

The Roots of Discord in India-US Relations during the Cold War

Sumit Kumar

ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellow, Pondicherry University, Puducherry

Abstract

India-US relations have emerged as a symbol of shared interests and cooperation in the recent times. However, the relationship between the two sides during the Cold War has been unfadingly, uncooperative and estranged. Unfortunately, a systematic effort has not been made to understand the factors and forces responsible for the turbulent relationship between the India and the US during the Cold War. It is in this context that this article tries to fill this research gap by explaining the roots of discords between the two sides

Key words: India, the US, Cold War,

Introduction

India and America are two countries that play a vital role in the day-to-day international affairs, while one is the largest democracy in the world; the other is the hegemonic power. These two nations share a lot of things in common like democracy, freedom of press, freedom of religion, respect for individual liberty, human rights etc. On the other hand, concepts like, fundamental rights, federalism, independence of judiciary were inspired by the American constitution. At the same time few American traders, missionaries, and soldiers had worked in India, while many Indian origin people have settled in America. Two-way traffic of ideas was also seen when Ralph Waldo Emerson, the father of the Transcendental Movement in 1830s and '40s, was deeply influenced by Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and the Brahmana.¹ Swami Vivekananda attended the World Religions' Conference in Chicago and spread the essence of Hinduism in America, while Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation, was deeply inspired by Henry David Thoreau's book on Civil Disobedience, who again was a Transcendentalist, in fighting against the colonial masters.

The first bitterness between India and America erupted on the question of Indian immigrants in America. Indian immigrants were barred from citizenship on the grounds of race. All the Indians were deemed as 'Hindus' and in by statute in 1917 Indians migrating for employment purposes were barred from entering America. The Indian legislature in 1926 passed an Indian Naturalization Act, according to which Indian citizenship was denied to nationals of any country that denied the same to Indians.² Although, this issue was solved by the intervention of President Truman in 1946, another issue that created rupture was the question of support for India's freedom. While, India as a colony looked towards America for championing the cause of freedom and decolonisation, America on the other hand was trying to improve British cooperation in order to fight and check the expansion of Japan and Nazi Germany. While America viewed the fight against Nazi Germany and expansionist Japan as the primary task, India viewed its freedom and the question of decolonisation as the basic and primary questions to be solved. Thus, the clash of interests had turned their relations into bitter one.

However, in spite of the above commonalities and similarities, Indo-US relations have been conducting their relations on rather a bumpy road, which is why scholars from both the sides have characterized the relations between these two great nations as 'estranged democracies'³, 'love-hate syndrome'⁴, 'cold-peace'⁵, 'unfriendly friends'⁶, 'democracies at loggerhead'⁷, etc. Further, Henry Kissinger characterized Indo-US relations as 'the never-never land of U.S.-India's relationship', while Daniel Patrick Moynihan described the relations as 'fragile and thin' and John P. Lewis called the relations as 'fractured' was how many scholars have described the Indo-US relations.⁸ Even Indira Gandhi in 1972 in her article in *Foreign Affairs*, she stated that, "despite fluctuations of mood, our relationship as a whole has been uneasy over a long period".⁹ But, one has to understand that this kind of ups and downs in the Indo-US relations were influenced by other deep domestic and external factors from both the sides, apart from their foreign policy objectives. In spite of the broad consensus about the nature of the Indo-US relations, there is no agreement among scholars and analysts from both sides

about the sources of its dissonance. How much ever bitter the relations might be not withstanding, the tensions, the irritations, the uneasiness there were efforts from both the sides not to let the strings stretch too far or break at one end.¹⁰

There was also lack of historical contact between these two civilizations, this in contrast with America's contact with two other major Asian cultures – China and Japan.¹¹ As Harold Issacs writes, "American interaction with India occurs less along a narrower arc, in a smaller compass of awareness and interest because the United States has much less hared history with that country than with China or Japan."¹² The post-1945 world has seen the US emerging as the global power, while India became independent in 1947. By the time India became independent, America occupied the place of global power, vacated by its European allies. The inability of the two countries to overcome their misperceptions about each other led to further downward in the relations. Given, its culture and philosophical outlook India found it difficult to appreciate America's concern regarding the world, while US had difficulty in understanding India's intentions and its place in the world.¹³ On the other hand, India had disapproved and viewed America's military blocs with great doubts. At the same time while India considered US as the extension of European colonialism, US considered to bring newly independent countries under its sphere of influence. Thus, the differences in their outlook towards the post-war world created a great deal odds in Indo-US relations. Some scholars have attributed the obstacles in Indo-US relations to their commonalities, like democracy, free press, and respect for individual freedom, shared language of elites, and a self-perception of their world historical significance accentuated rather than alleviated conflicts of interest arising from their differing preoccupations, etc. The ability of the US and India to display disagreements and resentment in their open, mutually comprehensible media and government deliberations has assured that major or minor disputes receive a full, often impassioned airing. Thus, theirs is not so much a "dialogue of the deaf" as one of the two well and – easily understood. Furthermore, both countries are convinced of the correctness of their positions and therefore they often adopt a moralising and lecturing posture towards each other. Hence, the ability and willingness of India and the US to discuss their differences easily and passionately derive from their commonalities. If such was the case, where similarities have paved the way for conflict, one can easily observe that there was no drift in India's relations with countries like Canada, UK, and Australia, etc with which India shares many similarities. Moreover, but for democracy, these two countries do not share any other attributes like, common racial ties that exist between the US and England or Africa and the US or Israel and the US. They shared only the surface of the democracy as their political systems functioned in different settings, one largely modern and the other traditional or semi-traditional.¹⁴

Further one hears from both capitals for example, the need for good relations because of shared democratic values. While the goal and its basics are laudable, the over simplification does a disservice. For such pleas not only misrepresent, by exaggeration, shared interests, but concurrently raise expectations which cannot be fulfilled; the cycle breeds and sustains mutual disappointment. In addition to this, there have been personality clashes and failure to understand the perceptions. Nehru's relations with Truman, Eisenhower, Dulles, Kennedy, and later Indira Gandhi's with Johnson, Nixon, and Kissinger failed to create a sense of cordiality and comradeship, which would have reduced the policy differences. For example when Dulles was State Secretary, Nehru's mistrust of the USA grew because of the fundamental disagreement he had over the treatment of certain international, and specifically Asian, problems. For instance John F. Dulles speaking on NAM declared that the conception of neutrality was largely obsolete, immoral and short-sighted. Dulles, himself, during a meeting with Pakistan's Finance Minister Amjad Ali and General Ayub Khan on April 30, 1958, said on the US relations with India and Pakistan as:

"US feelings for Pakistan are, in a sense, totally different from those for India...The basic relationship with India was intellectual in contrast to its relationship with Pakistan which came from the heart."

At the same time leaders like Nehru and Chester Bowles enjoyed a great deal of personal relationship, which didn't in any way sooth the relations. At the same time many scholars maintain that South Asia per se has never been important for the US.¹⁵

There is a shared misperception about both the countries in their respective nations. For instance, the image of India among Americans was generally portrayed as the one of the most backward countries suffering with disease, death, and illiteracy.¹⁶ The images about India in America were developed and promoted through school textbooks, media, and academic writings. The Asia Society, between 1974-75, found that some 300-school textbooks present India as the most negative of all Asian countries.¹⁷ Even, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, after serving as ambassador to New Delhi stated "What does [India] export but communicable diseases?"¹⁸ On the other hand, images of America in India were viewed equally stereotyped. Most of the Indians viewed the US as extension of the European colonialism and promoted suspicious images of America. Further, it was viewed as a adversary with its designs of imperialism.

On the economic front also, the two countries nurtured misperceptions right from the beginning. While the US followed liberal capitalism, India on the other hand followed a socialist pattern of development, which meant both adopting different strategies and paths for the development of the nation. Although, the differences in development models need not

necessarily create drift, as there was lot of scope for cooperation. America saw any nation with socialist pattern of development with suspicion, as it resembled Soviet model of development. At the same time, the American protestant-capitalist ethic based on hard work and profit motive stood in sharp contrast with the Hindu philosophy of non-materialism, where trading as an occupation was in the lower position.¹⁹ Besides, this the foreign investments in general and by America in particular were viewed in India as the path to colonialism. Moreover, the branding of America by the Indian policy makers and intellectuals as the neo-imperialist had further complicated the drift on the economic front. Along with the above-mentioned ideological differences, they also nurtured their differences due to the then existing international economic order. Where, many of the Third World countries in general and India in particular felt that the international economic order of those times was more favouring countries like America. Due to this, there was a demand for just and new international economic order, which again was vociferously championed by India. On the other hand, the US sought status quo in the existent international economic order in tune with its dominant position.²⁰ More importantly America saw its economic relations as a crucial linkage to its geo-strategic objectives.

The clash of foreign policy goals also created tensions, while for the US the immediate task was to contain the spread of communism, where all others like decolonisation, racial discrimination etc came only secondary. On the contrary for India the main thrust was on decolonisation and fighting racial discrimination. Thus, the issue of Portugal rule in Goa also flared up the bitterness between these two countries. Portugal a member of US led-NATO, was strongly supported by the US, in spite of its anti-colonial stance. President Eisenhower even stated that Goa was a Portuguese province and not a colony. Dulles went to the extent of declaring that since Goa was ruled by Portugal for 400 years, India had no right on Goa. All this invited the ire of India and finally, it occupied Goa through military. Nevertheless, India was criticized by almost every American leader for the armed action resorted by India.²¹ Further, it was pointed out that the Indian sub-continent was just another theatre of the Cold War where India and Pakistan happened to be on the opposite camps, and India being on the 'wrong' side could only hope to have a cool relationship with the US. While this line of thinking is not altogether wrong, it is indeed fallacious to subscribe to this view in a wholesome manner. For, despite its apparent appeal and cogentness, this theory merely points out the manifestation rather than the reason behind Indo-US tensions. If India and the US differed in their approaches towards the Cold War, it was because they chose to differ. And this matter of choosing to differ depends on geo-political considerations as also on some unavoidable domestic compulsions. While the internal democratic system and liberal ideology of the US prompted it to view the USSR as the 'evil empire', its strong capability arising out of its sound economy, internal cohesion, geographical position and military might enabled it to embark upon the course of containment of the USSR. On the other hand, India's geographical location, its culture, democratic system and ideas of freedom struggle compelled it to pursue an independent foreign policy which in turn facilitated US-Pakistan alliance. Surely, the approach based on the Cold War, remains incomplete and therefore unsustainable.

Another important irritant in the Indo-US relations right from the beginning had been the issue of Kashmir. The United States, while not recognizing Pakistan as aggressor, much to the disillusionment of the Indian public and the policy makers, continued to maintain that the Kashmir invasion by Pakistan was not an act of hostility. To quote Dennis Kux, who aptly summed up the Indo-US differences as, "Neither the Cold War, dollar diplomacy, nor anti-colonialism caused the first major bilateral difference between the United States and independent India. The problem arose over the unfinished business of partition---the dispute over the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir."²² America while refusing to see the tribals as invaders tried to push India towards plebiscite. There was a widespread feeling in India that the United States wanted a pro-Pakistani solution vis-à-vis Kashmir question as Kashmir was strategically important to it. Thus the US stance on Kashmir issue had strained the Indo-US relations to the maximum. To quote Norman D. Palmer, "on the whole, however, the official and unofficial American views on Kashmir have been more sympathetic with Pakistan than with the Indian case, an attitude reflected in votes by American representatives whenever Kashmir question has been brought before the Security Council."²³ Again to quote Norman Palmer:

"India was offended by what it regarded as unsympathetic, and even hostile, American attitude toward its position on the Kashmir question from time the question was introduced in the Security Council. It felt that the United States was siding with Pakistan, the aggressor, against India, the victim of aggression. It blamed the United States for allowing the question to be broadened and thoroughly confused, by transforming it into the 'India-Pakistan question'. It claimed that the United States was taking a pro-Pakistan and anti-India stand on the issue...India was particularly irritated by what it regarded as selective and biased views of the United States on the plebiscite issue, a highly sensitive and emotionally charged issue with the Indians...The United States is one of the countries that has held reservations about the reality of India's commitment (to holding the plebiscite)."²⁴

On the other hand, while India refused to align with the US on the question of Cold War, Pakistan gladly became a military ally of America. Thus, the Indo-US relations strained a lot due to the US support to Pakistan on the Kashmir

question. The challenge that America was facing in the form of Soviet Union representing Communist World, US became the self-proclaimed leader of the 'free world'. This led to the division of the world into two blocs and subsequent inaugural of the Cold War, building up the tensions in all possible parts of the world. At this juncture, India under Nehru, had some serious tasks to accomplish domestically after a painstaking partition. Apart from that India, being the seat of ancient civilization, is bound to play a vital role in the world affairs guided by its culture and philosophy.²⁵ With this India sought to play a vital role in uniting Afro-Asian countries and thereby bringing down the threats of the Cold War. Further, it viewed the Chinese revolution in 1949 sympathetically due to the above framework. Apart from the above, the two countries differed on the issues like the Korean War, the Japanese Peace Treaty, the Hungarian crisis, Indo-China problem, and the representation of China in the United Nations. India also voted against the US in the UN on many occasions. For instance, India supported the cause of China, which America opposed almost a quarter century. Also, India to placate the Muslim vote bank voted against Israel in the UN many times, which again is a close ally of the US.²⁶ These along with the already existing Kashmir issue have sown the seeds of suspicion in the Indo-US relations.

Another stream of scholars attributes the tension in Indo-US relations to the US policy of containment of Soviet Union and the subsequent friendly attitude of India towards the Soviet Union. If this was entirely true then US had to align with India rather than Pakistan, as India was in a better position to contain the Soviet Union, ideologically, militarily and strategically. Scholars from Left stream have ascribed the US containment of India as the clash of ideologies – neo-imperialists vs. anti-imperialists. Liberals on the other hand, agreeing with containment aspect, but trace it to the factor that India doesn't figure much in the US considerations, also as US was more powerful compared to the Soviet Union, the terms of friendship with the Soviets were more lenient and agreeable to the newly independent India. Some scholars have also attributed the tensions in Indo-US relations to their differences in security interests and perceptions.²⁷ On the other hand, scholars like Baldev Raj Nayar have centered their argument on US deliberate containment of independent power centers like India.²⁸ According to him India's urge to emerge as an independent power center in international politics and the subsequent containment policy of US aimed at all middle and independent power centers arising out of its compulsion of being a global power has created the drift between these two countries. For instance, US choose Pakistan as the artificial balancer against India by supplying it with arms and other military and economic support. The US also encouraged other South Asian neighbours against India. It encouraged the then Lankan Prime Minister John Kotelawala to assert himself against Nehru. America also tried supporting anti-India government of Ranas in Nepal.²⁹ However, he entirely ignores the internal milieu of India and its influence on foreign policy, thereby focusing entirely on the dynamics of external environment.

America as a Factor in Indian Politics

It is to be observed that while India's US policy rarely become an issue in US domestic politics, the US' India policies often generate spontaneous and emotional debate in India, bringing political forces to the forefront. This is simply because the US plays a much more vital role in India's both domestic and foreign policies than the vice versa. The US being a global power, quite naturally has diverse and multiple compulsions, while India as a regional power has its compulsions on a limited scale. And further, a global power's domestic compulsions may not be directly related to any one regional power, while a regional power's approach to international politics is invariably linked to the role of the global power in its internal and neighbourhood politics. It is therefore quite logical that the US perceives its national interest in a global context while India's immediate concern always hinges around preserving its internal autonomy.

In fact, India's strategic perception is a corollary of its limited capability. There is always a feeling of insecurity within India that whatever limited autonomy it enjoys in its domestic and foreign policies may be endangered by the big powers, the US being the most ominous of them all. There is indeed a very pronounced dichotomy in India's domestic pressures as while the country's underdeveloped economy and social conflict do not enable it to compel the US to accommodate it, its geo-strategic location, history, culture and politics do not allow it to accept the status of Camp followers.

The anti-Americanism in India's domestic politics also stems from the adoption of Parliamentary form of government, which has ensured a system whereby political parties engage themselves in a fierce show of one-upmanship for political gains. Due to widespread poverty and lack of education among a vast chunk of the electorate, finding foreign scapegoats and excessive use of rhetoric have always played an important part in India's domestic politics. In addition, undoubtedly, it was the US, which has most often come under heavy criticism generating emotional debate both inside and outside the Parliament. Thanks to the dominance of the Left-of-Centre in Indian polity, anti-imperialism in India has always revolved around anti-Americanism. Quite understandably, this sentiment has found its way to India's US policy. It is also worth nothing that the educated Indian elites, while striving for educational and economic linkage with the US, find it expedient to attack the US on public platform. This symptom was most glaring in the Indian Press, which was controlled by

the educated and economic elites in the country. Sensationalism has been the hallmark of the Indian Press so far as the issues regarding Indo-US tensions are concerned. Most often, the issues are blown out of proportion creating unnecessary tension between the two countries.³⁰ Thus, it may be argued that the domestic political culture and the democratic system in India complicated the tension in Indo-US relations.

The American Political System

Though unlike the US, India is not a significant factor in American politics due to obvious reasons, yet the American political system, too, influences Indo-US ties, albeit indirectly. The US is known for its presidential form of government and its loose party system, which encourages and entertains the practice of lobbying. The lobby groups in the US are immensely powerful with long reach in the actual process of decision-making that gets reflected in both the country's domestic and foreign policy.³¹ It is this nature of the American polity that makes it vulnerable to anti-India lobbying by Pro-Pakistan lobbies as will be illustrated in the following chapters. The highly liberal political and social mindset of the American society adds fuel to the fire by way of allowing vested anti-India interest groups to flourish and mould public opinion in the US. Understandably this has an effect both on the Congress and Administration in taking anti-India stance. The Congress remains particularly prone to such lobbying where the politics of vote bank based on ethnicity such as the Sikhs plays an important role.³²

In all the above arguments to explain the roots of discord in the Indo-US relations scholars have singled out the divergences to one factor, thereby making the study of Indo-US relations unidimensional. While we recognize the above facts and aspect them, we also recognize that no single factor cannot be highlighted in order to explain the roots of discord in Indo-US relations. Hence, there is a need for broadening the framework for the study of Indo-US relations since 1947. Hence, an modest attempt is made in the following pages to broaden and give a new framework of study, in order to find so as to where the fact lies.

The fundamental goals and characters of the US foreign policy like containing communism, establishing hegemony all over the world in all spheres like military, economic and political areas by forming alliances and counter alliances. Even though, America was not a 'Asian Power' like China or to some extent erstwhile Soviet Union, but its global, economic and geo-political and strategic reasons have forced it to play a major role in Asia in general and in South Asia in particular. In order to achieve the above goals it basically formulates through three fundamental policies --- 1. containment; 2. engagement/accommodation; 3. satellisation. This global role played by the US was justified in the event 'threat' posed by the Soviet Union to US interests and values.³³ This fundamental objective of the American foreign policy has given justification for containment, accommodation and satellisation. At times all these three were applied simultaneously in order to bring a third country under the influence of US. This was explained by many scholars as an fundamental objective to contain the sphere of Communistic Soviet Union. However, the above three principles had been applied to other middle countries like India also. These principles were neither permanent nor static in nature, though they were classified separately, in practice they were all applied at once at times. The three were sometimes applied simultaneously and sometimes separately. Indo-US relations can be divided broadly under these three principles with 1954-62 as containment; 1962-68 as satellisation and 1969-75 as revoking containment, 1976-80 as the accommodation period. Although the division is made on single principle for a particular period, it does not mean that other principles are not applied during that period. The dominant principle that was applied during a particular period was treated for that particular period. For example, during the period of containment there were under currents of satellisation and accommodation, however since containment dominated during that period it was termed and regarded as the period of containment.

Containment Years (1954-62)

The independent policy followed by India regarding foreign policy – refusal to align with the Western bloc, opposition to most US policies, grouping of countries under non-alignment thereby reducing the US sphere of influence, it opposition to US on the issues of Japanese peace treaty, Korea, China – have all made India a pre-eminent Power in the South Asian region, which called for the containment from America. Further the US policy makers, while failing to recognize India's non-alignment as the Third Bloc, have viewed it as the extension of Soviet Communism. Furthermore, for the US in its ideological battle against the Communist Soviets, it was the sole representative of 'free world', thus it was unacceptable for the US the growth of third blocs like non-aligned under the countries like India. For this only weakens the ideological stance of US against the Soviets. The policy of containment followed by Great powers can be summed up from the writings of George Liska, "Great powers can treat and have reason to treat individual middle powers as regional rivals, and be led to help still lesser states to contain them under the pretence of restraining, unilaterally or cooperatively, all Third World conflict."³⁴ The policy of containment is operated and implemented through alliances and maintaining regional balances, against middle powers, in favour of Great powers. In this connection, to contain India, US had armed Pakistan in order to maintain the balance of power in the region. This loose balance of power has provoked arms race in this part of the

world. Apart from aiming at the containment of middle powers like India, these regional military blocs are justified and needed by the US primarily in order to contain Soviet Union, where the regional military blocs were in turn tied to global military balance between the US and Soviet Union. In this path America calls for the military balance between unequal partners vis-à-vis size, military, population and resources, thereby arming the weaker state against the stronger state. From the early 1950s the US has used Pakistan to balance off India in pursuit of a policy of containment aimed at India. While India has seen this kind of military alliances and blocs as immoral to the newly independent nations as it triggers of arms race thereby spending more on the arms. India's view on the US military aid to Pakistan was summed up in Nehru's letter to state Chief Ministers dated November 15, 1953:

“A military pact between Pakistan and the US changes the whole balance in this part of the world and affects India more especially. The US must realize that the reaction in India will be that this arming of Pakistan is largely against India or might be used against India, whether the US wants that or not...They imagine that such alliance between Pakistan and the US would bring such an overwhelming pressure on India as to compel her to change her policy of non-alignment. That is a rather naive view because the effect on India will be just the opposite, that, one of greater resentment against the US.”

For America, South Asia is in the larger framework of communist threat involving both Soviet Union and China whereas, for India it was mainly from Pakistan. However when America attempted to bring both India and Pakistan into anticommunist alliance, India declined, while Pakistan responded positively through SEATO and Baghdad Pact in 1954 and 1955 respectively.³⁵ These were the formative years that America initiated its containment policy against India. The first came in the form of military aid worth to Pakistan.

By October of 1953 India was well aware of the US military aid to Pakistan. Hence when Nixon visited New Delhi in December of that year Nehru in his two-hour talk with him tried to dissuade and explain the compulsions of the region to avoid such military aids. He further expressed doubts that Cold War might enter into the region by Pakistan in view of the new strength might indulge in some misadventure vis-à-vis India. However ultimately Pakistan was given the aid thereby opening the South Asian doors for the Cold War to enter. Thus, there was no doubt that this military aid to Pakistan was directed against India. Through this general policy of containment US tried to satelise India.³⁶ Even on the question of nuclear cooperation, in spite of America's need for monazite and beryl from India, it refused to help India in exchange with India's programme of nuclear energy.³⁷ America characterized Pakistan as 'ally' with 1959 Agreement of Cooperation, according to which US obligated to protect the territorial integrity of Pakistan and to “take such appropriate action including the use of armed forces as may be mutually agreed upon.”³⁸ There is no doubt in the sense that the above agreement and the US mentioning Pakistan as an 'ally' was directed against India. For at that particular moment Pakistan's potential threat was one and only, India.

Period of Satellitesation (1962-68)

Under this policy a middle power should oblige and conform to foreign policy desires of Great powers. Great powers operates through interventionism in both internal and external matters of the target country in order to get the leverage over its policy matters in general and foreign policy in particular.³⁹ The US containment of India ended to a great extent with the Sino-Indian War of 1962. This, however, had put India in a more difficult situation as it was forced to take military and food aid from America. This in turn resulted in America satellising India to a larger extent. The outbreak of Sino-Indian war had brought India under the influence of American orbit, where the Kennedy administration supplied India with some \$85 million in military aid in the form of winter clothes, mountain guns, transport planes and helicopters.⁴⁰ Kennedy administration responded quickly to emergency arms supply request made by India. The US sent twelve C-130 Hercules transport planes with American to ferry troops and equipment to the battle regions in the border.⁴¹ Even when Pakistan strongly protested against military aid to India by saying India was just playing up 'Chinese bogey', US assured that the aid given to India was completely for defensive purpose against China. India was so influenced by America that when the US Seventh Fleet's entry into the Indian Ocean received a strong criticism from the rim countries like Sri Lanka and Indonesia. On the contrary, Nehru said, “If the US government decides to do this, all that we need to say, today is that outside the territorial waters of India, the Ocean is naturally open to them.”

And added the fleet's entry as “sightseeing, seeing the waters, etc.”⁴² India soon became the largest receivers of the US aid. In 1964 it touched the all time high figure of \$ 864 million. This honeymoon was however, lasted very short when Indo-Pak War broke in 1965. Subsequently the military aid was stopped for both Pakistan and India in view of defying American mediation. Further, the American response to the 1965 war was lukewarm, in the sense that both India and Pakistan seemed not an viable for strategic, economic and political support. Hence, America went for arms embargo on the subcontinent in order to bring down the destruction of the war and subsequently to stop it. During this period, however

the under currents of containment can be examined when the US refused to sell the F-104G *Starfighters* to India during the post-1962 war, by citing that it would threaten the security of Pakistan.⁴³ During this period India received large scale foreign aid from the US which aggravated the situation, by American side perceiving no gratitude from India and the Indian side reading the American efforts as a key to manipulate India's domestic economic policy.⁴⁴

In 1965, Pakistan tried to solve the Kashmir issue through arms. The worst fears of India that the arms and ammunition supplied by the US to Pakistan would be used against India came true. Through out the war America maintained strict neutrality between India and Pakistan. As Washington perceived that arms and economic aid would allow both the countries to continue the war, hence it imposed an arms embargo on both India and Pakistan along with stopping the economic aid. This was strongly resented by India as aggressor and the aggressed party had been equated by the US. India further brought to the notice of the US that the arms used by Pakistan in the war were supplied fully by the US. India's External Affairs Minister, Swaran Singh told the Lok Sabha on 16 August 1965, "The most obvious use of American arms in the Kutch area was the Patton tanks. The Government of India protested to the US government against its acquiescence in Pakistani use of US arms against India."⁴⁵ There was a proposal from the official ranks to display the captured Patton tanks as trophies in city squares, while the then Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri cut his birthday cake that year, which made out of Patton tank. Since, India was domestically weak it had to do away with the idea of displaying Patton tanks as trophies, when the US Ambassador to India expressed dismay over the trophy idea.⁴⁶ Thus the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 left the Indians completely disillusioned with the US, a general feeling prevailed that if not for the US arms Pakistan would not have dare to trigger conflict with India.

During the mid sixties India received a huge amount of food aid from the US, which made India to succumb to the dictates and pressure tactics of America. This food aid by America was no doubt came with an attachment of political and economic strings, despite, which Indian leaders thanked the American President for his generosity. Indian President, Radhakrishnan stated in his address on 14 February 1966, "In particular we would like to thank the President of the United States and his administration for his generous help at this time of need."⁴⁷ At the same time the then Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, went a step ahead on 31 March 1966 at New York, when she said, "the assistance we have received so generously from America has not only been on a government-to-government basis. It has also been on a people-to-people and business-to-business basis."⁴⁸ A Finance Ministry review released in mid 1966 stated that India had signed agreements for foreign loans to a tune of Rs. 3,834 crores, of which the largest amount came from the US and amount of Rs. 1,251 crores. By 1967, India had imported over six million tons of food grains from the USA. In 1967, February 20 another agreement under PL-480 was signed, through which India got 3.6 million tons of food grains in the first half of 1967. This included 1.2 million tons of wheat, 800,000 tons of milo and 30,000 tons of soyabean oil and tallow.

From 1965 to 1969 the relations, though discordant, were continuing in economic ties. India was restrained for food aid and subsequently the aid was used a weapon not only to pursue economic pressure, but also to bring a change in India's foreign policy and its criticism of US role in Vietnam. This was evident when the US Vice-President, Hubert Humphrey in February 1965, publicly expressed in New Delhi the hope for India's support to the US policy in Vietnam after announcing a non-project aid of \$ 100 million.⁴⁹ The 1965 war with Pakistan, drought and food crisis compelled India to take food aid from the US in large quantities. Within five months i.e. between December 1965 and May 1966 eight million tons of food grains had been imported from the US alone. This speaks volumes of the Indian dependency on American food aid and subsequent surrender of India to the US. Thus, in 1966 India had to devalue its rupee on the pressure from US and New Delhi also was less critical on the issue of America's role in Vietnam.⁵⁰ On June 5 1966 the Finance Minister of Indira Gandhi, Sachin Choudhary announced a huge devaluation – 36.5 per cent of the rupee amidst a great deal of criticism from the domestic front that it had been done under the pressure of the US. The Government also announced significant reduction in import duties and elimination major export policies. In return to this the US Government announced the resumption of 3.5 million tons of food grains and committed it to further economic assistance to increase power, industrial and agricultural production.⁵¹

While writing on the food aid to India and subsequent pressure built up on India by the US to tow its line on Vietnam, Chester Bowles wrote, "During India's food crisis of 1965-66, President Johnson rather obviously attempted to use our food shipments to persuade India to take a more tolerant view of our military activities in Vietnam. Determined to demonstrate their sovereignty, the Indians predictably stepped up their criticisms of our bombing of North Vietnam. Angered, President Johnson responded by slowing down our wheat shipments at the very moment when they were most needed. This left scars."⁵² Thus, India was compelled to liberalise import requirements, de-license a number of industries, devalue the rupee vis-à-vis dollar etc. for PL 480, its subsequent agreement on food aid and for other US loans.⁵³ The dependency of India and its passive foreign policy were directly linked with the US food aid and loan programme to India. This has given rise to resentment in India on the US.

Years of Containment (1968-75)

Soon after the period of satellite, India developed self-reliance through green revolution in agriculture by introducing latest technology into the field of agriculture. A lot of other measures like nationalization of banks also took place, due to which Indian economy received a boom and reached self-sufficiency from dependency. This in turn very much reflected in the foreign policy of that country. Foreign policy also took a new turn from succumbing pressure to it came to the level asserting power. However, this had its own implications in Indo-US relations, with the US policy makers reverting the policy of containment regarding India.

The US government renewed the arms supply to Pakistan after the 1965 embargo by resuming the supply of lethal weapons which included B-57 bombers and interceptors. While this naturally irked India, America defended it by saying the objective of the 'limited' arms supply to Pakistan to make it less dependent on China and Soviet Union. During this time new developments started taking place in this part of the world. Firstly, there was a new kind of relationship emerging between China-US-Pakistan. Secondly, there was trouble on the borders of eastern India, with East Pakistan refugees flowing in to India.

In the 1970s the US containment of India was no longer restricted to South Asia but inter-regional balances were forged in containing India. This was the policy followed by the US during Nixon-Ford era. The Pakistan-Iran alliance on the Western frontier and Pakistan-China alliance on the Northern frontier of India were used to contain India.⁵⁴ This enabled US to supply enormous flood of arms to Iran and Pakistan from the US. Further, this balance through regional powers did enhance the role of US in the sub-continent. During the same time when the US-China-Pakistan alliance was emerging, there was a upsurge in the East Pakistan, a movement for separate state – Bangladesh.

The Bangla movement for independence was ignored by the US administration, by terming its as a secessionist movement. But on the other hand there was 'other America' – the intellectuals, the media, writers and academicians, a good many Senators and Congressmen – showed great sensitivity towards the Bangladesh independence movement.⁵⁵ The Nixon regime was in no mood to put pressure on Yaha Khan to restore peace and order in East Bengal by releasing Mujibur Rehman. Further the US government threw the blame completely on India and tried to bale out the West Pakistani military from the crisis. For President Nixon, it seems, India never did a right thing and Pakistan never did a wrong thing.⁵⁶ This was firstly, due to the fact that Nixon administration is deeply engaged in negotiations with China through the good offices of Pakistan. Secondly, the Indo-Soviet Treaty widened the gulf between India and America. Finally, when the war broke out between India and Pakistan, President Nixon called for an 'emergency action' to halt the fight between India and Pakistan. A White House statement said that the US considered the presence of Indian troops in Bangladesh as "an attack on the very existence of a member-state of the US."

India rejected the UN resolution for an immediate cease-fire, while Pakistan accepted the same. Thereafter US took this resolution to the Security Council, where it was vetoed by the Soviet Union. During this time US moved its Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal. The nuclear-powered carrier Enterprise, the largest aircraft carrier of the US and a nuclear-powered one, with about 100-fighter bombers, reconnaissance aircraft, helicopters, and small cargo planes, sailed towards the Bay of Bengal. Though, the reason given was for the evacuation of American citizens from Dhaka, India had no doubts about its military objective – as show of strength. The *New York Times* quoted officials from Washington that the presence of US Fleet in the Bay of Bengal as, "political support for Pakistan whose army in Bangladesh was disorganized."⁵⁷ Washington Special Action Group(WSAG) papers revealed that the US Seventh Fleet was intended (i) to compel India to divert both ships and war planes to shadow the task-force; (ii) to weaken India's blockade against East Pakistan; (iii) possibly, to divert the Indian aircraft carrier INS Vikrant from its military mission; and (iv) to force India to keep planes on defence alert, thereby reducing the Indian air force operations on Pakistani ground forces.⁵⁸

The US suspended all military supplies to India on the eve of war, it also suspended the same to Pakistan due to the pressure under the US public opinion. However, Pakistan was offered military equipment worth about \$09 million and American aircrafts were delivered to Pakistan via Libya and Jordan on the authorization of the White House.⁵⁹ The 1971 war had made Nixon administration very unpopular in India. India was considered that there was a deliberate attempt from the US side to align and tilt with Pakistan. There was also a suspension of over one-third of the US economic aid programme to India on account of the war with Pakistan. India from its side stopped the import of wheat from USA. Thus during the Bangladesh war of independence, Indo-US relations had touched their lowest ebb. Even while relations were treading back to normalcy, US resumed \$ 87.6 million development loan to India, which remained suspended since December 1971. Soon after this announcement, hardly a day later, that Pakistan had been given over \$ 14 million worth of military equipment including reconditioned aircraft engines.⁶⁰ On the other hand India came up on heavily on America establishing and setting up a military base in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Alarmed by the developments in the region, fostering new alliances by the US, and the Nixon-Kissinger tilt towards Pakistan – gave a momentum to India's nuclear programme which was converted from energy to security⁶¹ and subsequently conducted a nuclear test in 1974 at Pokhran. Even though, India declared it as a peaceful explosion, the officials in US administration and the Congress demanded for immediate cut down in the aid to India and sanctions be imposed. Even while, relations were tending to become normal there were hiccups when India blamed America, for its military base in Diego Garcia, for militarizing Indian Ocean region,

while on the contrary, America criticized India for its nuclear test and for not signing Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The old problem of arms supply again resurfaced in Indo-US relations, when it was officially announced on 24 February 1975 that USA had ended the embargo on the export of military equipment to those countries for cash on a case-by-case basis. This was extended to all the weapons including earlier lethal weapons. Immediately after lifting up the arms embargo the US Defence Department approved sale of 110A-7 light bombers and it contracted military aid worth \$ 700 million with Pakistan.⁶² While India accused US of opening up the old wounds, Kissinger accused India of not showing restraint thereby forcing America to help Pakistan and set things right. The relations further went downward with India under Indira Gandhi declaring emergency and the subsequent American reaction to it. Like many other countries from the West, US reactions were sharp and hostile. The US President Gerald Ford, speaking on emergency in India, said, "it was very sad that 600 million people have lost what they had since mid-1940s as I recall, and I think it is a very sad development and I hope that in time there could be a restoration of democratic process as we know them in the US."⁶³ India was annoyed with the response of the US and Mrs. Gandhi accused the West of hypocrisy in its concern as it was not pleased with the independent stand of India in world affairs and her growing strength.⁶⁴

Towards Accommodation (1976-80)

This policy depends upon the middle power whether it is 'rebellious' or 'loyalist' regarding the Great power. Basing on that devolution of responsibility takes place, so that the middle power can act on behalf of the Great power regionally.⁶⁵ During this period a remarkable phase started in the Indo-US relations. There were statements from the US side recognizing Indian supremacy in South Asia and signs of accommodation were also shown during this period. All the while there were also under currents of containing India. For instance America has developed new alliances which further threatened the security of India and tried to maintain surrogate balance against India. This process of cordiality had started in 1976 even when emergency was still on rather than when Janata Party came to power.⁶⁶ The restoration of internal stability and production discipline influenced the Ford administration's accommodative stance towards India. Henry A. Kissinger observed that the two countries were moving towards "a new and more mature relationship".⁶⁷ Further, the Ford administration lowered down the criticism on emergency and started backing the emergency by saying that a number of developing countries when faced with the challenge of survival and economic betterment of masses had given the so called up democratic right and there was nothing wrong in that.⁶⁸ Thus the Indo-US relations during the emergency moved "from see-saw to the swing and to smoother relationship."⁶⁹

In the elections that took place, soon after the recall of emergency coalition partners under Janata Party came to power, while President Carter visited India and praised India's commitment towards democracy and human rights. All these developments paved way for a smoother relationship between India and the US. The heat of second Cold War melted the coldness in Indo-US relations, contrary to the beliefs that it aggravated Indo-US tensions for US according frontline state to Pakistan.⁷⁰ The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union without warning to New Delhi had produced disenchantment in New Delhi along with adverse implications for Indian security. At the same time personally Mrs. Gandhi's distancing from Soviet Union and moving towards the US may also have been influenced by the bitter experience caused during her political wilderness (1977-79), where Soviet Union deserted her in favour of the ruling Janata Party.⁷¹ Though Janata Government talked of following a 'genuine non-alignment' there were speculations that it would improve relations with the US and reassess the relationship with Moscow. But, in concrete terms there was little change as Janata Government was soon voted out of power. On the other hand the concert of balance created by the US comprising of China-Pakistan-Iran (although by that time Iran came out of the US influence) against India, made India look for a better avenue at a time when Soviet Union was involved in Afghanistan.

In April 1979, much to the amusement of India, the US Congress passed the Symington-Glenn Amendment to Security Assistance Act forbidding US military and economic assistance to any country engaged in acquisition or production of nuclear weapons, while, Pakistan fell into this and immediately all aid from the US was frozen. But due to the fall of Shah in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, in 1979, the South Asia region's strategic importance grew due to the manifestations of the Cold War. Immediately the Carter administration released \$ 400 million as economic and military aid to Pakistan, while, simultaneously, the cooperation and understanding of India were also sought.⁷² At the same time, the Carter administration cleared in June 1980 nuclear fuel supplies to Tarapur plant after two years of acrimonious exchanges between the two countries.⁷³ The beginning of 1980s saw many changes influencing the conduct Indo-US relations. Domestically there was change of guard in both the countries, while Indira Gandhi assumed power in India in 1980; Ronald Reagan assumed power in the US in 1981 as President. Further, Indira Gandhi was able to strengthen her leadership domestically within the Congress Party as well as in the country, while, President Reagan known for his vociferous opposition to Communism had assumed power during a much-tensed crisis of Afghanistan. India felt threatened by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and thus the stage was set to move close to the US. At the same time, there were some

expectations on both the sides vis-à-vis Washington attitude towards the region due to new strategic dimensions. Thus, the undercurrents of accommodative mood prevailing between both the countries paved the way for new era of relations between both the countries. Thus, the successive chapter discuss the new era of Indo-US relations starting from 1980 to present times.

END NOTES

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- ² Arthur G. Rubinoff, "Congressional Attitudes Toward India", in Harold A. Gould and Sumit Ganguly, *The Hope and the Reality: U.S.-Indian Relations from Roosevelt to Reagan*, (Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.: New Delhi), 1993, p. 158.
- ³ See Dennis Kux, *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies*, (New Delhi: Sage, 1991).
- ⁴ See N.K.Jha, "Indo-American Relations: Love-Hate Syndrome", Review Article, *Détente*, (New Delhi) vol. VIII, No. 4, November-December, 1989, pp. 11-17.
- ⁵ See H.W.Brands, *India and the United States: The Cold Peace*, (Boston: G.K.Hall, 1990).
- ⁶ See T.V.Kunhi Krishnan, *The Unfriendly Friends: India and America*, (New Delhi, India Book Company, 1974).
- ⁷ See A. Subramanyam Raju, *Democracies At Loggerheads: Security Aspects of US-Indian Relations*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers), 2001.
- ⁸ See Norman D. Palmer, *The United States and India: The Dimensions of Influence*, (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1984), pp. 1-8.
- ⁹ Indira Gandhi, "India and the World", *Foreign Affairs*, 51, October 1972, p. 74.
- ¹⁰ V.P.Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: Vikas) 1993, pp.115-116. Though the author says this only in the case of India, it is however applicable to both sides.
- ¹¹ Madan Lal Goel, "Indo-American Relations in a New Light", in N.K.Jha, ed., *India's Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers), 2000, p. 58.
- ¹² Harold R. Issacs, *Scratches on our Minds*, (ME Sharpe: New York, 1980), p. 239.
- ¹³ Satu P. Limaye, *US-Indian Relations: The Pursuit of Accommodation* (Boulder: West View Press, 1993), p. 19.
- ¹⁴ Baldev Raj Nayar, *India and the Major Powers After Pokhran-II*, (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications), 2001, p. 32.
- ¹⁵ Scholars who maintain this view are Stephen Cohen, Leo Rose and N.D. Palmer and others. For further reference see S.P.Cohen, ed. *The Security of South Asia: American and Asian Perspectives* (Urbana Campaign: University of Illinois, 1987), Also Leo E. Rose, et al., eds., *Towards a New World Order: Adjusting India-US Relations* (Berkeley, California: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1992) and Norman D. Palmer, *India and the United States: Dimensions of Influence*, (New York: Praeger, 1984) Also by the same author, *South Asia and United States Policy*, (Boston, 1966).
- ¹⁶ Rubinoff, n. 2, p. 156.
- ¹⁷ *Asia and American Textbooks* (New York: Asia Society, 1976) quoted in Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Cf. Rubinoff, n. 2, p. 157.
- ¹⁹ Raju.G.C.Thomas, "Security Relationships in Southern Asia: Differences in the Indian and American Perspectives", *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXI, No. 7, July 1981, p. 690
- ²⁰ Satu P. Limaye, n. 13, p. 139.
- ²¹ A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, (New Delhi), p. 236.
- ²² Dennis Kux, *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies, 1941-1991* (New Delhi: Sage, 1991).

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- ²⁴ Norman D. Palmer, *The United States and India: The Dimensions of Influence*, quoted in Dinesh Kumar, "Defence in Indo-US Relations", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. XX, no. 5, August 1997, p. 751.
- ²⁵ For further discussion on cultural roots of India's foreign policy see N.K. Jha, "Cultural and Philosophical Roots of India's Foreign Policy", *International Studies* (New Delhi)
- ²⁶ Madan Lal Goel, n. 11, p. 62.
- ²⁷ See Raju. G.C.Thomas, n. 19, pp. 689-70. Although the author gives other dimensions like clashing of personalities of national leaders, diverging foreign policy goals, contrasting national characteristics, negative images etc. main stress was laid on divergences in security interests.
- ²⁸ For further reference see Baldev Raj Nayar, *American Geopolitics and India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1976)
- ²⁹ S.D. Muni, "The United States and South Asia: The Strategic Dimension", in Shelton U. Kodikara, *External Compulsions of South Asian Politics*, (New Delhi: Sage), 1993, pp. 60-61.
- ³⁰ See N.K. Jha, "Reviving US-India Friendship in a Changing International Order", *Asian Survey* (Berkely: California Press), vol. 34, No. 12, December 1994, p. 1035.
- ³¹ John Dumprell, *The Making of US Foreign Policy* (New York: Manchester, 1990).
- ³² "Banking on Defeat", *India Today* (New Delhi), September 30, 1992, p. 179.
- ³³ Satu P. Limaye, n. 13, p. 13.
- ³⁴ George Liska, "The Third World: Regional Systems and Global Orders", in Robert E. Osgood *et al.*, *Retreat from Empire* (Baltimore, Md, 1973), p. 226.
- ³⁵ Thomas, n. 19, pp. 698-699.
- ³⁶ Baldev Raj Nayar, "US Containment Policy, Global and Regional: The Decision on Military Aid to Pakistan, 1954", *International Studies* (New Delhi), vol. 28, no.2, April-June, 1991, pp. 159-186.
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- ³⁸ Baldev Raj Nayar, "United State and India: New Directions and Their Context", *Economic and Political Weekly*, November 5-12, 1977, p. 1908
- ³⁹ Baldev Raj Nayar, n. 28, p. 162.
- ⁴⁰ Thomas, n.19, p. 699.
- ⁴¹ *New York Times*, 20 November 1962.
- ⁴² *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. 24, no. 24, 19 December 1963, col. 5768 and col. 5772.
- ⁴³ Raju.G.C.Thomas, *The Defence of India: A Budgetary Perspective of Strategy and Politics* (New Delhi: The Macmillan Company, 1978), pp. 186-191. quoted in Thomas, n. 19., p. 702.
- ⁴⁴ Raju. G.C. Thomas, "U.S. Transfers of "Dual Use" Technologies to India", *Asian Survey*, vol. XXX, No. 9, September 1990, p. 838.
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- ⁴⁶ K.R.Malkani, "The Paradox of American Myopia", *World Focus*, vol. 3, nos. 11-12 (Annual no.), November-December 1982, p. 76.
- ⁴⁷ *Indiagram*, no. 24, 14 February 1966, p. 2.
- ⁴⁸ *Selected Speeches of Indira Gandhi, January 1966 – August 1969* (New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India, 1971), p. 470.

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- ⁵⁰ Satu P. Limaye, n. 13, p. 7.
- ⁵¹ N.K. Jha, *Domestic Imperatives in India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers), 2002, p. 94.
- ⁵² Chester Bowles, "America and Russia in India", *Foreign Affairs* (New York), vol. 49, no. 4, July 1971, p. 646.
- ⁵³ See N.K.Jha, n.51.
- ⁵⁴ Baldev Raj Nayar, "United States and India: New Directions and Their Context", *Economic and Political Weekly* (Bombay), November 5-12, 1977, p. 1907.
- ⁵⁵ V.P.Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Vikas), 1993, p. 101.
- ⁵⁶ A. Appadorai and M.S.Rajan, n. 21, p. 244.
- ⁵⁷ *New York Times*, 8 January 1972. quoted in V.P.Dutt, n. 55, p. 103.
- ⁵⁸ A.Appadorai and M.S.Rajan, n. 21, p. 250.
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- ⁶⁰ V.P.Dutt, n. 54, p. 109.
- ⁶¹ Annpurna Nautiyal, "Pakistan Factor in Post-Cold War Indo-U.S. Relations", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. XXII, no. 4, Summer 1999, p. 35.
- ⁶² *US Defence Department Report*, No. 17, 1975. quoted in Aftab Alam, *US Policy Towards South Asia: Special Reference to Indo-Pak Relations*, (New Delhi: Raj Publications), 1998, p. 119.
- ⁶³ *Indian Express*, 18 September 1975.
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- ⁶⁵ Baldev Raj Nayar, n. 27, p. 162.
- ⁶⁶ Baldev Raj Nayar, n. 37, p. 1906.
- ⁶⁷ *Foreign Affairs Record* (New Delhi), October 1975, pp. 175-76.
- ⁶⁸ N.K.Jha, n. 51, p. 198
- ⁶⁹ Kalpana Sharma, "Indo-US Relations: From Seesaw to the Swing", *Himat*, vol. 11, no. 31, 17 October 1975, pp. 5-6.
- ⁷⁰ Nalini K. Jha, "India and the United States: Pursuits and Limits of Accommodation", *Strategic Analysis*, (New Delhi), vol. Xvii, no. 1, April 1994, p. 89.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91
- ⁷² *New York Times*, January 1 and 6, 1980; and *Times of India*, January 8, 1980 quoted in Raju G.C. Thomas, n. 18, p. 199. President Zia ul-Haq, who called this offer "peanuts", subsequently rejected the offer on the grounds that it would only invite the hostility of the Soviet Union without bringing Pakistan much security.
- ⁷³ N.K.Jha, n. 70.