were ignorant as to who invited the Soviet intervention.\(^{61}\)

The United States sought Security Council condemnation of the invasion of Afghanistan at the UN. It was only to be blocked by the Soviet veto, the US position

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\(^{60}\) Shri Ram Sharma, n.1, p. 44

\(^{61}\) Ibid., pp. 46-47.
was that: “no state would be safe against a larger neighbor if the international community appears to condone the Soviet Union’s intervention.”

In India, during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the outgoing Charan Singh government expressed its displeasure with the Soviet action. However, within the week, he was on his way out as Prime Minister. Then, Indira Gandhi was on her way back in. Mrs. Gandhi expressed its concern over the foreign interference, it did not specifically condemn the Soviet Union. This has disappointed the US Government, which had expected a strong condemnation from India.

In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs decided to clear the statement India would make on Afghanistan with the incoming Prime Minister. Besieged by the preparations for taking office, Mrs. Gandhi turned the task over to T.N. Kaul and G. Parthasarathy, another veteran foreign policy adviser.

At General Assembly of the UN where a 17 nations resolution was moved, among others, by Pakistan and Bangladesh for immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan, Indian UN Representative Brajesh Mishra on 11 January 1980 made a statement to whitewash the Soviet action that “We are against the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country. However, the Soviet government has assured our government that its troops went to Afghanistan first at the request of the Afghan Government on December 26, 1979 and repeated by his successor on December 28, 1979. And we have been further assured that Soviet troops will be withdrawn when requested to do so by the Afghan Government. We have no reason to doubt assurances, particularly from a friendly country like the Soviet Union with whom we have many close ties.

The President of India in his address to the Lok Sabha on 23 January 1980 stated “The intervention of outside forces and the induction of armaments in the region as well as in our neighbourhood have created a dangerous situation not only for ourselves but for the entire area. The development in Afghanistan highlights the re-emergence of the cold war. This is a matter of grave concern. To subject these

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63 Dennis Kux, n. 11, pp. 366 - 367.
64 Shri Ram Sharma, n. 1, p. 48.
countries to Big Power rivalries is totally unacceptable to us”.

In the early statements made by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, regarding the developments in Afghanistan, she adhered steadfastly thereafter: Soviet troops—her usual reference was to “foreign troops” must be withdrawn from Afghanistan, but other powers are also involved in the area and in adjoining regions, including the Indian Ocean, and their actions are also adding to the dangers facing India and the world. On January 30, in a lengthy policy statement in the Lok Sabha, she touched on those facets of the crisis that were of particular concern to her. What happened in Afghanistan, she said was an internal matter with that country.

While India was opposed to foreign intervention in any part of the world and while Mrs. Gandhi stated that “all our efforts are for the speedy withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan” India did not approve of “one sided condemnation.” She then referred to the “build up in the Indian Ocean with whole armadas of ships in the Arabian Sea, and to the Hundreds of millions of military aid that had already been committed to Pakistan. The United States in particular and other powers as well, including China, were making their contribution to convert Pakistan into arsenal.” India, she stated firmly, “could not but feels disturbed at the reaction of some of these powers”.

In the first week of Mrs. Gandhi’s return to power, the US ambassador was called in and told that the US decision to arm Pakistan in the wake of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan would not improve matters but would escalate tension in the subcontinent. The ambassador tried to reassure that the proposed arms transfer to Pakistan was designed to improve the general security environment in the region rather than to strengthen the military muscles of Pakistan. He was naive to believe that the Indian sentiments would be pacified if he offered to dangle a few carrots. Accordingly the envoy expressed US readiness to meet India’s defence requirements in specific spheres without imposing any pre-conditions. He also offered to discuss how to ensure early dispatch of two friendly shipments of American nuclear fuel for the Tarapur plant. American hope that by these incentives India would acquiesce to

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the arming of Pakistan was misplaced.\textsuperscript{68}

When Mr. Reagan became the US President, he expressed his opinion regarding to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and its grounds of justification by saying that “the world is well aware that this is nothing more than propaganda designed to divert international attention from the sordid reality”. He was of the view that the Soviet Union had entered Afghanistan in 1979 “without provocation” and with “overwhelming force”. Since then it had continued to suppress the Afghans by all methods available to it. He believed that the “mysterious death” of the President, who was projected as having invited the Soviets, and his succession by a “Soviet nominee”, raised doubts about the Soviet claim of being invited.\textsuperscript{69}

India did not only disapprove of the action, it also accused the US of being responsible for the “invitational intervention”. This was due to the consequence of growing US aid to Pakistan and Iran, over the last thirty years. The threat, caused by this assistance, had led Afghanistan towards the Soviet Union. The US did not approve of this Indian stand, which it viewed as attempted to relegate the Soviet occupation to the background by highlighting the US arms build-up.\textsuperscript{70}

Though India supported the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, it was not willing to condemn the Soviet Union. Mrs. Indira Gandhi believed that, “if we condemn them, then we must condemn many other countries who have done the same or worse in other parts of the world—Latin America, Asia, Africa”. The Indian government refused to single out one country for condemnation.\textsuperscript{71}

Instead of condemning the move, India reiterated the Soviet rationale that the action was taken for “self-defence”. Mrs. Gandhi believed that the Soviets were endangered by the Sino-US friendship, which appeared to be encircling Moscow. She asserted that the Soviet Union was justified in taking measures in its neighbourhood to ensure its security, when the US was “not tolerating any of its near neighbours to be against it”. At the same time, the US was even extending its

\textsuperscript{68} Shri Ram Sharma, n. 1, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{69} Ronald Reagan, \textit{American Foreign Policy, Current Documents} '82, March 20 - 1982, No. 438, p. 907.
\textsuperscript{70} Mohammed Ayoob, “India -Pakistan and Superpower Rivalry”, \textit{The World Today}, 3 (5), May 1982, p.200.
\textsuperscript{71} Indira Gandhi, “India’s Gandhi Tells Why She is Sour on United States” (Interview), \textit{US News and World Report}, January 15 -1982, p. 27.
influence beyond its region. The Prime Minister said that she did not want to justify
the Soviet action, but: “I think the United States’ presence in Vietnam destabilized
the whole area. Regarding Soviet presence in Afghanistan, I am not saying that it
will have no effects. We don’t like foreign presences in Afghanistan. But there is a
very big difference. Afghanistan happens to be on the Soviet border; it’s a
neighbour. The United States had to go clear around the globe to get to Vietnam.
What did the United States have to do with Vietnam?”  

The Reagan Administration denied the charge that the US had been the cause
of the Soviet move, for no arms had been supplied by it before the invasion.
President Carter had authorized a programme of covert military assistance in the
aftermath of the Soviet entry. The programme had only been expanded by the
Reagan Administration due to their continued presence.  

It also denied that the
interference of other countries, besides the USSR, had created the crisis. “There has,
indeed, been external interference in Afghanistan. But that interference has been
committed by the Soviet Union itself, which utterly without provocation, invaded
that free and non-aligned nation and imposed its will on an independent people”. 

The US Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Mr. Michael Armacost,
declared that the US did not want to extend the stay of the Soviets in Afghanistan in
order to “bleed” them, or “to achieve historic revenge” for Vietnam. He stated that
America help it in attaining its status of a neutral, non-aligned state.  

President
Reagan also clarified that the US had always pursued a “policy of non-interference
in Afghanistan’s internal affairs”. Even after Soviet entry, the US had not attempted
to gain any ground in the country. The struggle against the Soviets was purely a
consequence of efforts of the Afghan people, and not” the mischief of outside
forces”. He, thus, laid the responsibility for the crisis on the USSR, which had
obstructed the success of the efforts of the Islamic Conference in 1980 and the
European Community in 1981. At the UN, the Soviet demand that the solution be

73 Arnold Anthony, The Soviet Invasion in Perspective, (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann
74 Ronald Reagan, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents’ 82, March 20 - 1982, No.
438, p. 907.
75 Michael Armacost, “South Asia and the United States”, Department of States Bulletin,
found in Kabul, Islamabad and Tehran, was seen as a way of evading the issue.\textsuperscript{76}

Though Soviet forces had not succeeded on subjugating the Afghans completely, they had caused the loss of life and property as well as the constantly increasing flow of refugees to Pakistan and Iran.\textsuperscript{77} Vice-President Bush accused the Soviets of using chemical-nerve agents, phosgene oxide, mycotoxins and Soviet mine or “butterfly mine” as of they had “opened Pandora’s box of modern warfare” over Afghanistan. They had also prevented the information of these atrocities from reaching the world public by restricting the rights of the press, and had not even allowed the Red Cross to enter Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{78}

Since the Reagan Administration believed that the Soviet “brutal and unprovoked aggression” was causing physical torture and economic loss to the Afghans, it accorded high priority to Afghan refugees. President Reagan declared: “we can not and will not turn our backs on this struggle”. He also appealed the US citizens to make donations for the assistance of the Afghan refugees.\textsuperscript{79}

The Reagan Administration also declared its intention of keeping the Afghan issue in the forefront until the international pressure managed to change the Soviet policy. It made repeated appeals for the planning of a withdraw time-table and the arrangement for the return of the Afghan refugees. It gave the assurance of its own and Pakistani assistance to the Soviets in any “genuine process of national reconciliation”. At the same time, America continued to offer its “support” to the Afghan “freedom fighters”, until they achieved their objective.\textsuperscript{80}

From the above analysis, we can conclude that the India’s stand towards Soviet intervention in Afghanistan made the US believed that Indian support to the Soviet Union was due to its preference for a Soviet-backed, rather than a pro-Pakistan, government in Afghanistan. Secondly, the Soviet presence on Pakistan’s border would make Pakistan adopt a more accommodating stand towards India. The

\textsuperscript{76} Ronald Reagan, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents' 82, March 10 -1982, No. 436, pp. 905-906.
\textsuperscript{77} Ronald Reagan, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents' 82, December 26 -1982, No.446, p. 927.
\textsuperscript{78} George Bush, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents' 82, March 21 -1982, No. 439, p. 908.
\textsuperscript{79} Ronald Reagan, American Foreign Policy, Current Documents' 82, March 10, 1982, No. 436, p. 905.
\textsuperscript{80} Michael Armacost, n. 75, p. 78.
Indian support was also attributed to India’s dependence on Soviet arms. The US Administration believed that these interests had led India into adopting a pro-Soviet position, which seriously damaged the cordiality established in Indo-US relations during the Carter-Desai period. Thus, the Soviet intervention dragged Afghanistan a distant primitive land into the lime light, gave new impetus to the superpower rivalry and generated an irritant in Indo-US relations.\(^8\)

**US arms aid to Pakistan**

One of the most important factors affecting Indo-US relations during the Mrs. Indira period, was the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan by the United States. India considered that the supply of such sophisticated arms to Pakistan, would not only upset the balance of power in the sub-continent, but also stall the process of normalization between the two countries.

During the latter part of President Carter’s administration as mention earlier, the fall of the Shah of Iran and the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan brought the Gulf region in front of the United States strategic consensus. President Reagan gave high priority to the formation of the Rapid Deployment Force to protect US interests. Pakistan was seen in US perception, as being strategically placed to straddle the maritime oil routes from the Gulf and had since then, replaced the Shah of Iran.\(^8\)

Earlier, in the first week of April 1979, President Carter announced the cancellation of foreign aid to Pakistan as Pakistan was acquiring capacity to make a nuclear bomb. This action was taken under the Symington Amendment which denied assistance to countries refusing inspection of facilities with nuclear weapons applications. Thus, the US wanted to use its aid strings to prevent Pakistan from developing nuclear weapons capability but was aware of the growing presence of USSR in Afghanistan, and the aid that the Arab countries were providing to Pakistan, which reduced its reliance on the USA. This conflict in the minds of the US policy makers was resolved by the movement of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, as a consequence of which president Carter lifted the ban on the supply of arms to

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Pakistan and announced his decision to expedite the sale of about $150 million worth arms supplied to Pakistan.\textsuperscript{83}

Actually, the US is not basically an “Asian power” like China and USSR, as it does not share any territorial borders and disputes with the states of the region. It has, therefore, awarded relevance to the region only to fulfill its economic, geopolitical or strategic goals. It has planed and altered its South Asian policy on the basis of its changing relations with China and the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{84}

A similar “fluctuation” was seen with the initiation of a new Cold War, with its centre in the vicinity of the sub-continent, i.e. South West Asia. In the late 1970s South West Asia attracted attention following the oil crisis, the Iranian Revolution, the increasing presence of the superpowers in the Indian Ocean and the Soviet entry into Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{85}

When the US “twin-pillar policy” in South West Asia ended with the coming of Islamic fundamentalists in Iran, US interests in the Persian Gulf were severely threatened. The subsequent entry of Soviet into Afghanistan brought the communist threat closer.\textsuperscript{86} The Carter Administration regards Pakistan as “the main road block to Soviet Southward expansionism” and therefore, attempted to woo Pakistan. The Reagan Administration showed a greater appreciation of Pakistan’s “front-line position”.\textsuperscript{87}

**US interested in the South and South – West Asian region were three fold:**

- To ensure uninterrupted flow of Gulf oil.
- To prevent the Soviet Union from disrupting the oil supplies by extending her sphere of influence.
- To suppress nationalist movements like those in Iran which might disengage

\textsuperscript{84} Rais A. Khan, “Pakistan - United States Relations; An Appraisal”, *American Studies International*, 23 (1), April 1985, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{86} Rais A. Khan, p.84, p.93
\textsuperscript{87} Francine R. Frankel, “Play the India Card”, *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1986, p. 160.
themselves from the West.

The US, therefore, hoped that Pakistan by being armed to the teeth may make available her manpower in the event of an insurgency. By giving aid to the Afghan Mujahideen, they could make the Soviet presence in Afghanistan uncomfortable.\(^{88}\)

By strengthening Pakistan would benefit the United States in the following way:

- Pakistan would continue to serve as a refuge and source of arms/ other supplies for the Afghan Mujahideen.
- Pakistan would also be encouraged to persist in its refusing to recognize the Kabul regime in Afghanistan
- Giving substantial support to Pakistan by the United States might induce the former to permit shipments of large quantities of the munitions the rebels need, like anti-aircraft and anti-tank rockets
- American support for Pakistan might also facilitate the build-up of the former’s military power in the Persian Gulf area. Pakistan might also allow her harbours for use by the Rapid Development Force of the US.\(^{89}\)

As the US lifted the ban on the supply of arms to Pakistan, the American President claimed that he had decided to remove the ban on sale of arms to Pakistan, so that Pakistan could protect itself against the Soviet designs as the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was considered a threat to Pakistan also. He was of the view that Pakistan faced this danger because it had taken in thousands of Afghan refugees, had been helping the tribesmen fight the Marxist government in Kabul, and was a check on Soviet aspiration for an outlet to the Indian Ocean.

According to a Pakistan journalist, white House spokesman, Jody Powell told a group of educationists in the USA that Carter Administration and congressional leaders had drawn up an aid package for Pakistan to ensure that the country did not become” the next target on the Kremlin’s list.” By mid January,

\(^{88}\) B. Baruah, n. 82, p. 33.
\(^{89}\) Ibid., p. 32.
President Carter had approved $400 million in US military and economic aid to Pakistan, the weapons according to him would be “defensive”.

The Indian reaction to the US decision to resume arms supply to Pakistan was bitter. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India’s former Minister of External Affairs, said that the American was using the Afghanistan situation as an excuse for resuming arms supply to Pakistan. He also expressed the fear that Pakistan would use these arms against India, which in turn would have a destabilizing effect on the region and revive the arms race. This view was supported by Slig Harrison, who said that the resumption of US aid to Pakistan would needlessly arouse Indian fears because “Islamabad was seeking to use the Afghan crisis to bolster in Power position vis-à-vis New Delhi”.

The Indian government, under Mrs. Gandhi also adopted a similar stand. It was of the view that the promised arms aid package would not constitute a great threat to India but might start the trend towards strengthening Pakistan military. Mrs. Gandhi expressed the fear that this would bring about a setback to the Simla Agreement and to the efforts off normalization of relations with Pakistan. The Indian Minister for External Affairs, Rao stated that India would oppose all attempts by any power to turn the clock back and force India to revert to an era of confrontations and Cold War.

To continue support to Pakistan, Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State, urged the US government to support Pakistan even if Washington did not like the present regime in Islamabad. He added “if India and the Soviet Union Co-operate, our problem will be to prevent Pakistan being destroyed or dramatically weakened.

India, on the other hand was opposed to the arming of Pakistan by the United States because Carter’s aid package might further worsen the situation in South -West Asia, for it would according to Mrs. Gandhi, draw counter- action from Moscow. She added; the Russian will need to strengthen their presence in this

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90 Leela Yadava, n. 83, pp. 330-331. 
91 Ibid., p. 331. 
92 Ibid. 
93 Ibid.
region, not necessarily only in Afghanistan but in the whole of South-West Asia and that is a great danger.\textsuperscript{94}

Mrs. Gandhi advised Pakistan against being a pawn in the game of the super powers in the region and through the Indian Foreign Secretary, R.D. Sathe, emphasized the possibility of great power confrontation in the region which according to her could be averted by avoiding the induction of arms into the region and by refraining from moves or initiatives which might add to tensions.\textsuperscript{95}

Another turning point came, when Pakistan refused to accept the US arms aid package, which would also free it from the US aid strings. The US strategy was to use Pakistan in getting the revolutionary regime in Kabul overthrown, for then an anti-Soviet regime could be installed. A pro-West regime in Afghanistan would change the historic and strategic balance in the region. Such a regime would, on the one hand, provide a new gambit on the borders of the Soviet Union and on the other, be of immense value in any emergent situation in West Asia. But Zia’s refused to accept the aid package shows the decline of its influence and failure of its strategy in Pakistan. President Zia while rejecting the aid offered by President Carter has called it “peanuts”. He rightly considers it to be too small for the purpose for which it was being provided to face a threat from Afghanistan backed by the Soviet Union, and its, therefore, unwilling to offended the Russians for a peanut donation, but would not mind giving offence for a substantially larger consideration which is obvious from the reports that he was now trying to get $2 billion from the carter administration to “rebuild the Pakistan armed forces”.\textsuperscript{96}

The reason for Pakistan’s rejection of the US offer are first it expects to force the USA to agree to a larger deal, secondly it is getting military assistance from Saudi Arabia which is aiming at building up Pakistan militarily so that it would act as a buffer and prevent Soviet expansion towards the Indian Ocean. Thirdly, it does not want to antagonize Moscow, which it reportedly believes “can make a positive contribution to the prosperity and well being of the people of Pakistan.” Whatever the reason, one thing is clear that by this move Pakistan has avoided being labeled as

\textsuperscript{94} The Tribune, 23 January 1980.
\textsuperscript{95} Leela Yadava, n. 83, p. 332.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., pp. 332-333.
an American Satellite.97

The Reagan Administration decided to offer 15 F-16 planes to Pakistan, initially as part of a five-year military and economic aid programme to bolster her military strength. The US National Security Council decided to supply the F-16s to Pakistan in view of the Soviet threat to her in the wake of the military intervention in Afghanistan. President Reagan offered aid package of $2.5 billion to Pakistan spread over five years. Under this package, Pakistan would receive $500 million for the purchase of arms and $100 million for economic development. This package was provided after Aga Shahi’s visit to the United States in April 1981, where he met Vice-President George Bush and Secretary of State, Alexander Haig. The package came into effect from October 1982.98

The US aid was to give Pakistan the ability to handle a range of limited cross-border threats from Soviet or Soviet backed Afghan forces and by aligning the United States with Pakistan to keep the Soviet from thinking they can coerce, subverts or intimidate Pakistan with impunity.99 The aid would strengthen Pakistan so that it could continue its “principled opposition” to the Soviet action, check Soviet aggression as well as create regional harmony. Pakistan’s insecurity was seen as a generator of regional tension and external intervention. At the same time the aid would also provide the US with influence over Pakistan in mounding its policies according to American global interest and providing facilities for the Central Command Forces.100 Since the aid had been given on the condition that Pakistan would agree to US nuclear stipulations, it would also enable America to check the progress of Pakistan’s nuclear programme.101

Despite these aid was approved by the Congress but it appeared to be disapproval and face a criticism within the United States itself. Mr. Richard Burt, Director of State Department’s Bureau of politico-military affairs, believed that the supply of sophisticated weapon systems to Pakistan would instigate India to acquire

97 Ibid., p. 333.
98 B. Baruah, n. 82, p. 101.
100 Rais A. Khan, n. 84, p. 95.
101 The Times of India, 6 April 1984.
weapons itself and thus, initiate new arms race in the sub-continent. He supported the view of the Indian Counselor in Washington (as expressed in his letters) that India would be forced to “consider the purchase of technologically sophisticated weapons”, including Mirage-2000 aircraft. It was reasoned that Pakistan’s perception were focused on India and not limited to the Afghan border. With the available of sophisticated weapons, capable of penetration into Indian Territory, the chances of another Indo-Pak war would be raised. Further, the F-16s were not justified, since they would not be suited to meet the Soviet attack. The availability of interceptor planes or surface to air missiles would have served the purpose of counteracting the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{102}

While India was concerned for this development, President Reagan, on 16 June 1981, justified it on the ground that “Pakistan is of strategic importance in view of the Soviet military presence in neighbouring Afghanistan.” At a Press Conference on 16 June 1981, President Reagan” said, “Pakistan had a long time alliance with the United States”, when he was asked why he was supplying Pakistan $3 billion worth of arms when that country did not sign the Nuclear Non–Proliferation Treaty?.\textsuperscript{103}

India believed that the United States was trying to maintain military balance in the Third World between states with territorial or other political disputes, tend to be both immoral and dangerous because they encourage arms race among nations that could be concentrating on economic development. In addition, these efforts make third world nations dependent on great power military aid and political support in their regional struggle for security. India was of the view that the arming of Pakistan by the United States would give an adverse effect to the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan.

Even Mrs. Gandhi told Member of Parliament on 27 April, 1981 that she sensed war in the situation developing as a result of US arms to Pakistan. She said: “There is no question of trying to compete with Pakistan in an arms race. We have never complained about Pakistan being armed. Our only worry is that such arms supply is creating a situation in which everybody is drifting towards war. All the

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{The Indian Express}, 18 June 1981.
same, we have to be prepared for any situation. Such supply would cause a set-back to the process of normalization of relations between India and Pakistan, and also lead to an arms race in the sub-continent.” 104

Regarding to the supply of F-16 aircraft, Mrs. Gandhi said at a New Conference on July 1981 that the entire country was concerned at Pakistan acquiring the Sophisticated F-16 aircraft. She said: “They (Pakistan authorities) have said it was not likely that the F-16 would be used against the Soviet Union. Will they use it against Afghanistan? The Pakistani Air Force, even without the F-16 already has, and will continue to have for some years a deep strike force three times the size of our own”. 105

The above view was shared by Congressman, Stephen Solarz who stated that the decision of the Reagan Administration to provide Pakistan with sophisticated arms was a serious mistake. “It is much more likely to be used against India than against the Soviet Union, and we will have to work harder to change the Reagan Administration’s mind in this regard”. 106

In September 1981, a US-Pakistan aid agreement was concluded as a result of discussions held during the visits of Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. AGHA Shahi to Washington (April 1981) and Under Secretary of State, Mr. James L. Buckley to Pakistan in June and September 1981.

According to the agreement, the former would provide the latter 155 mm guns, Cobra gunships, TOW anti-tank missile, upgrade the M-48 tanks to A-3 standards, artillery fire locating radars, electronic warfare equipment, etc. But the prize catch was the US commitment to sell 40-F-16 planes “on a cash basis” of $1.1 billion, seven of them before October 1982. The next aid package of $4.02 billion, starting from 1988 would include AEW/AWACS, F-16 fighters, P-3 Orion long range maritime patrol aircraft, armour and armoured fighting vehicles. 107

By the above developments, India was alarmed as her security was being threatened. Mrs Gandhi once told an American journalist that “the present US

105 B. Baruah, n. 82., p. 102.
106 Ibid.
107 Ibid.
Administration (Reagan’s) has said that the guns can be fired in any direction. We have no doubt that those guns and equipment are meant to be used against India”. The Pakistan Air Force received the first batch of three F-16 fighter planes on 15 January 1983 from the United States.

The result of the visit of President Zai – Ul Haq’s to Washington in May 1983, Pentagon told the American Congress its intention to provide Pakistan with four Vulcan – Phalanx guns for close-in naval defence, with ammunition, spares and training for an estimated $38 million. These US guns would be installed in Pakistan’s naval ships. Pakistan also received from the United States M-48 A5 tanks, 24 improved TOW vehicles, 1000 missiles, 20 AH – attack helicopters which mount the TOW missiles. The first 10 of these helicopters where scheduled for delivery in 1984 – 1985. The rest would be delivered between January-May 1986.

As regards Field Artillery, the known contracts with the United States include 100 M 109 A2 155 mm self- propelled howitzers, 75M 198 towed 155 mm howitzers and 40 M 110-28 inch self-propelled howitzers. For Air Defence, Pakistan was looking for suitable air defence guns and missile systems from the United States. The US Congress also passed the sale of harpoon missiles to Pakistan in September 1983.

Shiv Chandra Jha of Bihar, stated in the Rajya Sabha that with the acquisition of the Harpoon Cruise missiles by Pakistan from the United States, vital Indian establishments like the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, the Sagar Samrat offshore platform on the Bombay High, and India’s aircraft carrier would become highly vulnerable targets. Pakistan was also negotiating for at least 40 harpoon missiles from the United States in the first phase. She was also seeking surface to surface, air – launched and submarine missiles. The latter would be lethal since Pakistani submarines could seriously threaten various targets along the Indian coastline.

On 7 March 1984, the Defence Minister of India, R. Venkataraman

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108 Ibid., p. 103
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid., p. 104.
111 Ibid., p. 104-105.
expressed his concern in the Lok Sabha that Pakistan was receiving military hardware from the United States on a massive scale, much in excess of her “legitimate defence requirements”. He told the House that these weapons were justified on the so-called “Afghan threat” but actually, they were unsuitable for deployment against Afghanistan.

India was very much opposed to this US’s move and it resulted only in the deterioration of Indo-US relations, during the Mrs. Gandhi period. Both the countries viewed the security in South Asia from opposite angles. Either India must accept the revised American policy of arming Pakistan or provide for hostility and all that it implied. Since the United States was determined to pursue a policy of containing the Soviet influence in the region militarily, and because India could not afford to lose the goodwill of the Soviet Union, the differences of opinion would remain.

Thus, regarding to US arms aid to Pakistan, India had always opposed this move of US policy towards Pakistan and ignoring India’s security as a militarily strong Pakistan would be a threat to India’, for the nature of the arms aid equipment provided by USA was such that it could not be against China or Russia. It is obviously that these arms were meant to be used against India and not against the communist powers. Another reason was that it led to an arms race in the sub-continent and prevented normalization of Indo-Pak relations because it gave Pakistan a false sense of strength making her aggressive and bellicose. The US decision to provide arms to Pakistan in the wake of Afghan crisis has caused dismay and anguish in India, for it would lead to a clash between the two super-powers, eventually making South-West Asia the theater for the Third World War.\(^{112}\)

Thus, the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan during Mrs. Gandhi’s second terms in power with Reagan period was one of the primary factors affecting Indo-US relations. India was rightly concerned about her security as those lethal weapons not only upset the balance of power, but also escalated an arms race in the sub - continent.

\(^{112}\) Leela Yadava, n. 83, p. 334.
The “impasse on nuclear cooperation” has been a major irritant in the Indo-US relations since the seventies. The issue got greater emphasis in the eighties due to the Reagan Administration’s commitment to non-proliferation. President Reagan, on 16 July 1981, outlined a broad approach to nuclear proliferation, according to which the prevention of the spread of nuclear explosives would be “a basic national security and foreign policy objective”. The US would also attempt to promote stability in order to “reduce the motivation for acquiring” them as well as secure adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NNPT), the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

The relations between India and the US were strained because of India’s stand on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978. A thirty-year nuclear cooperation agreement, between India and the US, had provided for a low-interest loan of $78 million for the setting-up of a nuclear power plant on 3 August 1963. Under this agreement, the US had acquired monopoly over the supply of fuel to the plant. In return, India had entered into an agreement with USA on 27 January 1971 to observe the IAEA safeguards. However, this spirit of cooperation had ended with passage of the NNPT (1978), especially in view of India’s nuclear explosion at Pokharan in 1974. The US threatened the termination of fuel supplies if India did not accept all the safeguards. India refused to be influenced by such threats. It opposed the Treaty which was not applicable on the nuclear states. It charged the US of attempting “monopolization of nuclear energy” and suppression of its economic independence.

This disagreement which had started in 1973 continued during the Presidency of Mr. Reagan.

This disagreement along with the announcement of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on 14 May 1980, posed a barrier to further supplies of fuel to India. The NRC had announced that all shipments of fuel, after 10 March

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1980, would require observance of “full – scope safeguards” of the NNPT. In accordance with this declaration, the US “with – held” a 19.8 tons consignment which was due in India between March and September 1981. It threatened the termination of fuel supplies if the NRC conditions were not fulfilled. The Indian officials issued a counter threat, warning that they would end the observance of IAEA safeguards by the Tarapur plant if the US carried out its threat. While the ‘New York Times’ and The Wall Street Journal’ referred to the Indian stand as “nuclear blackmail”, the Indians called the US threat stand a way of “blackmail” to end Indian independence.  

Since India was in urgent need of the fuel, it sent a high – level delegation from 16 -17 April 1981 to Washington. It was headed by Mr. Eric Gonsalves, a senior diplomat and included Dr. Homi Sethna, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. The delegation clarified that India would be willing to continue the 1963 agreement as far as no “extraneous” conditions were applied. Their American counterparts, however, stated that further supplies did not appear possible after the NNPT and suggested “an amicable termination of the agreement”. The then, Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, also reflected the same lack of hope for a solution, saying that “What can save this agreement is amendment to the US legislation of 1978; that is not in the cards today. So nothing can save this agreement”.

‘The Wall Street Journal gave the headline “India Reported Ready to Renege on Nuclear Pact”. The Philadelphia Inquirer appeared to say the opposite – “US is Ending Nuclear Cooperation Pact with India”. However, India wanted to find a better solution and the US was also worried of loosing its credibility in the international arena. Therefore, several suggestions came forth from both sides which resulted in a major break through during the official visit of Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to Washington in July 1982. During the negotiation it was agreed that fuel would be supplied to Tarapur by France. An official of the Reagan Administration clarified that it was not possible for the US to supply the fuel and maintain nuclear relations, under the NNPT, with a country that had not adopted

118 Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, p. 89.
119 Ibid., p. 89.
120 Ibid., pp. 233-234.
‘full – scope safeguards’. Though the President could utilize the waiver to the Act to secure an export licence, it would be difficult to secure the approval of the Congress. Thus, the two countries had worked out a compromise to enable the supply of fuel.122

This agreement was able to remove one major irritant in Indo-US relations. However, the success was marred by the differing views of the Reagan Administration and the Indian Government with respect to the reprocessing of spent fuel. India had started the construction of its Power Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant (PREFRE) at Tarapur, costing Rs. 120 million, after securing the US approval. The US, however, refused to give its concurrence to the working of PREFRE after its completion in 1976. India objected that this refusal was not in accordance with the agreement, under which permission could be denied only if safeguards could not be effectively applied.

According to Dr. Sethna, the IAEA had given the project its clearance because it had “come to the determination that safeguards can be satisfactorily implemented when the plant reprocesses power reactor fuel”.123 This issue of reprocessing continued to trouble the relations even after the 1982 agreement. After the agreement, India claimed that no control could be exercised by the US since it was no longer supplying the fuel. India was totally free to utilize the fuel coming from France without seeking the US approval.124

The US held an opposite view on the issue. The US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Mr. Nicholas A. Veliotes, presented the administration’s opinion on 29 July 1982. The two governments, after consulting with the Government of France, have reached a solution which envisages the use of French supplied low enriched uranium at Tarapur while keeping the 1963 agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation in effect in other respects, including provision for IAEA safeguards.125

The issue of the supply of spare parts also posed a threat to Indo – US ties.

France held the view that the matter should be settled between the US and India, since its own commitment was limited to the supply of fuel. While India expected America to continue supplying the parts, the US was “reluctant” to continue the supply, as per the 1963 agreement.\textsuperscript{126}

Another factor which continued to trouble their relations was that the 1982 agreement imposed the same safeguards on India as had been applied under the 1963 agreement. India did not accept the ‘full – scope safeguards’ in accordance with the NNPT of 1978.\textsuperscript{127} The US was unable to pressurize India to sign the NNPT or accept the safeguards. This failure constantly came in the way of better ties.

At the same time, the agreement was met with severe criticism in both the countries. The New York Times and the Washington Post described it as “a surrender by the Reagan Administration” since it went against the NNPT.

In India, the Lok Sabha expressed its dissatisfaction over the agreement, because it was a “means of demoralizing” the Indian scientists whose efforts of creating mixed oxide (MOX) from plutonium, as a substitute fuel, had been nullified. Secondly, India had not taken the opportunity to end the 1963 agreement and the limitations imposed by the safeguards.

The former US Ambassador to India, Mr. Robert Goheen also felt that India had been “the more generous party”.\textsuperscript{128} He believed that India had made a compromise since it required “a counterpoise” against the Soviet forces “at the historic north – western gateway to the Indian subcontinent”. It indicated that the Indian ‘political’ requirements had gained precedence over the scientific and technological ones. Further, Indian refusal to the Soviet offer of supplying fuel was also a gain of the US.\textsuperscript{129}

Besides the discrepancies in the agreement, the nuclear irritant continued in Indo – US ties due to their basic principles. Mrs. Indira Gandhi as well as her successor, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi made efforts to reduce the nuclear threat posed by the nuclear – weapon states. On the initiation of Mrs. Gandhi, heads of governments of

\textsuperscript{126} Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, p. 235.
\textsuperscript{127} The Pioneer, 30 July 1982.
\textsuperscript{129} Robert F. Goheen, n. 113, pp. 201-202.
India, Tanzania, Mexico, Argentina, Greece and Sweden met in New York in May 1984, to appeal to the superpowers to move towards nuclear disarmament. A similar appeal was made by the six nations on 28 January 1985.

In spite of the persistent requests by India, with the support of other NAM countries, no change was witnessed in the US policy. India was convinced that "nuclearization" of South Asia could be averted only by the reduction on the stocks of the superpowers. It held them responsible for the increasing nuclear threat to the world and opposed all types of proliferation – horizontal, spatial and vertical.

The US, on its part, maintained its faith in the NNPT and ignored India’s demand of similar restrictions being imposed on all nations. It did not accept India’s view that nuclear disarmament was not a "regional issue". It held that cordial relations of India with Pakistan and China would prevent the spread of nuclear power. It continued to be concerned over India’s progress in the field of nuclear energy and fuel recycling, which it feared could lead to the development of an explosive device and threaten world peace. The US put forward various proposals before both India and Pakistan to reduce tension in the region, which would be conducive to the abandonment of their nuclear programmes.

The above proposals included "a binding declaration renouncing acquisition of nuclear weapons; acceptance of full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards; adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; and mutual inspection of nuclear facilities..." However, the two were unable to reconcile their differences and the nuclear irritant persisted.

Different over Indian Ocean

As the Indian Ocean has posed a serious question in the international politics, the politico-strategic significance of the Indian Ocean area was an important focus of attention in different chanceries of the world. The serious problems which have been frequently focused are: the great-power military and naval presence, both visible and less tangible elements; the security interests of the superpowers and the question of a perceived threat to their national interest and the interests of their client

states in the region; the problem of keeping a strategic balance in the region; the question of the freedom of navigation in international waters and protection of trade routes and sea-lanes; the local and regional arms-race and tensions; and the proposal to make the Indian ocean a “zone of peace”.

In this region, the United States has planned to develop a permanent military presence to counter any Soviet naval activity by accelerating her naval activities in the region. Among the US bases, the important ones are: Asmara (Ethiopia), Diego Garcia, Woomera and Harold E. Holt (Australia), Bahrain and Mahe (Seychelles). Washington and Moscow press on with their policies in the Indian Ocean, accusing each other of generating tension and conflict.

The Diego Garcia base of the US in the Chagos Archipelago is about 2,249 kilometers from the Indian coast and commands an excellent strategic location in the Indian Ocean. It has a major role of supporting US forces. The US Senate on 29 September, 1975, gave the final approval to 3.8 billion dollars construction authorization bill, including 13.8 billion dollars for expanding the controversial base.

The Indian Ocean is regarded as “a new heartland, a new focus of world politics and world conflict”, since the six-day Arab-Israel War of 1967, the announcement of the intended withdrawal of the British east of the Suez (January 1968) and President Johnson’s announcement of the impending US withdrawal from Vietnam (March 1968), it has been converted into Yom Kippur War, the oil shortage and the consequent rise in oil prices in 1973, the super-power rivalry for naval presence in the Indian Ocean, the US withdrawal from Vietnam, the crisis in Iran, the Iran-Iraq War and the Soviet entry into Afghanistan.

The US has continuously enhanced its underwater capability of launching several advanced weapon systems and has introduced several systems like Trident nuclear missiles for her submarine fleet, cruise missiles for the B-52s, F 14 fighters

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132 Ibid.

for the carriers, F-15 for the air force squadrons and the rapid nuclear attack submarines with a highly developed acoustic technology in the region. It established bases in Diego Garcia\textsuperscript{134} and Male and attained access to facilities in Bahrain, Berbera, Masirah Mombasa and Singapore.\textsuperscript{135}

The Reagan Administration continued to support the Indian Ocean policy of Mr. Jimmy Carter. It intended to adopt a policy to meet the threat of Soviet attempts to gain control over the Middle East and its oil reserves. The US feared that after Afghanistan, the Soviets would aim at controlling Baluchistan, a Pakistani province disturbed by the pro-Soviet communist secessionist movements. Thus, the US was anxious to prevent the Soviets from reaching the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{136}

Besides the US advantages against the Soviet Union, the US control over the Indian Ocean would secure the passage for oil and regulate oil prices. Further, the administration could assure its allies and friends among the littoral states of its support, by used for strategic advantage in any crisis as well as to deploy submarine-launched ballistic missiles in the India Ocean. Therefore the US naval presence aimed at playing “diplomatic, intelligence-acquisition, and communication roles”.\textsuperscript{137}

The Reagan Administration enhanced the efforts of the previous administration of establishing support facilities and access arrangements on Diego Garcia for the deployment of US forces. By the end of the first term, President Reagan had tripled the amount of ‘maritime propositioning’ on the island. The US converted eight fast cargo ships ( SL-7s ) to roll-on-roll-off configuration, for movement of forces based in the US, as well as purchased fifty more C-5 and forty-four more KC 710 wide bodied aircrafts. It also gradually strengthened the army logistics units needed to support the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) in different climates and terrains, and increased by fifteen fold the level of the US rapidly

\textsuperscript{135} Harish Kapur, “Great Powers and the Indian Ocean; A Non - Aligned Perspective”, Round Table, No. 297, January 1986, p. 54.

The defence expenditure in 1981-82 was increased by nearly $2.5 billion, to improve the naval facilities in the Indian Ocean.\footnote{139}{Rasul B. Rais, n. 134, p.1048.} On 1 January 1983, a new regional Central Command (CENTOCOM) was established. Its sphere of activity included nineteen states of South West Asia, North East Africa, the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea. The CENTOCOM took charge of regular army and navy units with an aggregate strength of 300,000 troops.\footnote{140}{P.C. Kapur, "US Designs on Asia - Pacific", \textit{Democratic World}, 17 (8), February 1988, p. 11.}

By 1983, it was reported that the Diego Garcia base had been “upgraded” to provide a 12,000-feet runway capable of handling all types of aircraft, including B-52 bombers. The US also made arrangements for ‘a deep underwater anchorage’ dredged to a depth of 45 feet suitable for the naval task force, including nuclear-powered aircraft carriers of the Nimitz class, eight fuel storage tanks with a capacity of 640,000 barrels and an electronic communications station to provide “rapid radio reply with ships and aircraft operating in the Indian Ocean. Thus, Mr. Reagan adopted his predecessor’s policies with more enthusiasm and less compunction.\footnote{141}{Norman D. Palmer, n. 7, pp.198-199.}

Regarding to India, the Indian Ocean also has tremendous importance for India’s economic development as well as industrial and commercial growth due to its vast resources. India’s relations with Asian and African countries and its international status are, to an extent, dependent on the environment of the Indian Ocean. At the same time, it plays a significant role in India’s security arrangements by guarding Indian coastlines. The waters are also useful for fisheries, irrigation and fertilizer inputs needed for agricultural production. Since the Indian Ocean is vital to Indian interests, it has been keen to prevent it from becoming” a preserve of any particular Power”.\footnote{142}{Madan Mohan Puri, "Geopolitics in the Indian Ocean", \textit{International Studies}, 23 (2), April - June 1986, p.161.}

Thus, the Indian government was disturbed over the development of US bases on the territories bordering the Indian Ocean and the establishment of the
Rapid Deployment Force. These US actions were inconsistent with the 1970 Lusaka Declaration, which had proclaimed the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace. 143

On the contrary, the US regarded the establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean as an essential component of its foreign policy, especially after the Soviet entry into Afghanistan. 144 Secondly, the growth of the US and Soviet naval facilities in the Indian Ocean was viewed with grave concern by India, since it was feared that the big power rivalry would inevitably become linked with the regional conflicts. This would accelerate the arms race between the countries of the region and divert their resources and energies away from developmental activities. At the same time, the influence of the superpowers would bring about “distortions of their natural evolution” and increase the possibilities of “convulsive or violent political change”. Further, the juxtaposition of superpowers could lead to their confrontation and war, which would endanger the entire region. Thus, Mrs. Indira Gandhi denied the possibility of the US or any other forces acting as a ‘Stabilizing factor” in the region. 145

Pakistan’s anticipated support to the Central Command, operating from Kenya to Pakistan, seriously threatened Indian security interests. The US-Pakistani cooperation in the field of intelligence gathering provided Pakistan with essential information about India and the US aid provided Pakistan with an opportunity of strengthening itself. For this assistance, Pakistan would be willing to reply the US with its support to RDF and “various forms of strategic cooperation” in the Persian Gulf. These fears had been substantiated by a former member of the US State Department’s Policy Planning Council, Mr. Fukuyama’s statement that Pakistan could serve as an important for the RDF moving from Diego Garcia or Philippines into the Persian Gulf. 146 Mr. Fukuyama’s report and Mr. Jack Anderson’s disclosures indicated that Pakistan had agreed to provide use of its airfields to the US planes in case of a Soviet threat to the Gulf from Afghanistan.

The President of the Movement for Restoration of Democracy also alleged,

on 4 March 1983, that President Zia-ul- Haq had “offered unconditional support to plans for upgrading naval facilities for RDF in Baluchistan as a part of US “forward strategy” in the region. Pakistan had acquired the status of a front-line state’ due to the existing circumstances in Afghanistan and Iran. Thus, India feared that the US and Pakistan would promote their relations for mutual benefits, while endangering Indian interests.147

The Indian were especially perturbed by the enhancement of naval facilities on the island of Diego Garcia. They viewed it as, “an arrow pointed at the heart of world peace. Under the circumstances, one can only conclude that Diego Garcia is aimed at the developing countries as it is against the Soviet Union”. The Indian anxiousness was further increased when the US denials about the build up bases proved to be false. A US Information Service official observed in February 1983 at Allahabad: “the evolution of the American plans for Diego Garcia have changed radically over time and it is futile to try convince Indians that we did not secretly intend all along to turn the atoll into a major staging area complete with runways for B-52s and anchorage for ballistic missile submarines”.

In spite of this acknowledgement, the Reagan Administration continued to deny the Indian allegations of the development being aimed against the Third World, and declared that the Indian statements had exaggerated the relevance of Diego Garcia. These denials of the US, even while the developments continued on the island, created doubts about the “credibility and intentions” of America, which resulted in a deterioration of Indo-US relations.148

The Indian government also expressed its disapproval of the US task force. It was seen as a potential threat since none of the littoral states had the ability to counteract its force. All the air-craft carriers of the force operate about twenty-four fighters like F-14, thirty-six attack aircraft like A-6 and A-7, four E-2 Hawkeye early warning / control aircraft, four EA-6B electronic warfare aircraft, and three RA-5C long-range reconnaissance aircraft. In its maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine operations it is supported by ten S-E Viking ASW aircraft and eight SH-3 Seeking ASW helicopters. India feared that, “these large floating airfields, protected

147 Ibid.
by surface escorts and submarines, can bring to bear a concentrated fire-power at a
given place at any given time". Though the US presence in the Indian Ocean was
less than that in the Pacific and the Atlantic or the Mediterranean, it endangered
Indian security.

These Indian concerns were accentuated by the fact that the US had
developed close" politico-military linkages" with some powers of the region and
regional groups, its relations with the members of the ASEAN in South East Asia,
Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan in South Asia, some members of the GCC in the
Gulf, Somalia and Kenya in East Africa, Egypt and Israel in the Red Sea and the
Mediterranean region had helped it to “consolidate and legitimize” its presence.
Thus, the US threat to any country, which was not a part of its fold, was
increased.150

The US criticized India’s soft attitude towards the Soviet Union and its
expansion in the Indian Ocean. The US stated that both India and Sri Lanka had
contributed towards the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, but since
then India had changed its stand. While Sri Lanka viewed the Soviet and American
actions with “apprehension”, Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s Government tended to tilt
towards the Soviets. India dismissed the Sri Lankan apprehensions as an
“exaggeration”, and was highly critical of the US actions.151

The Indian government clarified that it advocated the removal of all foreign
forces and bases from the region. Though it expressed its dissatisfaction with the
Soviet activities, it severely opposed the US presence because the US was greater
threat to region.152 India argued that the Indian Ocean has a greater strategic
relevance for the US than for the USSR because the Trident-1 submarine-launched
missiles from the Indian Ocean can strike the industrial areas of southern Russia,
while the US can utilize this threat to deter the Soviets, the USSR cannot similarly
operate against the US.153 The Soviets would not be anxious to deploy their SLMBs
in the area since their range was such that they would not reach the US from the

150 Ibid., p. 10.
Indian Ocean. Secondly, the Soviet submarines have to cruise long distances through choke points controlled by the West to reach the Indian Ocean. The USSR could pose its counter threat more effectively if it SLBMs in the Pacific, the North Sea and the Atlantic. Thus, the Soviets would not be interested in using the Indian Ocean for any military programmes.

India also alleged that the continuous US deployments, since 1971, had not been primarily the result of the cold war or the Soviet threat. It had evolved the RDF/ CENTCOM strategy not to prevent Soviet expansionism in the Gulf, but to secure the oil fields for itself. The Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan had only been used as a pretext for a strategy which had been worked out in advance and perhaps would have been executed even the Soviets had not entered Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{154}

The Indian government did not strongly oppose the Soviet moves in the region because the Soviet Union appeared to be more “sympathetic” of the Indian views on the Indian Ocean, and even expressed its support for the idea of a zone of peace. On the contrary, the US had adopted a different position to that of India. It had constantly refused to accept the proposal for a peace zone as a “realistic” and “feasible” one. America had reasoned that even if the superpowers agreed to a complete demilitarization of the region, it would remain” an area of internal, intraregional, interregional rivalries”, since several countries of the region had developed their own navies. At the same time, the US was not supportive of a conference for discussing the implementation of the December 1971 resolution since it felt that “such a conference would be long on denunciations of the US and short on actual achievement”.\textsuperscript{155}

Both India and the US continued to uphold the same views which had been presented in the late sixties. Thus, the Indian Ocean politics and rivalry prevented any improvement in Indo-US relations. In the eighties, the relations deteriorated further due to the relevance of the region in President Reagan’s SDI and anti-Soviet campaign.

Differences over South-East Asia and West Asia

South-East Asia; Kampuchea & Vietnam

Another differences in Indian and American perspectives on South-East Asia surfaced again in 1980 on the issue of which government should be recognized as the legitimate one in Kampuchea. India’s support to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, its economic assistance and recognition to Heng Samrin government installed by it in Kampuchea. This policy was based on the conviction that India’s interests were based served by cooperation with other middle powers, such as Vietnam, and by offering a third path to new countries, rather than by acquiescing in great powers domination of smaller powers.

From the above point of view the failure of the US to normalize its post-war relations with Vietnam and assist in ameliorating Vietnam desperate economic plight and its support for the Beijing-oriented Pol Pot regime and the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea, only pushed Vietnam towards and undesirable dependence on the former Soviet Union and gave the appearance of delineating mainland South-East Asia as a Chinese sphere of influence.156

The border clash between Vietnam and Kampuchea since 1975 had developed into serious fighting in 1977 and ultimately on 31 December 1977, Kampuchea broke off diplomatic relations with Vietnam. On 3 December 1978, Vietnam set up a Kampuchean Liberation Front with 14 members in the Central Committee headed by Heng Samrin. On 7 January 1979, the Front forces aided by Vietnam captured all the provinces. This was not liked by China, the ASEAN or by the United States. China and ASEAN wanted Vietnamese withdrawal, and supervised elections under the United Nations. The formation of a coalition of three anti-Vietnam resistance forces on September 1981, at the behest of China and ASEAN comprised of Prince Sihanouk, Sonn Sann and the Khmer Rouge.157

In Kampuchea, India recognized the Heng Samrin Government, supported by Vietnam; the United States however, strongly opposed the presence of Vietnamese

156 Surjit Mansingh, p. 3, p. 80.
157 B. Baruah, p. 82, p. 88.
troops in Kampuchea as well as Heng Samrin Government.

In a statement on 23 September 1983, US Deputy Press Secretary, stated that “The United States supports ASEAN’s effort’s to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the problem in Kampuchea based on the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and internationally supervised elections... We give moral, diplomatic and political support to the coalition’s non – Communist elements, led by Prince Sihanouk and former Prime Minister Sonn Sann. We provide no assistance to and have no contact with the Khmer Rouge... The President will reaffirm our opposition to the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea and our support for ASEAN’s efforts to achieve a settlement which will restore Kampuchean independence”.

West Asia; Iraq – Iran War & Palestinian Question

The American policy in West Asia was affected by the outbreak of the Iran – Iraq War, in the aftermath of the hostage crisis. Previously, the Carter Administration adopted a policy of non – interference and denied any linkage between the war and the hostage issue. It wanted to dissociate itself from the war but wanted to ensure the safety of its hostages.

Thus, a “pro – Iran tilt” was seen in October 1980, when Iraqis were described as “intruders”, and arms supplied to Iran. The administration permitted some arms manufacturers to continue sales of military equipment to Iran covertly", in addition to supplies through Israel and South Korea. At the same time, it took definite steps to prevent the spread of hostilities in the region. It declared that it would keep the Hormuz open by utilizing its naval power, supplied four AWACS to Saudi Arabia for its defence and “cautioned” Jordan from joining the war.

The US Administration, however, maintained its neutral stand for its first two years, in spite of tankers being attacked by missiles and the mines being laid on the tanker’s route. But after Iranian attacks against Iraq in 1982, the US had changed

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158 Ibid., pp. 88-89.
160 Christopher S. Raj, "Iran - Iraq War; Weapons Acquisition by Combatants and Strategic Implication", Quarterly of Strategic Studies, 1 (1), January 1984, pp. 49-50.
161 Gulshan Dhanani, "Iraq - Iran War and Superpowers; A political Analysis", Quarterly of Strategic Studies, 1 (1), January 1984, p. 65.
its policy. It adopted a policy of supporting Iraq. Though it was not publicly acknowledged since a National Security Council study had concluded that a defeat of Iraq would come in the way of American interests in the region.

Iraq was then removed from the list of countries which were supporters of international terrorism in 1982 and diplomatic relations between Iraq and the US were re-established on 26 November 1984. On the other hand, Iran was proclaimed “the real villain of the piece” by President Reagan and in January 1984 was included in the list of nations which were supportive of terrorism.162 The US, however, never made a serious attempt to resolve the crisis since its continuation served American interests. It drew the Arab states towards the US for military cooperation.

India was greatly concerned about the Iran–Iraq War since it caused economic losses. It has been realized that South-South economic relations require favourable circumstances, which promote negotiations between the parties. A war is always a severe threat to any negotiations. The economic loss caused by the breakdown of talks, would serve as an additional burden on the developing countries.163

Thus, India opposed the continued hostilities which caused a shrinking of markets and non-payment of companies which had completed their work. Unlike most other countries, the Indian Government did not decide to withdraw from the region,164 but attempted to get peace restored, as a member of the Non-Aligned countries. In the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of NAM countries at New Delhi in February 1981, India played an active part in the efforts made to end the war.165

As in South Asia, American policies in West Asia abounded with dilemmas complexities and conflicts. The cause of Palestine was considered less significant than that of Israel because it was strategically more relevant to the US. The US had been able to safeguard its interests in West Asia by maintaining close relations with Iran and Israel till the 1970s. Iran had secured a safe passage for the Gulf oil while

163 Girijesh Pant, “Iran - Iraq Conflict and India; A Dimension in South - South Relations”, Quarterly of Strategic Studies, 1 (1), January 1984, p. 71.
164 Ibid., p. 75.
165 Prem Arora, n. 159, p.448.
Israel had assisted it in “containing” Beathist Syria and the PLO. The US naval build up in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean had supplemented this assistance to protect US interests. However, with the fall of the Shah of Iran, the responsibility had to be shared by Israel and the US naval force.166

Thus, the US continuously supported the cause of Israel and attempted to secure its membership in the UN. It believed that any attempt to “challenge” Israel’s right to participate in the General Assembly would be a violation of the UN Charter and would be severely opposed by the US.167 President Reagan had proclaimed, “if Israel is ever forced to walk out of the UN, the United States and Israel will walk out together”. Due to its support to Israel, it had adopted a stand which was” titled decisively against the Arabs”. It vetoed all UN resolutions which condemned Israeli treatment of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. It also intercepted “an Egyptian airliner which was carrying the Palestinians responsible for the seizure of an Italian cruise ship”.168

The significance of Israel and the emphasis of the superpower rivalry, led the US to oppose the activities of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The US believed that the PLO had received the ‘tutelage’ of the Soviet Union since 1975 169 and was therefore its enemy. Mr. Reagan, like his predecessors, was critical of the violent methods utilized by the PLO, since the administration had pledged to check terrorism. Secondly, the US was not ready to recognize or negotiate with the PLO until it accepted Israel’s right to exist as well as the Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.170

The Indian government, on the contrary, had always advocated the cause of the Palestinians. Its policy has been based on the Gandhian dictum the “Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France

166 M.S. Agwani, West Asia; Humiliation Far From Home, World Focus, 6 (1), January 1985, p. 29.
to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs".\textsuperscript{171} In addition, India opposed the occupation because it came in the way of a permanent settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute, and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. India never recognized the Israeli claim that the Israeli public services had been extended to the Arabs in the West Bank of the Jordan solely due to "humanitarian considerations".\textsuperscript{172}

The Congress Government, under Mrs. Gandhi administration in 1980, reiterated this Indian stand and extended its support to the PLO. While enumerating the policies of the new government, the Indian President Mr. Sanjiva Reddy declared in Parliament that the government believed that a solution to the problem of West Asia could not be found without conceding the legitimate demands of the Palestinians for their homeland.\textsuperscript{173}

Further, any comprehensive solution would require the active involvement of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, which had shown "great heroism" in the pursuance of the cause.\textsuperscript{174}

Thus, India and the US differed over the Palestinian issue. While India has regarded the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians, Washington has always been critical of its activities. This difference, therefore, prevented the way of improving relations between India and the United States throughout Mrs. Gandhi's second term in power. However, the declaration by Mr. Arafat in 1988 that the PLO would renounce "all forms of terrorism"\textsuperscript{175} helped to remove the US doubts.

new International Economic Order (NIEO); Conflict with the US commitments

Another major issue of disagreement between India and the US was the proposal of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). India, like the other non-aligned countries, held a different view with respect to the world economy and the

\textsuperscript{175}The Times of India, 16 December 1988.
economic problems of the developing countries, as compared to the US.\textsuperscript{176}

The Non-Aligned Movement awarded high priority to the interests of the newly liberated states and wanted to work for their economic and social development. It believed that progress in the fulfillment of these objectives was obstructed by the "structure, processes and style of functioning of the international economic system",\textsuperscript{177} which continued the economic exploitation plasticized by the economic masters. India believed that trade between the developed and the developing countries was unequal. The developed countries controlled the market while the developing countries—the suppliers of the raw materials—were dependent on them. Every time the demand decreased, or competition for a common market increased among the suppliers, or the ‘North’ discovered substitutes for the raw materials, the prices of the raw materials were decreased.

Consequently, the earnings of the developing countries decreased while the prices of the industrial products of the North’ continued to rise. The protective tariff barriers also prevented economic gains in case the developing countries managed to develop their industries and export their products to the West. Thus, the existing economic system ensured that the wealth of the ‘South’ was transferred to the ‘North,’\textsuperscript{178} and that the ‘South was forced into the debt traps of the ‘North’.

India held the view that the entire international financial set up is dominated by the “TNCS (representing private/corporate capital), governmental agencies (representing state sector of advanced capitalist countries) and IMF-World Bank (representing global institutions)”. Under such circumstances, the newly liberated states can not achieve the required economic resources, energy supply, technology transfer and conducive conditions for trade.\textsuperscript{179}

The process adopted in the international institutions is “biased against the developing countries in their global distribution of income and influence. “ Though the developing countries are in a majority in the international organizations, they are

\textsuperscript{177} Rasheeddudin Khan, "Non-Alignment; Leading the Struggle", World Focus, 5 (8), August 1984, p.14.
\textsuperscript{179} Rasheeddudin Khan, n. 177, p. 14.
not provided with adequate representation in the economic agencies.\textsuperscript{180}

Since India and the non-aligned countries believe that this “old economic order” perpetuates “neo-imperialism”, they want to prevent a further deterioration on the economic conditions of the ‘South by adopting a “New International Economic Order”\textsuperscript{181}. They are also in favour of creating a “new information order” to facilitate the acceptance of NIEO. The present system leads to an “information imperialism” which tries to suppress the cultures of the newly liberated states and prevents the development of their identity.\textsuperscript{182}

Thus, NIEO proposes “massive resource transfer, automatic and multilateral” from the developed to the developing countries. Secondly, it wants to secure greater power and representation for the developing nations in the significant international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. This will enable the developing countries to protect their interests when decisions are being taken by the institutions. Thirdly, it asks for some concessions in trade, provision of economic resources and investment, as well as technology transfer to help the growth of “equitable economics”.\textsuperscript{183}

The Reagan Administration, like its predecessors and some other developed nations, held the view that the NIEO was not an economic programme intended to solve the existing crisis of the Third World countries. Reagan Administration continued the policy adopted by the previous administrations. In fact, it was the first to award a low priority to international economics. It viewed the issues of international economics only in terms of the East-West relations, with the sole purpose of gaining superiority over the socialist countries. It even went to the extent of declaring that it did not believe in the existence of the ‘South’. Thus, the Reagan team was opposed to any discussions for a New Order and believed that the proposal was “impudent, impractical and unacceptable”.\textsuperscript{184}

The US officials were of the opinion that the Third World countries were

\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{181} Dewan Berindranath, n. 176, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{183} Rasheeduddin Khan, n. 177, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., p. 16.
"weak". Therefore, a need did not exist to cater to their proposals and enhance their importance. They also rejected the view of the developing countries that their economic crisis was due to the existing economic system. The administration held the developing countries responsible for their economic problems. Their economic weakness is due to the "fragility of nationhood", lack of proper agricultural planning, and high rate of population growth, heavy expenditure on arms, inefficiency and corruption. Aid and trade liberalization can only supplement the economic development, which is dependent on the efforts of a country and its people.

Thus, the developing countries would not be able to stimulate their economic growth through 'direct aid and concessional loans'. Economic progress, acquisition of latest technology and access to foreign markets would only be possible with the increase in direct private investment in other countries. It was because, "Such investment...... paid for itself out of new production instead of imposing a fixed repayment schedule".

The Reagan team upheld that the NIEO proposes special rights for certain countries which are "poor "and have "socialist economics". The rich countries and the transactional corporations are to be” penalized”. The proposals are contrary to the interests of America and the Western nations since the NIEO was a plan for global socialism in which transfer of wealth, technology and power was to be administered through the UN.

Regarding to the NIEO, the decision of Mr. Reagan to attend the Cancun Summit, to discuss the North-South relations had raised some hopes in India. His willingness to participate in "global negotiations" was significant since he had always kept away from North-South relations and rejected the NIEO. Yet the US put several conditions before participating. It demanded that there should not be any

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187 Madhu Limaye, Problems of India's Foreign Policy, (Delhi: Atma Ram & Sons, 1984), p. 257.
“detailed negotiations, no concrete agreements on substantive issues, no final communique, and no Cuban presence”. It wanted the “substantive negotiations” to be held in “specialized agencies” and the principle of weighted voting accepted in these agencies. The UN should not be allowed to veto any agreement. The US threatened that it would not associate itself with any negotiations which were “sterile rhetoric” and placed “unrealistic demands” since it wanted to promote “global economic growth” and not just the transfer of economic resources from the ‘North’ to the South’. These conditions, thus, reduced the summit to a mere “ceremonial” event. Only general discussion related to food, security, energy, commodity stabilization and finance took place.189

The NIEO was thus, viewed as a threat to the US economic interests as well as means of building up a ‘South bloc which challenged its international prestige. It created a new bloc “the alignment of the non-aligned”.190 However, India viewed these reforms as a means of removing the injustices in the international economic system. India’s commitment to the cause of the poor countries conflicted with the US commitments and interpretations of the NIEO came in the way of improved Indo-US relations.

End of Mrs. Gandhi

Sikh problems and the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi

India’s relations with the United States followed a downward trend due to the alleged US support to the Sikh extremists, who propagated the formation of Khalistan and the suspicion about the development of American policy in the Punjab including the US attitude towards the separatist movement of the Sikh extremists and terrorists who were active in North India and had strong organizational and financial links in UK, USA and Canada. It was known that extremists were basing themselves in USA and Canada, there was obvious disquiet about possible US sympathy for them. As General Secretary of the Congress Party and Member of Parliament, Rajiv Gandhi told newsmen in Bhopal on 23 July 1983 that the US was interfering in the Punjab affairs. J.S. Chauhan, who was making the loudest noise

190 Hari Jaisingh, n. 185, p. 60.
about Khalistan, appeared to have US support, he said. Some pro-Khalistan groups were also raising voices in USA. Some Sikh elements had apparently come under the influence of Pakistan, Rajiv added.

The US was charged of instigating the Sikhs after Operation Blue Star and the deployment of the army in the Golden Temple in June 1984. The Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr. Rasgotra, however made an official denied of any such charges on the US. He said that the information available indicated towards Pakistan being the offender and not the CIA. Though, no official charge was levied on the US. Indian antagonism was aroused when the Khalistan leader, Mr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan, who had earlier announced on the BBC that Mrs. Gandhi would be assassinated, was allowed to take refuge in the US, despite Indian protests. The issue reached its climax at the time of the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The Indian Prime Minister was assassinated by her own Sikh security guards on 30 October 1984. A section of the Indian press, public and some foreign nations put the blame on the US, since it did not appear to be “an immediate sudden act of some irrational persons”.

A section of the Indian press also expressed its suspicion. The ‘Hindustan Times’ suggested a deep conspiracy. The Indian press on 9 November hinted at the US involvement by citing an incident which took place on 20 October 1984. Just before Mrs. Gandhi landed at the Amausi airport in Lucknow, a stretch of highway about 2 kms away was discovered to be covered with inflammable fluid. The Times of India’ reported on 10 November 1984 that a horse-cart carrying plastic cans had reached the highway, despite severe security, and spilled the fluid “accidently”. Later the driver of the cart could not be traced and no explanation was provided of how it occurred. This incident raised doubts of a conspiracy and the visit of the US Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Murphy, on 22 October 1984, just nine days before the assassination aroused suspicions of US involvement. The Indian press also condemned the US media for telecasting demonstrations by Sikh extremists in celebration of the assassination and their

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191 V.P. Dutt, p. 23, p. 122.
192 M.G. Gupta, n. 9, p. 255-256.
193 Ibid., p. 262.
194 Ibid.
195 Ibid., p. 259.
threats to kill other leaders of India.\textsuperscript{196}

Even after Mr. Rajiv Gandhi took over as the Prime Minister the problem of Sikh extremists in Punjab continued and Mr. Gandhi made oblique references to external intervention. Though his government was less suspicious of the US than Mrs. Gandhi’s Government, he sharply criticized the alleged US “support for, or at least indifference to, the activities of Sikh nationalists in the United States”\textsuperscript{197}

The US denied having any connection with the terrorists. Soon after the assassination, Mr. Ronald Reagan expressed his concern over the growing terrorism in India and promised his administration’s support in apprehending the Sikh terrorists and exchanging information about them.\textsuperscript{198}

This pledge was fulfilled in the significant arrest of US based Sikh extremists who had planned the assassination of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and other Indian politicians. The Sting operation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) foiled the assassination attempt called the ‘Gandhi Plot’. This was a significant contribution to Indo-US relations, especially in view if Indian suspicions.\textsuperscript{199}

In spite of the cordiality caused by the arrests, the suspicions of India were not totally suppressed. The Prime Minister and the Indian elite believed that the US was aware of the Pakistani assistance to the terrorists. Its’ silent awareness in itself condoned the Pakistani actions.\textsuperscript{200} Mr. Gandhi in August 1986 stated at the Youth Convention that “it was no coincidence that Sikh secessionists issued a declaration in favour of independence on April 29, 1986, within days of India taking a spirited stand against the US air strikes against Libya on April 15”.\textsuperscript{201} He seemed to indicate that the US instigated the Sikhs, every time India was critical of their policies or did not act according to their wishes. This statement, therefore, antagonized the US administration.

The US, however, continuously attempted to convince India that it was not supportive of the extremists. But the Indian doubts persistently obstructed the

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\bibitem{196} Ibid., p. 262.
\bibitem{197} Paul H. Kreisberg, “India After Indira”, \textit{Foreign Affairs}, 63 (4), 1985, P. 885.
\bibitem{198} Paul H. Kreisberg, “Gandhi at Midterm”, \textit{Foreign Affairs}, 65 (5), 1987, p. 1072.
\bibitem{199} \textit{India Today}, 15 June 1985, p.66.
\bibitem{200} Paul H. Kreisberg, n. 198, p. 1072.
\bibitem{201} Dillip Mukerjee, “US Weaponry for India”, \textit{Asian Survey}, 27 (6), June 1987, p. 612.
\end{thebibliography}
removal of this irritant. Thus, the above problems regarding to the alleged patronage extended to Sikh terrorists by the United States which culminated in the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi remained irritant and continued throughout the 1980s between India and the United States under the Reagan Administration.

End of Mrs. Gandhi and after

According to a Congressional analyst Richard Cronin, the Indian foreign policy during Mrs. Gandhi’s period was not so much driven by some ‘inexorable factors’ as by her personal viewpoint bolstered by Soviet efforts to achieve certain objectives which were likely to clash with American interests. So there was a perceived need, felt in some American circles to prevent the Russians from winning over her successor, Rajiv Gandhi. Some powerful sections in the Pentagon were also thinking on these lines and planning to court India on Indian terms by conceding the Indian demand for highly developed military items. The Assistant Secretary for Defence, Richard Armitage was sponsoring the idea that the obvious way to disengage India from the Soviet Union was to offer very high technological products which Moscow could not match.202

Mrs. Gandhi’s death was received with great shock all over America; the good will and admiration for a sister democracy in bereavement was shown in many ways. American leaders and resident Indians joined together in a rally to pay homage to Mrs. Gandhi and deplore the violence which had killed her. The Congressmen, of both the parties reaffirmed their commitments to preserve the territorial integrity of India. Although the US Presidential election was just a few days away, India continued to attract the local media.

The US Secretary of State George Shultz led a high power delegation to attend Mrs. Gandhi’s funeral. On arrival, he said in a statement, ‘we shall do so as we did with the government of Rajiv Gandhi’s great and distinguished mother to whom over thoughts turn so strongly, so warmly on this tragic day. In another touching reference he said, ‘I speak for all Americans when I tell you how profoundly shocked we were by the brutal act of terrorism which has taken Indira

202 Shri Ram Sharma, n. 1, p. 65.
Later when Shultz met Rajiv Gandhi he held out the hope that the US administration would try to improve its relationship with India by striving for a better balance in its involvement in the subcontinent without in any way weakening its links with Pakistan. Rajiv reminded that India had at no stage suggested that the US should not have good relations with Pakistan but it had only been striving that the focus would shift from military aid to economic assistance. A stable and prosperous Pakistan would not pose a threat to India like a militarily strong but politically weak one bent on pursuing a confrontation policy to condition the psyche of its people with the bogey of an Indian threat.

On the re-election of Ronald Reagan as the US President, India looked forward to further strengthening the friendly ties between the two countries. Messages of congratulations to this effect were sent by both President Zail Singh and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The Americans had given the assurance but the Reagan government was not going to take any decisive steps till the outcome of the Parliamentary poll in India was known. Then alone, the US administration would be in a position to know what moves it should take to determine new tenor of Indo-US relations.

The congratulatory messages were scanned carefully in Washington and it was noted that no doubt, they indicated India’s desire for better understanding with the US without giving any misleading impression that the new government in India was inclined to tilt towards Washington. It was quite in keeping with the spirit of American assurance conveyed by Shultz that in developing cordial relations with India they would not weaken their links with Pakistan.

Top American leaders appeared anxious to woo Rajiv and try to open a new and happier chapter in Indo-US relations. Subsequent to the visit of Shultz another dignitary to visit India was Clairbon Pell, a ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He paid a tribute to the resilience of India’s democratic system after Mrs. Gandhi’s death which manifested itself in its capacity to produce a

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203 Hindustan Times, 3 November 1984.
204 Shri Ram Sharma, p. 1, p. 66.
205 Ibid.
leader equal to his national task.\textsuperscript{206}

In his report, Pell said that while Rajiv Gandhi did not signal any departure from India's traditional or foreign policy but he left the impression that once elected he would give many issues a fresh look. The period following the election would offer a great opportunity to improve Indo-US relations. He noted that Rajiv's education and personal orientation was distinctly western. Besides, his technological bent and his relatively non-ideological pragmatism were quite congenial to the American mind set.\textsuperscript{207}

A delegation of four Democratic Senators led by Sam Nunn arrived here on 29 December 1984. They came to India primarily at the suggestion of the US ambassador Hary Barnes who had been pressing them to visit the subcontinent to get a better idea of Indian policies and aspirations in the period immediately following the death of Mrs. Gandhi. The idea of this visit was mooted much before Mrs. Gandhi's assassination; it acquired significance during the turmoil that followed her death. Its itinerary was changed to suit Rajiv Gandhi's convenience as he was likely to be away from Delhi from 1 December on the election campaign. Earlier, the idea was to send Charles Percy, former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to make a reappraisal of the prospects for closer Indo-US relations. But it was considered a better substitute to send a delegation of four Democratic Senators as their views would reflect wider spectrum of public opinion.\textsuperscript{208}

What was more important than the visit of this team of Senators to the subcontinent was the impending trip to Pakistan by the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Vassey, the highest ranking American military officer to make an on the spot assessment of Pakistan's additional military assistance request for the supply of more sophisticated arms. One of the Senators visiting the subcontinent Sam Nunn who was Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee would join the army chief along with John Glenn, a ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{209} ibid., p. 67 - 68.
Another important American dignitary who came to meet Rajiv Gandhi was the Republican Senator Larry Pressler, the author of the amendment which laid down the conditions on the fulfillment of which supply of nuclear material to India and Pakistan could be permissible. He was told clearly by Rajiv that the US tilt towards Pakistan was the main stumbling block in Indo-US relations. Pressler retorted that India's attitude towards the Soviet Union was another stumbling block. He believed that the US was losing India to the Soviet Union and he did not think much could be done to rectify the situation; he wanted India to be a reliable neutral. Pressler categorically asserted that the US would not only maintain its supply of arms to Pakistan at the existing level but would increase it if the Soviet Union stepped up its strength in Afghanistan. As regards the working of the new government Pressler believed that there was no concrete evidence of Rajiv Gandhi breaking new ground in India's relations towards the US but he hoped that Gandhi would shed some of the old rhetoric. He called it an absolutely baseless allegation that the CIA was working to destabilize India or of its involvement in the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi. \(^{210}\)

To sum up, Indo-US relations during the second tenure of Mrs. Gandhi 1980-1984 did not show much improvement. Though Mrs. Gandhi tried to create a rapport with the American leadership, the latter was firm in their commitment to Pakistan which was a factor that always came in the way of the two countries developing cordial relations. Even on personal level, at times, there was acrimony when the two sides were face to face to discuss some controversial issues. There was one more factor to be reckoned with. During the preceding period of Janata regime, Carter and Desai could develop personal rapport and though they differed on several issues bitterness did not mark the process of negotiations. But during Mrs. Gandhi's tenure, because of temperamental incompatibilities between the two sides, most of the bilateral issues were coloured by personal dispositions.

\(^{210}\) Ibid., p. 68.