

THE IMPACT OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION ON POLITICS OF PAKISTAN

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When President Reagan took up office for his first term in 1980, he inherited a very difficult situation from his predecessor Mr. Jimmy Carter. The Shah of Iran had fallen to the fundamentalists who were threatening the pro-American moderate Arabs, a power vacuum had been created in the Persian Gulf region, and the Iran-Iraq war had started. Moreover, the Soviet Union had entered Afghanistan and from American point of view, it was posing a threat to the vital interests of the West in the Gulf region. The main objectives of the First Reagan administration were:

- (1) to boost the morale of the American nation which was in a state of trauma arising out of the Iranian hostage crisis; and
- (2) to neutralise the Soviet gains all over the world, whom it was calling an evil empire at that time.

To achieve its objectives, the First Reagan administration adopted a very assertive policy throughout the globe. Its policy objectives in South and South West Asia were very clear: The containment of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, the prevention of an Iranian victory in the Gulf war, reaffirmation of its commitment to pro-American regimes in the area, and the continuation of the 'U.S sponsored peace process' to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The First Reagan administration realised that those objectives could not be achieved single-handedly. It was in need of a regional state that could cooperate in providing air, naval and communications bases (which were lost as a result of revolution in Iran) and in playing the role of a proxy to halt the potential Russian advances towards the Gulf and South Asia. In the circumstances, Pakistan, situated at the cross-roads of South and South West Asia, was the natural choice for the Reagan administration. The military ruler of Pakistan, General Muhammad Ziaul Haq, who staged a coup against the charismatic prime minister, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and subsequently executed him in April 1979, was facing isolation in the

international community. He was in search of a strong ally who could provide him with military and economic aid and also confer legitimacy on his rule. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan and instability in the Gulf created a convergence of interests between the Reagan administration and the Zia regime.

Under the impact of newly emerging factors, the bilateral defence agreement of 1959 concluded between Pakistan and the U.S.A was revitalised. The Symington amendment, banning aid to a country, allegedly engaged into making nuclear bomb, was also waived in favour of Pakistan and it received a package of economic-cum-military aid, worth \$ 3.2 billions for five years (1982-87). Since Zia's main constituency was the armed forces, he made them happy by providing them with sophisticated U.S. weapons. Pakistan air force received F-16 planes, the navy got the Harpoon missiles, the army was almost completely overhauled. Because of the renewed friendship with America, General Zia also won legitimacy for his rule and he was exalted from 'Hayman to a statesman.

Politics is considered as a two way traffic. There is always reciprocity and bargaining between the parties concerned. As a return for the American aid, General Ziaul Haq sent his troops to the Gulf at a large scale to protect the Shaikhs from any threat posed to them.¹ General Zia allegedly allowed the Afghan resistance forces to use the refugees camps as 'sanctuaries' and 'training camps' for their operations against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Pakistan also became a conduit for the CIA sponsored clandestine aid to the Afghan fighters.² After the revitalisation of Pakistan-American ties under 1959 treaty (renewed in 1982) Pakistan's immediate neighbours, India, Soviet Union (by virtue of its presence in Afghanistan), and the Revolutionary Iran, started accusing it of offering bases and communication facilities to the United States.³ The dissident Baluchi leaders also made similar charges against the Zia regime.⁴ Both America and Pakistan have repeatedly denied these charges vehemently, but have failed to appease their critics.⁵

During his first term in office, Mr. Reagan pursued his policies all over the world single-mindedly. When he was reelected in 1984, a question arose about the continuation of those policies in the global and regional terms. A similar question also arose about the American commitments towards Pakistan and its military ruler, General Ziaul Haq.⁶ At the time of writing of this paper, Mr. Reagan is running in the second year of his current term. He met with the Soviet leader

Mr. Gorbachev on a number of times. Mr. Reagan does not call the Soviet Union 'the evil empire' any more. However, the United States and the Soviet Union have failed to narrow down their differences on a number of issues such as the Star War Project (SDI), Arms Limitation Talks and many of regional issues including Afghanistan, which has got an international dimension and could be solved only at international level. Without a solution of the Afghanistan issue, under the Reagan doctrine, the U.S. administration will certainly continue its support to the Afghan guerrillas. Among other things it is providing them with Stinger anti-aircraft missiles. Those missiles and other weapons would be continually channelled through Pakistan. The operation will need cooperation by General Zia and he is reportedly ready to do that.⁷ Both American and Pakistani officials are optimistic about the approval of the post 1987 U.S. aid deal by the Congress.⁸ This Zia-Reagan 'entente cordiale' stretching beyond mid 80s will have a tremendous impact on internal and external policies of Pakistan and the country's future in general.

As just mentioned, unless a trade-off takes place between the two super powers on Afghanistan, General Ziaul Haq can be sure of the Reagan's commitments towards him. However, counselled by a shrewd bureaucracy like the Pakistani one, General Zia is aware of the restraining power of the U.S. Congress over the executive, especially in the matters of foreign aid. The Congress has been generally critical of General Zia's record of violation of human rights and his intentions of joining the nuclear club. Hence, to make himself pliant to the Congress, General Zia, like (one of his predecessors) General Ayub Khan, has adopted a slow, cautious and phased course. First of all, he held in December 1984, a referendum on his programme of the Islamisation of Pakistani society, although denounced as "a shameless exercise of poll rigging" by independent observers.⁹ General Zia proclaimed himself as the civilian president of Pakistan till 1990. Moving a step further, in February 1985, General Zia held long-awaited elections to the National and Provincial Assemblies on non-party basis. As a result of these party-less polls held under the draconian provision of the martial law, feudals, industrialists, retired civil and military bureaucrats, fundamentalists and a new cadre of mountebanks return to these assemblies. The majority of these newly elected members has a record of supporting whatsoever government in power to extract maximum personal benefits. However, by holding these elections, General Zia gave an impression to

the outside world that he intended to return power back to the civilian hands. Under the same plan, in August 1985, General Zia selected Mr. Muhammad Khan Junejo (a Sindhi politician with minimal backing) as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. To bolster images of Mr. Junejo and the assemblies, General Zia allowed the formation of a Government parliamentary group headed by Mr. Junejo. A similar group of the members who refused to join the official group was also allowed to function under the name of the Independent Parliamentary Group (IPG). The Pagara Muslim League which had supported all the internal and external policies of the Zia regime was renamed as the Pakistan Muslim League, and it was declared as the official party and the members of the National and Provincial Assemblies were asked (or forced) to join it. In December 1985, General Zia formally lifted his 8 year old Martial Law (the longest one in the history of the country) and disbanded the military courts (which had passed heavy sentences against his opponents before their termination). After lifting of Martial Law, General Zia congratulated himself for completing a historic job of handing over Power to a 'truly' civilian government.

Although the Martial Law and the State of Emergency have been lifted, the General did it, after receiving an undertaking from the National Assembly that neither he nor his fellow generals would be tried for tampering with 1973 Constitution. He also received a guarantee from the Assembly that all the decisions of military courts will not be challenged into the civilian courts.¹⁰ It is also noteworthy to point out that despite his proclamation of being 'the elected civilian president' of Pakistan, General Zia still retains the post of the Chief of the Army Staff which is quite different from the office of the 'supreme commander' of the armed forces held by a head of a state. Similarly, in spite of lifting of the Martial Law, the governor of Baluchistan province is the retired military officer. It should also be kept in mind that by changing the shape of 1973 constitution from parliamentary to the presidential one, General Zia has assumed wider powers. He can dismiss the Prime Minister or dissolve the Assemblies at his sweet will.

Like General Ayub Khan, General Ziaul Haq is also experimenting with his model of controlled democracy. Pakistan Muslim League has been revamped (though Zia has so far not joined it). The banned opposition parties have been given a choice to resume a limited degree of political activity if they get registered under the Registration Act. The Tahrik-i-Istiklal, the Muslim League and the Jamat-

e-Islami have got themselves registered under the scheme. Some other right wing parties may also join them. The apparent purpose of this scheme is to drive a rift among the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) which campaigns for the restoration of genuine democracy in the country. The registration of some of the right wing parties on the one hand will give legitimacy to General Zia to perpetuate his rule, on the other, he will be in a better position to deal with U.S. Congress. One can argue that this type of juggling and manipulation with the democratic norms, may help the General to prolong his rule, but it is bound to produce horrendous consequences for the existence of Pakistan.

The Zia regime, irrespective of its form, is bound to widen the differences between the Punjab and the smaller provinces. As General Zia and the ruling elite (both civil and military) are mainly from the Punjab, there is a resentment against them from other provinces. The leaders of the smaller provinces feel that 'there is an understanding between the Punjabi politician and soldier to perpetuate their rule in different forms with the intention to make the Punjab the virtual master of the country and to reduce the other provinces to the status of its colonies.'¹¹ This feeling is very bitter in the province of Sindh. The execution of Mr. Z.A. Bhutto in 1979, the mysterious death of his son Shahnawaz in July 1985 in France, the violent clashes between demonstrators and the law enforcing agencies during MRD campaign in 1983, the lack of response to the call for similar protest from the Punjab, ever-rising rate of unemployment, shortage of irrigation water, the allotment of lands to the Punjabi ex-servicemen, the presence of the bulk of the army (despite formal lifting of Martial Law) in the interior Sindh, the establishment of new huge cantonments in the Upper Sindh, and a host of other factors have compounded anti-Punjab and anti-Zia feelings among the downtrodden Sindhis.

The veteran Sindhi leader Mr. G.M. Sayed is utterly pessimistic about a fair deal for Sindhis within Pakistan. Mr. Mumtaz Bhutto, the cousin of the former Prime Minister Bhutto and Mr. Hafiz Pirzada, a former cabinet minister during the Bhutto era have cast their lot with the leaders of other smaller provinces and have formed the Sindh Baluchistan Pakhtoon Front (S.B.P.F). They are demanding a confederal structure for Pakistan. They believe that the confederation will grant maximum autonomy to the provinces within the frame work of a united Pakistan as enshrined in the Pakistan Resolu-

tion of 1940, and it would save Pakistan from disintegration. They further argue that it is only a confederal structure which will slam the doors for repeated military coups against the constitutional governments in the country.¹²

The idea of confederation is an attempt to accommodate the demands of maximum provincial autonomy within the framework of a united Pakistan. The majority of the autonomists in three smaller provinces support it. It is gaining popularity especially in the Sindh province. But, most of the Punjabi leaders and General Zia condemn it as 'an attempt to isolate Punjab and finally disintegrate Pakistan.'¹³ The Punjab's uncompromising attitude towards the demands of genuine provincial autonomy would lead the Zia regime (which is the vehicle of the Punjabi interests) to the two options and both of them appear to be counter-productive. General Zia's first option is to pick a handful of Sindhi politicians (with limited influence) and give them a 'token share of power' in the regime and project their image as the 'real leaders of the masses'. The same trick could be applied to the other two smaller nationalities. General Zia believes that such a move would quell the simmering opposition against him. To implement this scheme, General Ziaul Haq has appointed Mr. Junejo as the Prime Minister. Some other free wheeling politicians have been appointed as the provincial and central ministers.¹⁴

General Zia's policy to rely on the support of some collaborators, has a great deal of resemblance with that of General Ayub Khan, who also depended on some old Muslim Leaguers like Abdul Munim Khan and Noorulamin, who were happy with only a token Bengali presence in the Ayub regime. It appears that Zia is consciously or unconsciously wearing Ayub's mantle and repeating his mistakes. As Ayub failed to reconcile with the demands of the Bengali nationalists, Zia is doing same with the Sindhis and other small nationalities. Like Bengali Noorulamin or Abdul Munim Khan, Mr. Junejo is not a popular figure in the Sindh province. His influence is limited to some parts of his home district Sanghar only, and he can hardly prove his credentials as a genuine representative of Sindh. The Sindhis having a deep sense of deprivation in Pakistani body politic they do not consider Mr. Junejo as their leader. As the Bengali collaborators failed to stop the storm against Ayub Khan, so the Junejo ministry will not be able to do anything positive for the Zia regime if trouble once started against it. "Mr. Junejo is a small time Sindhi politician who can not set to see the Indus a fire" as the Guar-

dian rightly puts it in an editorial.¹⁵ Mr. Junejo cannot resist pressures posed by either the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) which enjoys the mass support in Sindh and Punjab or the regionalist leaders like Mr. G.M. Sayed or Mr. Mumtaz Bhutto or their coalition. The failure of Junejo ministry would lead General Zia to his second option, that is the military action.

Mr. Altaf Gouhar, one of Ayub Khan's aides, in an article opines that the Generals are confident of eliminating miscreants and disruptionists (terms used by the military clique for political activists) in every part of Pakistan.¹⁶ This proposition indicates that if there is any threat to the army or the interests of the Punjab, the former will be ready to take military action against the Sindhis as they did in 1983 or as was done in Baluchistan during Ayub and Bhutto eras. General Zia is hypersensitive about Sindh. He has ordered to construct new cantonments in Sind. The presence of the bulk of the armed forces in the interior Sindh, their counter insurgency exercises also indicate the possibility of the military action against the Sindhis in case of any uprising. The Sindhi nationalists also contemplate the possibilities of such an action against them at any time. There is a feeling in Sindh that if the army took action, the populace would give it more serious resistance than it offered in 1983. The army with superior weapons and training can crush any uprising against it by Sindhis or other smaller nationalities, but it can not crush their anger and hatred. The Generals may be feeling at ease to crush any uprising against them considering Pakistan as a single geographical unit. However, they perhaps forget that when Bangladesh was created, Pakistan had one enemy, India. But now-a-days India, the Soviet Union and Iran are either hostile or suspicious of the Zia regime. At least, India and the Soviet Union would not miss the chance in supporting anti-Zia forces to settle their own scores with the regime. Hence longer the Zia rule continues the gulf between the Punjab and other provinces would widen, creating more problems for the unity of Pakistan.

The Islamisation of the Pakistani society has been one of the main catchwords of the Zia regime. Although General Zia introduced this slogan in the early days of his coup, he propagated it more vigorously only after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. General Zia held his 1984 referendum on this programme, and as result of that controversial referendum he proclaimed himself as the President till 1990. Out of this slogan of Islamisation of Pakistani society,

General Zia wanted to achieve a number of objectives: Firstly, sensing the religious nature of Pakistan society, he wanted to project his image as a 'messiah' committed to the glory of Islam. However, his real purpose was to get support for his rule from the masses. Secondly, he wanted to curb political activities in the country in the name of Islam. According to his interpretation of Islam, there was no room for political parties in an Islamic Society. Thirdly, since General Zia wanted to receive the Saudi aid uninterruptedly, he professed to establish the Saudi model Islam in Pakistan. Fourthly, General Zia wanted to be in good books of the U.S. Congress by portraying himself as a devout Muslim and anticommunist. Last not the least, as a counter revolutionary affiliated with a status quo power (the U.S.A), Zia wanted to neutralise the mass appeal of the Islamic revolution of Iran.¹⁷

To make his programme of Islamisation a success, General Zia took several steps. Along side Civil Law and Martial Law, he introduced the Shariah Law in part, and the Shariah Bench was established. They were made so strong that they were competent to amputate the hands of an accused person. Under the Islamisation programme, alongwith ordinary taxes, Islamic taxes like Zakat and Usher were also levied on the public. In July 1985 the Pakistani banks decided to ban the payment and receipt of interest. The media was ordered to present special programmes on Islam.

As the Zia regime lacked any popular support, its programme of Islamisation of a country, whose population is predominantly Muslim, was rebuked from the very beginning. The imposition of the Shariah Law annoyed the bar councils throughout the country, who felt that Mullahs and their like-minded judges should not be entrusted to deliver justice to the people. Since the Zia brand Islam has no place for political activity in the country, all the banned political parties, with the exception of Jammait-i-Islami and Pagara Muslim League (Now Pakistan Muslim League), have opposed this official Islam. The imposition of Zakat and Usher infuriated the Shias who refused to pay these taxes. In opposition to the imposition of a unified Sunni Law, the Shias are demanding the enforcement of their own jurisprudence (Fikah-i-Jaffaria) for them. General Zia's close association with the United States and Saudi Arabia and his covert attempts to oppose the Islamic revolution in Iran have also intensified Shia aversion towards him. Shia Sunni riots have broken out on an unprecedented scale during the Zia regime at Karachi and Quetta. The Islamic Banking System is also labelled as a 'Pious fraud' or an

'Islamic fudge' by its critics who point out that instead of 'interest' banks are offering and receiving 'service charges' at a higher rate than the interest they used to receive or offer to their customers.¹⁸ In contradiction to the Iranian model of Islam, Zia brand Islam does not offer better housing, medical facilities and employment opportunities to the poor. On the contrary it encourages the process of 'denationalisation' in the country. Wealth is being concentrated in few pockets. The unemployed youth seeks refuge in secular ideologies like nationalism and socialism. They feel that they have been robbed of their basic rights in the name of religion. Pakistan as a state came into being by democratic means. General Zia's flagrant diversion from democratic norms has tarnished the image of the country abroad. With the exception of America and Saudi Arabia no country on the earth appreciates Zia's attempts to exploit the sacred name of Islam for his political ambitions. Hence General Zia's programme of Islamisation of the Pakistani society has proved counter-productive. It has divided Pakistan on sectarian and class lines and blanked its image abroad.

Foreign policy of a state, being just an extension of its internal policies beyond its boundaries is formulated by the government in power in accordance with its ideals and goals. After receiving an amount of \$ 3.2 billions of the U.S. aid in 1982 and a promise of the post 1987 aid worth 4.2 billion dollars, America is being considered by General Ziaul Haq as the state with whom "Pakistan has friendliest relationship".¹⁹ This "special relationship" with the United States cemented by Reagan's commitments to General Zia, plays a significant role in shaping Pakistan's relations with its immediate neighbours.

Afghanistan issue is a point where the Zia regime and the Reagan administration have almost a complete identity of interests. Both perceive the Soviet Union military presence as a potential threat to their vital interests. Both help the Afghan guerrillas to continue their operations against the Soviet forces. Both of them try to get maximum benefits out of turmoil in Afghanistan. The Reagan administration probably wishes to see the Russians bleed into Afghanistan till they agree to make concessions under a broader East-West context. The Zia regime seemingly wishes the lingering of the Afghan conflict to receive the U.S. aid uninterruptedly. Both the Zia regime and the Reagan administration express their willingness to solve the problem by political means, but at the time of serious negotiations with the U.N. mediator Mr. Cordovaz, Pakistan rejects a

proposal for direct talks with Afghanistan. Similarly the United States is professedly willing to become a guarantor to the neutrality of Afghanistan and it makes promises to stop interfering in Afghanistan if the Russians withdraw their troops. The Russians are quite willing to do so provided America stops supporting the guerrillas. America wishes the Russians withdrawal first, and thus hinders the political settlement of the Afghanistan issue.

Pakistan still maintains diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, all the banned political parties with the exception of the Pakistan Muslim League and the Jammait-i Islami insist on direct talks with Kabul. The intellectuals in Pakistan raise the similar voices²⁰ but the Zia regime believes that any direct dialogue with Kabul, which from its perspective is an 'illegal, illegitimate and puppet regime' would on the one hand confer legitimacy on it and on the other, it will be a violation of the resolutions passed by the Islamic Ummah Committee. The American involvement in Afghanistan is quite understandable because of its status as a world power and an adversary of the Soviet Union. However, Zia's refusal to reach an agreement with Kabul is a bit difficult to be understood. Undoubtedly 'it was Afghanistan as the Guardian puts it, which brought Zia from the dog house to the whitehouse,²¹. However, the same Afghanistan issue is posing a host of problems for Pakistan as a state and Zia's negligence of them is beyond any comprehension. Zia is probably taking security risk of Pakistan by provoking the Soviet Union, for the sake of his own survival. One can argue that Zia as a head of state is not insensitive to the Afghan dilemma. He may be willing to strike a direct deal with Kabul but may be waiting for a green light from the United States. Till that signal comes he will continue his present policies on Afghanistan, which could be very dangerous for Pakistan as a state.

It has been mentioned in the introduction of this paper that, apart from the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the instability in the Gulf region, arising out of the fall of the Shah of Iran, was another factor which made Pakistan and its military ruler, General Zia indispensable to the U.S. policy makers. In a way they were probably happy that Pakistan ruled by a dictator (reliant heavily on U.S. aid) would be more suitable to become a partner into the 'Strategic Consensus' and play role of the 'policeman' of the region, than an elected leader. General Zia agreed to comply with the American wishes. He despatched Pakistan troops into the Gulf to save the rulers from any uprising against them. The Gulf rulers were assured by the United States and Pakistan to count on their support in an hour of

the need, a reference to the Iran-Iraq war which started in 1980 and appears to be interminable in its course. Pakistan and the United States are professedly neutral in it, but their impartiality is certainly benevolent towards Iraq. America and Pakistan are very much worried about the war and the prevention of the victory of Iran is in their best interests. If the Iraqis were defeated in the war, their Gulf Paymasters, common friends of U.S.A. and Pakistan, would face the same fate. The fall of the Sheikhs, especially that of the House of Saud would bring unbearable losses to the United States. The new rulers would be either leftists or fundamentalists, both hostile to the United States interests in the region. They could interrupt the supply of oil to the West, open an Eastern front against Israel, and lean too much towards the Soviet Union. Those potential rulers would be popular at home and may not need mercenaries for their protection. The falling oil prices could compel them to expedite the expatriation of the foreign workers. The return of the workers and soldiers (who are mainly from Zia's home province Punjab) would increase the financial difficulties of the Zia regime. Hence Zia, for domestic and external reasons, has joined the U.S. efforts to prevent the victory of Iran in the Gulf War.

Despite their heavy losses in men and material, and a limited supply of weapons from the open market, the Iranians' are stubborn to defeat the Iraqis and try their President Mr. Saddam Hussain as a 'war criminal'. Iranians have surprised the world by penetrating deep into Iraqi territory from South and the North. They have captured the Iraqi port of Al-Faw and a missile base in the Southern Iraq near the Kuwait border. The Iranians may occupy the Kuwait Island of Babayan, as a preventive measure to save it from falling into the enemy hands. America has declared the security of Kuwait and other Gulf states as one of its vital interests in the region.

Iraqis, in a desperate bid to halt the Iranian advances and cripple its economy, are bombing the Iranian oil terminal at Kharg. They are also hitting the oil tankers in the Hormuz Straits. Iranians have made it clear that if they were deprived of the export of oil through the straits, the waterway will be closed for all nations. To make their threat credible they have intercepted an American cargo ship in the straits. To maintain the freedom of navigation in the Gulf, America has threatened to use force against Iran.²² It has requested its allies to cooperate in this context. Pakistan as the 'guardian of the Gulf waterways' may also be expected to cooperate

There is no doubt that if Iran closes down the Strait of Hormuz or occupies a part of the Kuwaiti territory, America will use force against it. Will Pakistan be able to resist the Arab-American pressures to attack Iran. A specialist on West Asia, believes that 'an economically dependent Pakistan would be hard put to refuse if these countries demanded their pound of flesh.'²³ Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo, a prominent Baluchi leader apprehends that, 'Pakistan may intervene in the Gulf war at U.S. insistence.'²⁴ Iranians do contemplate this possibility seriously, and they are ready to face it.²⁵ Despite a limited economic cooperation and rhetoric of Islamic brotherhood, they perceive the things through prism of their national interests. Iranians do not consider Pakistan as their friend. During his tour of Pakistan, the Iranian President Mr. Khamanie said 'All friends of American imperialism while not enemies, cannot be true friends of Iran.'²⁶

The Majority of the Pakistanis in general and the Shias in particular are very hostile towards the United States for a number of reasons. In case of any Pakistani intervention direct or indirect, in the Gulf war, the Iranians would use their 'anti-American card' quite effectively against the U.S. interests and the Zia regime in Pakistan. To thwart the Pakistan-U.S. designs against them, the Iranians are mending their fences with the Soviet Union. Hence the Zia regime's Gulf policies associated with the U.S. are provocative to the Iranians. They are creating distrust in their minds. These policies are completing ring of isolation around Pakistan and increasing security risks for it.

The Reagan administration has a great deal of impact on the Zia regime's overtures to India. This U.S. influence on the regime has both positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, it persuades the regime to normalise relations with India, and on the other, the same influence on the regime, deepens the historical suspicion between India and Pakistan. The Reagan administration desires to be friendly with India, because of its democratic setup, opportunities offered by a vast Indian market to U.S. manufactured goods, and 'to develop a China-India-America triangle of containment' against the Soviet Union in the 1995-2005.²⁷ The Reagan administration has a better opinion about the pragmatic computer loving Rajiv than his ideologue, anti-imperialist mother, late Mrs. Gandhi. After the Rajiv's accession to power, Mr. Reagan believed that 'a window of opportunity' has been opened for the Americans in India. At the same time, the Reagan administration continues its patronising

attitude towards the Zia regime in Pakistan. Furthermore, the administration believes that the regime could play an effective role in the Gulf and against the Soviet Union when it is at peace with its most important neighbour, India. Hence the Indo-Pakistani rapprochement is in the best interests of the Reagan administration, and it is insisting on both the countries to normalise their relations.

After the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, Pakistan offered a 'no war pact' to India. Although India didn't turn it down, it suggested a 'Comprehensive treaty of friendship' for an over all improvement in their mutual relations. Ever since, the diplomats of the two countries are trying to forge the two proposals into a single instrument. Trade is supposed to be the index of state of relationship between the states. It is rapidly increasing between India and Pakistan. It is expected to be doubled in the next year from its present volume of £ 35 million. One more land crossing point at Khokhrapar is to be opened. The direct telephone link has been established between Karachi and Delhi. Some private companies have agreed to start joint ventures. Prime Minister Rajiv and General Zia are meeting frequently at different forums. They have played a leading role in the establishment of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). In December 1985, during General Zia's visit to Delhi, the two heads of the government made a verbal declaration not to attack each other's nuclear installations. Mr. Junejo has also met with Mr. Rajiv at Stockholm where the later reaffirmed his commitments to visit Pakistan if 'satisfactory progress' was made in the normalisation of Indo-Pak relations. The Foreign and Defence Secretaries of the two countries also meet very frequently. By observing the momentum of contact between the dignitaries, one may be tempted to believe that under Reagan's pressures, India and Pakistan have made a great deal of progress towards the normalisation of their relations. However, this is only one side of the picture.

President Reagan's alliance with the Zia regime has a number of adverse effects on the Indo-Pakistani relations as well. Keeping in view the U.S. interests in the region, Mr. Reagan may be happy to condone Zia's model of controlled democracy, but the Indians may be unwilling to do that.²⁸ They consider the Zia regime, basically an authoritarian one and are afraid of it. The Indians believe that whenever Pakistan has been ruled by a dictator, the two countries have plunged into war, and this cycle may repeat during the present regime at any time. The Indians point out that Zia is exploiting the Afghan bogey to his benefit. He is equipping his armed

forces with sophisticated American weapons which have been used against India and would be used in the same manner in the future as well. The F-16s are stationed near Indian border. The bulk of the army is deployed on the Indian border, the Harpoon missiles would be used only against India, which is still being considered to be the traditional enemy by the Pakistani military hierarchy.²⁹

The waiving of the Symington amendment has also annoyed the Indians. They feel that Pakistan is making bomb with the American acquiescence which would lead to a nuclear race in the sub-continent.³⁰ The Indians blame Pakistan for encouraging and harbouring Kashmir and Sikh separatists. Indians point a finger at Pakistan in case of Hindu-Muslim riots in their country. The Indians are unhappy about Pakistan's ties with the Srilankan government which is allegedly committing genocide against the Tamils. In nutshell Indians perceive a Pakistan-American machination against them for most of their troubles inside India and around it.³¹ They feel such a plot against them is the biggest stumbling block in the way of improvement of relations between India and Pakistan.

For an over all improvement of relations, Indians suggest that Pakistan must decouple itself from the United States strategy in South and South West Asia and solve the problems through bilateral means. The Indians disagree with Zia's military model 'detente' for improving relations. On their own, they suggest a 'functional approach' for the same purpose. The Indians believe that India and Pakistan have a great deal of things in common and they can improve their relations rapidly. The Indians insist that Pakistan should treat them as the most favoured nation in the trade. Pakistan and Indian films should be available to each other's spectators, the readers in the two countries should have access to each other's literature and the travelling restrictions on each other's citizens should be minimised. Despite pressures from the Reagan administration, General Zia cannot go upto that extent, due to domestic restraints.

General Zia is under heavy pressure from his home province Punjab, to be cautious in improving ties and businessmen are against any exchange of the films and expansion of the trade with India. His fellow generals insist to continue hawkish attitude towards India. The Pakistani military hierarchy feels that if Pakistan completely normalises relations with India, there will be no need to keep one of the huge standing armies in the world, and Zia has very little influence on his fellow generals, who prop him into the power. The generals rightly feel that without armed forces, the Punjabi (whom

they represent) on the one hand would be deprived of the job opportunities for the unemployed youth, on the other, without armed-forces, the Punjab would be at pains to keep its grip on the smaller provinces. Hence the Punjabi factor, restrains General Zia to improve relations with India. His close connections with the Americans also put hindrances to improve the relation between the two countries.

An overall picture of Pakistan's external relations indicates that the regime has formulated foreign policy in such a way that it is more prone to protect the interests of the regime rather than national interests. Pakistan foreign policy serves the American interests rather than its own in the South and South West Asia. The Zia regime's American connections have provoked the Soviet hostility, Indians suspicion and Iranian mistrust. Pakistan has been isolated from its immediate neighbours and security risk has been heightened. In the final analysis, the Reagan administration has been giving a new lease of life to the Zia regime but the same support to the regime is eroding the very existence of Pakistan as a state.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Mr. Bhutto sent military instructors to the Gulf to train the local forces there, but Pakistani troops were dispatched by General Muhammad Ziaul Haq, see Williams Guanct, Saudi Arabia in the 1980: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil, (Washington D.C. Brooking Institute, 1981) p. 41.
2. "A Leak in the Pipe Line" The Times Magazine, December 9, 1985, pp.14-13.
3. This is the recurrent theme of the propaganda of the above mentioned states. Their diplomats never miss a chance to raise the issue of the bases with their Pakistani counterparts. Indians are especially sensitive about those bases and consider them as the major hindrance in the way of improvement of relations with Pakistan. See statement of Mr. Ramesh Bandari (the former Indian Foreign Secretary during his visit to Pakistan). Dawn (Karachi) January 21, 1986 and A.S. Abraham, "Indo-Pakistani Dialogue; Some Crucial Questions". The Times of India, (Delhi), February 7, 1986.
4. Sher Muhammad Marri, Takbir Weekly (Karachi), October 17, 1985, p. 18.

Grassroots

5. The American aid to Pakistan is being given under the provisions of 1959 bilateral defence agreement, that included a secret clause which allowed the U.S.A. to use Pakistan air bases and set up monitoring centres. The presence of such arrangements in Pakistan were known to the world when in the 60s the Soviet Union shot down, U-2, a reconnaissance plane over its territory and its pilot Gerry Powers confessed of beginning his flight from the Peshawar base. The renewal of the said treaty in 1981, has evoked those memories of the 60s which have been refurbished by the visit of U.S. 7th Fleet at Karachi in March this year. (1986)
6. "Reagan-II: A foreign policy Consensus", *The Times*, December 10, 1984 pp. 40-42 and Ahsan Ali Khan "U.S. Policies and Pakistan". *Dawn*, February 11, 1985.
7. *Dawn*, April 2, 1986.
8. For a post 1987 aid package, Pakistan demanded U.S. \$ 6.2 billions, but the U.S. provided it with a package worth \$ 4.2 billions. Half of the amount would be spent to modernise the Pakistan forces. *Dawn*, March 25, 1986.
9. *The Economist* (London) January 19, 1985, p. 13.
10. The Assembly gave such an undertaking by making 8th amendment in the constitution under so called 'Indemnity act'.
11. Sardar Attaullah Mengal: An Interview, *Jang, Daily* (Karachi) August 31, 1983.
12. Declaration of Convention of the Sindhi Baluchi Pakhtoon Front (PBSF) London, December 8, 1985, pp. 3-4.
13. For General Zia's views on the Confederation, see *Dawn*, May 13, 1985, and for Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Khar, a champion of the Punjab's case, see *The Herald*, (Monthly) January 1986, pp. 46 and *Dawn*, April 2, 1986.
14. They are freewheeling politicians in the sense that they want to remain in office regardless of party loyalties.
15. *The Guardian*, Weekly, January 12, 1986, p. 10.
16. Altaf Gouhar "Ayub Khan's Abdication", *The Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 1, January 1985, p. 130.

17. The programme of mass appeal of a revolutionary power is opposed by its neighbours, who feel threatened by its influence and they put forward their counter ideals. See "International Revolutions" in Martin Wight's *Power Politics*, (London, Penguin Books, 1979) pp. 81-94.
18. *The Economist*, October 26, 1985, p. 77.
19. See General Zia's address at the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Karachi, Dawn, February 14, 1986.
20. M.B. Naqvi, "A Policy for Afghanistan", Dawn, January 26, 1986.
21. *The Guardian*, Weekly, op. cit.
22. America has delivered its latest threat to Iran, during Vice President, Bush's visit to the Gulf region, see Dawn, April 9, 1986.
23. Muhammad Ayub, "Date Line Pakistan: A Passage to Anarchy", *Foreign Policy*, No. 59, 1985, p. 166.
24. Dawn, February 27, and April 18, 1986.
25. An Informal Interview with Aga Yakoobi, one of the First Secretaries in the Iranian Embassy at Islamabad, August, 1982.
26. *The View Point*, Weekly, (Lahore) January 23, 1986, p. 24.
27. Professor Iqbal Ahmed: An Interview, *Herald*, January 1986, p.241 and *the Link*, Weekly (Delhi) May 19, 1985.
28. S. Venkatesh, "Friends and Neighbours-II: Aspects of General Zia's Democracy", *The Statesman*, (Delhi), February 2, 1986.
29. Mr. Gandhi has repeated these charges against Pakistan in a statement given in a Lok Sabha Debate, Dawn, April 9, 1986.
30. *Ibid.*
31. "India warned against U.S.-Pak. Designs", *The Statesman*, February 14, 1986.