

Attitude of Big Powers Towards India and Pakistan

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After the partition in 1947, the subcontinent was first considered as an area where British responsibilities and capabilities were paramount. But soon afterwards the atmosphere of suspicion, quarrel and conflict between India and Pakistan drew the attention of non-regional countries to these developments. The regional cold war was, of course, not conducted in a vacuum. Elements of global politics, particularly those that related to the three dominant sets of conflict in the international system—the Soviet-American, the Sino-Soviet and Sino-American—directly or indirectly interfered in the regional conflicts.

Given the geo-strategic location of the subcontinent bordering on two of the three great powers, with an outlet into the Indian Ocean and contiguous to the Persian Gulf, the intrusion of global and extra-regional conflicts into the subcontinent was perhaps inevitable.¹ The external major powers' involvement in South Asian region was sometimes related directly to their regional interests in the subcontinent, but more often they were related to their larger goals of international competition and domination. In this game South Asia became merely another chessboard on which pawns could be moved one way or another. Their interests and related moves were further complicated by Indo-Pakistan relations and often made the regional cold war very bitter and severe.

India's and Pakistan's Relations with the United States

After the liquidation of British rule in 1947, India and Pakistan emerged as two independent countries in South Asia. In the beginn-

ing both countries got nothing more than a warm greeting from the United States, as new members of the world community. At that time, the U. S., like the U. S. S. R., was preoccupied with more urgent problems in Europe and the Far East. However, things changed due to the developing cold war. Washington now turned its attention towards South Asia, which seemed as an ideal region for the implementation of new U. S. policy. Friendly gestures of goodwill and modest amounts of economic aid were first contemplated without any major political and military involvement.

Between India and Pakistan the former got greater attention from Washington, because of its size, popularity of its leaders, like Nehru, who was quite well known in the Western world and was emerging as the leader of Afro-Asian countries. But when the United States started formulating its new policy towards the Middle East and gave serious thought to regional defense arrangements for the Middle East, as well as South Asia, Pakistan's geographical position gave it a special strategic importance. West Pakistan bordered on the region surrounding the Persian Gulf and East Pakistan could become an outlet to the countries of Southeast Asia. From these strategic locations, the United States could deal with the problem of international Communism from a "position of strength".

U.S. policy towards the subcontinent (1954-59)

The real incentive in this regard came when the West was confronted with the Korean War. Southeast Asia and the Middle East became strategically and economically important areas, which needed to be defended from the "threats of aggression" from communists. John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State under the Eisenhower administration, set out on a fact-finding mission to countries of the Middle East and South Asia on May 9, 1953, during which he visited India and Pakistan. Dulles' talks with Nehru were unsuccessful, the Indian Prime Minister had fundamental differences on the issue of regional military pacts, and like most Asian and Arab countries, was not convinced of "any imminent Communist threat". Secondly, Nehru was not prepared to give up his policy of non-alignment which had earned for his country high prestige and a favorable image in the Third World.²

In Pakistan, the atmosphere was quite different and of course favorable to the U.S. Pakistan in her quest for security in the face of unending Indo-Pakistan tensions, was eager to find an ally. The plans for regional pacts which the U.S. was ready to sponsor had great attraction for Pakistan. The United States was happy to get the support of an Asian country, with its significant geo-political location, at a time when non-alignment was the dominating theme among the Asian countries. On the other hand, Pakistan was delighted to get the help of a Super power to increase her military strength to meet the threats of aggression from India.

Pakistan became a member of SEATO as well as the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) after entering into a bilateral military agreement with the U.S. in 1954 and subsequently an additional one in 1959.³ India re-acted violently to the U.S. decision to include Pakistan in her global strategy; thus Indo-U.S. relations were put to severe strains and stresses in the mid-1950s.

New U.S. policy towards the subcontinent in the 1960s

With the coming of the Kennedy administration in 1961, great changes were brought in U.S. policy towards the subcontinent. The keynote of the new policy was favorable to neutralists like India, but it worked to the disadvantage of allies like Pakistan.⁴ The Indo-U.S. relations had already taken a turn for the better during 1959-60 because of the growing tension between India and China. President Kennedy wanted to take advantage of the situation. Other factors like the Soviet-Chinese ideological conflict and prospect for an East-West detente also influenced alignment and non-alignment in the policies of India and Pakistan. The most important factor affecting U.S. policy towards the subcontinent was the common objective of both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. concerning China in the 1960s and the role that India was expected to play in their global *policy* for the containment of China.

Kennedy enunciated a "new alliance for progress" in lieu of military alliances for the developing countries, emphasis being on economic aid. India was very much delighted with this change in U.S. policy, whereas Pakistan was worried. Kennedy seemed to make extraordinary efforts to maintain good relations simultaneously

with India and Pakistan. But the task was not easy; rather, it was difficult and complex like having good relations at the same time with the Arab countries and Israel. Both Ayub and Nehru were invited to the United States in 1961. As a result of Kennedy's meetings with the leaders of India and Pakistan, the U. S. was successful in maintaining a policy of equal treatment with both India and Pakistan. India, satisfied with this move, had new hopes and was optimistic.⁵

But the situation changed when the Indo-China armed conflict started in October 1962. Due to the hostile attitude then prevailing towards China, the Western countries reacted in favor of India, which was supposed to be the victim of "naked aggression" by China. This was the most appropriate moment for the United States, which showed its great favor rushing arms and supplies to India. This continued even after China's unilateral declaration of a ceasefire.

India embarked upon a huge military build-up with the military supplies not only from the United States but from the Soviet Union as well. The Indo-Chinese conflict not only brought India closer to the United States but also the Sino-Soviet rift was further widened as a result of the Soviet support to India. So the policy of strengthening India's military strength suited the objectives of U.S. foreign policy.⁶

Pakistan made protests against U. S. policy of arming India which greatly upset the balance of power in the subcontinent. The United States tried to remove Pakistan's fears and anxieties over the Indian arms build-up but it did not help much. Rather, the tension between India and Pakistan (which had never diminished) increased, which finally culminated in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. At that time the United States suspended military assistance to both India and Pakistan. Gratis military supplies to Pakistan were never resumed. Sales were subsequently limited to spare parts for weapons already supplied and these too were treated on a "case-by-case" basis. In the 1970s, a few sales of whole units, notably fighters, were negotiated but not actually executed.

Disheartened by the unfortunate events of the subcontinent, particularly Indian wars with Pakistan and China, the United States was convinced that there was no hope of building up India against China in Asian affairs. In the case of Pakistan, the special relations were formally broken when Pakistan gave notice to close the important U.S. strategic communication center at Bedaber near Peshawar from where the U-2 plane had once taken off and was shot down in Russia. During the Johnson administration, the United States began a process of disengagement from military commitments in the subcontinent. President Johnson wanted to make it clear to both India and Pakistan that the U.S. military assistance to them was not meant for their fighting against each other.

The changed attitude of the United States was mostly due to her military venture in Vietnam. Due to this involvement, Southeast Asia became a top priority area. At the same time, the United States paid attention to the Middle East, where the Soviet Union was rapidly expanding her influence by taking advantages of the regional conflicts between the Arabs and Israel.⁷

The U.S. and the Subcontinent in the 1970s

By the time Richard Nixon became the President of the United States in January 1969, U.S. policy towards the subcontinent had undergone great changes since the days of his vice-presidency in the mid-1950s. Though President Nixon, due to the political importance of the subcontinent, could not altogether ignore it while evolving the new U.S. foreign policy, he certainly decided to operate it with a low profile. Nixon was rather anxious to develop better understanding and detente with the two communist major powers: the U.S.S.R. and China.

A significant development in U.S. policy with regard to the subcontinent took place when an unexpected assignment was given to Yahya Khan (then the President of Pakistan) by Nixon to act as a middleman between Washington and Peking in the context of Nixon's new China policy. Yahya did this job with utmost secrecy and responsibility and his services were greatly appreciated by both countries. Nixon's new China policy gave Pakistan a good opportunity (which at that time was involved in the Bangladesh crisis) of

renewing better relations with the United States, particularly with a sympathetic President at the White House. The better relationship was dramatized by the U.S. government's decision to lift the embargo on U.S. military equipment to both India and Pakistan, which had been banned since the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. No doubt, Pakistan was pleased with this decision. It had been the main loser from the U.S. embargo since India continued to get massive military supplies from the Soviet Union, thereby causing a grave threat to Pakistan's security. During the Bangladesh crisis, Indo-U.S. relations were correct but not entirely cordial. India was suspicious of Nixon's personal inclinations towards Pakistan.⁸

Nixon's policy towards the subcontinent in 1971-72 raised many angry voices both inside and outside the United States. The world press had flashed atrocities of the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan, and the Nixon administration was charged with siding with the military junta in Pakistan. A closer analysis of the U.S. role during the crisis in Bangladesh reveals that President Nixon did not condone the atrocities of the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan, and he did not approve of India's grand and well planned strategy to dismember Pakistan with Russia's diplomatic and military help. Nixon tried to encourage a political settlement between the East and West Wings of Pakistan, but had no success in that. As regards India's role, the Nixon administration branded India "as an aggressor in the war".⁹

After the secession of Bangladesh, Pakistan was desperate to preserve her territorial integrity in the context of separatist tendencies in the Northwest-Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan, which appeared to have the Soviet Union's blessings. Pakistan looked towards Washington for "protection". It had already revived its interest in CENTO, a reversal of Bhutto's earlier demands of withdrawal from SEATO¹⁰ and CENTO.

The United States still seemed to be interested in the maintenance of Pakistan's territorial integrity. Washington would not like to see a further dismemberment of Pakistan by the combined Soviet and Indian moves. But one thing is certain; the heyday of U.S.-Pakistan relationships of the mid-1950s is over for good. The new

relationship is likely to be merely pragmatic and based on realities in South Asia. Besides, after the ouster of Mr. Bhutto by a military general, Pakistan once again is facing a difficult internal crisis. The Carter administration's attitude has been quite cold—to the extent of ignoring Pakistan. Carter made a tour of Asia and Africa in the winter of 1978. He visited India, and showed an interest in the new government led by Morarji Desai (installed after the defeat of Indira Gandhi and Congress), but did not visit Pakistan.

Relations of Soviet Russia with India and Pakistan

The Russians often accuse the so-called "imperialist powers", and recently China, of exploiting regional tensions to advance their national interest. An analysis of the Soviet's policy and actions towards the subcontinent will, however, show that the Russians, more than any other power, sought to utilize the tensions between India and Pakistan in achieving their objectives in South Asia.

India's struggle for power and the Muslim demand for a separate state based on religion, was denounced and condemned by Russia, "as a set of new imperialist devices to retain British political, economic and strategic influence in South Asia".¹¹ Throughout the Stalin era, Russian comments on India and Pakistan were harsh and their attitude remained hostile. Through that early period Soviet Russia showed no inclination to establish any friendly relations with India or Pakistan. But Pandit Nehru, being a great admirer of the social welfare and economic development policies of Russia, had felt the necessity of maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union, a neighbor, with whom, he said, "we shall have to undertake many common tasks and have much to do".¹²

Stalin, like Dulles, did not appreciate Nehru's non-alignment, because he saw the world as sharply divided into two camps and thought there was no room for the middle-of-the-roads. Nehru's first trip to the United States in 1949, at the invitation of President Truman, had drawn further Soviet criticism, and most of his speeches brought harsh comments from the Soviet press. He was called an "American Stooge".¹³ The Soviet Union, by sensing Pakistan's discomfort with the Western powers' wooing of Nehru, tried to take

advantage of Pakistan's frustration. An invitation to visit Russia was sent to Pakistan's Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in 1949. At that stage, Pakistan could not be influenced by the Soviet Union, because it desperately needed economic and military assistance, neither of which the Soviet Union was in a position to supply. Thus, Pakistan turned down Stalin's invitation and became more friendly with the United States in the mid-1950s. The Kremlin leaders recognized that the best way to penalize Pakistan was to support her adversary, India.¹⁴

During the Korean War, India played her first major role in international affairs, and her policy was found favorable to Russia. Nehru's speeches and statements gave the impression that India agreed more with the Soviet Union than with the United States on matters related to the Korean War. On another occasion, when the Japanese Peace Treaty became a controversial matter, India sided with the Soviet bloc. Nehru's open criticism of the policies of the West began to gain Stalin's appreciation. Relations between India and the U.S.S.R. showed some improvement; simultaneously this was the end of Moscow's softer policy towards Pakistan (manifested by the earlier invitation to Liaquat).

Nehru's condemnation of the Western military pacts in the Third World brought praises from the Soviet press, and Stalin's successors valued his independent foreign policy. They tilted towards the Indian government and took advantage of the tensions between India and Pakistan. They saw that antipathy to Pakistan was the pivot of Indian foreign policy.

The whole decade of 1950 to 1960 and onwards is remarkable in Indo-Soviet relationships. Moscow and New Delhi entered into numerous trade agreements from 1953 to 1959 which not only improved their relationship, but also enhanced the economic development of India. Soviet Russia helped India in construction and development of heavy industry. Between 1957 and 1961 the U.S.S.R. extended credit to India totalling \$ 670 million.¹⁵ At the same time, India obtained large amounts of economic assistance from both the United States and other Western countries.

On political issues, India and the Soviet Union supported each other's position. With respect to the Russian atrocities in Hungary, India was not at all vocal as compared to her severe condemnation of the Anglo-French-Israeli action in Egypt. India was the only non-communist country which voted with the Soviet bloc against a U.N. resolution calling for free elections in Hungary. India's support for the U.S.S.R. was compensated by Soviet support of India's position on the Kashmir issue. During 1954-1962, the Soviet Union dropped its neutrality on the Kashmir issue and openly supported India. It not only gave unequivocal support to India on the matter, but also went to the extent of exercising its veto when the U.N. Security Council resolutions regarding Kashmir were displeasing to India.

Soviet policy towards India and Pakistan in the 1960s

After the Sino-Indian War of 1962, Soviet Russia began to take note of "new trends" in Pakistan's policy. Pakistan had shown its displeasure with the American decision to supply arms to India. Along with that, the Soviet Union also watched with concern Pakistan's growing friendship and closer links with China. With the twin objectives to exploit Pakistan's dissatisfaction with the United States and prevent the growing relationship between China and Pakistan, the Soviet Union began a new phase of its policy towards the subcontinent. The new policy continued the special relationship with India but attempts were now made to cultivate better relationship with Pakistan.

As a result of Russia's new policy, a series of dialogues began on ambassadorial and then higher official levels. During these dialogues it was clear that the Soviet Union wanted to discuss secondary issues like a cultural agreement and trade, whereas Pakistan was eager to discuss the more important issues, such as Soviet support of India on Kashmir, Afghanistan's stand on "Pakhtoonistan" and Soviet arms supplies to India which were causing great anxieties in Pakistan.¹⁶

During President Ayub's visit to the U. S. S. R. in April 1965, Moscow appeared to press Pakistan to withdraw from the Western

sponsored pacts, particularly CENTO, and to close the U. S. communication center at Bedaber base. Pakistan urged Moscow to modify the Soviet stand on Kashmir and reduce arms supplies to India. Neither side showed any flexibility in their respective positions, however. Keeping aside these important political issues, Pakistan had already signed a cultural agreement in June 1964, a civil aviation agreement in 1963, and a barter trade agreement in 1963.

Since Ayub's first state visit to the U.S.S.R., the Soviet-Pakistan relationship had been relaxed considerably though no major step was taken by either side on important political issues affecting the relationship. The Soviet Union began to maintain a posture of neutrality in the Indo-Pakistan dispute. It, however, did not take any positive step in that direction which would seriously jeopardize its relations with India. This softness in its attitude was shown only to weaken Pakistan's old ties with the United States and those emerging with China. That is how the Soviet Union maintained a facade of neutrality in Indo-Pakistan affairs.¹⁷

Whatever the motives behind Soviet policy, it was able to bring some changes in Pakistan's policy. Its first success was seen in 1965, when after the Indo-Pakistan War in September 1965, Ayub, despite the warnings of Pakistan's ally China, accepted the Soviet role of mediation at the Tashkent Conference in 1966. This conference could achieve very little, if anything at all, to improve Indo-Pakistan relations. Yet, for the Soviet Union, it was a great diplomatic achievement as it played, for the first time, the role of a peacemaker in a major conflict in Asian affairs.

After the 1965 War, the military balance of power was changing fast to the detriment of Pakistan and favourably for India because the United States, on which Pakistan depended totally for military supplies, put an embargo on military supplies for both India and Pakistan. The U.S. embargo did not hit India as hard as it did Pakistan, because the Soviet Union continued to give massive military aid to India. Pakistan got military supplies from China, but they were no match for the Russian weapons pouring into India. Hence Pakistan also tried to get Soviet arms, of which it received a modest amount after agreeing to close down the U.S. communication center at Bedaber.

The Indian reaction to the Soviet decision to supply arms to Pakistan was predictable. However, Kosygin's visit to New Delhi, after a visit to Pakistan, convinced Mrs. Gandhi that the arms sales to Pakistan neither harmed India's vital national interests nor vitiated its ties with Moscow. India officially protested the arms sales, but it seemed to accept the Soviet assurances.¹⁸

After the arms sales, Russian pressures were further intensified, when Pakistan was "advised" to join Kosygin's plan for a regional economic grouping, comprising Afghanistan, India, Iran, Pakistan and the Soviet Union, and Brezhnev's scheme of an Asian Collective Security arrangement.¹⁹

Pakistan saw that the Russian motives behind these schemes of regional cooperation against "imperialist" aggression and "neocolonialism" were to jeopardize its friendship with China on whom it relied heavily in case of a threat from India. Accordingly, it rejected these various Russian proposals. It refused to pay the heavy political price for the Russian arms, uncertain in quantity and poor in quality. Pakistan's rejection of the new Soviet proposals in Asia against China put an end to the short-lived period of so-called friendly relations between Moscow and Islamabad (1965-70).

Soviet relations with India and Pakistan in the 1970s

By refusing to comply with the crude Russian pressures, Pakistan had to pay a heavy price. Soviet Russia's relations with India grew stronger day by day. By signing the 20-year treaty of peace, friendship, and cooperation in August 1971 with India, the Soviet Union gave almost a blank check to New Delhi.²⁰ Soviet goodwill for Pakistan had now evaporated. Further, Pakistan's role in arranging the Sino-American dialogue was greatly resented in Moscow.

This was the background of the Soviet attitude to Pakistan at the beginning of the civil war in East Pakistan in 1971. The Soviet support for the Bangladesh movement could only be explained in terms of these developments in the Pakistani-Soviet relationship in the preceding two years, 1969-70. Soviet hostility continued even

after East Pakistan's secession. After becoming President, Mr. Bhutto visited Moscow in 1972, but the relationship did not improve much. The political unrest in the NWFP and Baluchistan provinces was greatly due to Soviet encouragement. The seizure of Soviet arms smuggled into Pakistan through the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad, the coup in Afghanistan and President Daud's⁴¹ threats to revive the old issue of "Pakhtoonistan" were interpreted in Pakistan as indications of continued Soviet pressure to bring Pakistan into the Asian Collective Security System.

Relations of China with India and Pakistan

The other great power that has been interested in the recent past in the affairs of the subcontinent is China. After the protracted wars with foreign powers, Mao Tse-tung's China emerged as a united nation, which was to play an important role in Asian affairs. China was considered by many Asians as a great symbol of Asian nationalism. Its emergence was enthusiastically greeted by India, because working together they could form a strong force in the area.

The period from 1949 to 1959 was an era of friendship and cooperation between the two large countries of Asia: India and China.²² India was the second non-communist country after Burma to recognize the People's Republic of China. After the exchange of ambassadors, relations between the two improved a great deal. On the other hand, China's relations with Pakistan were not as warm, one reason being that Pakistan had shown no special enthusiasm about the new China. Though the two countries were not close to each other, there was not any hostility between them, either. Diplomatic missions had been exchanged and other links were established.²³ When Indo-Pakistan trade came to a complete stop in 1949, Pakistan in its search for new markets sold jute and cotton to China in return for coal under a barter agreement. China, on its part, hoped to cultivate relation with the Muslim countries of the Middle East through Pakistan.²⁴

China's relations with India and Pakistan upto 1959

This was the period of a decade of extremely intimate relationship in Sino-Indian relations. Some complications arose during that

period, but those were solved with a spirit of goodwill and friendship. The first major complicating factor in their relations arose over Tibet, whose international status was somewhat ambivalent. China, viewing Tibet as part of its own territory, sought to end its autonomy and integrate it with the rest of the country by force. India was dismayed by China's use of force in Tibet but lacked the military strength to challenge China. Nehru could have opposed China by accepting military support from the Western powers, but at that time he was also interested in establishing his policy of non-alignment.

Sino-Indian relations survived Tibet. The dispute was solved by their signing the Tibet Agreement on April 24, 1954, on the basis of "Panch Sheela"—five principles of peaceful coexistence.²⁵ Moreover, India vigorously championed the cause of China during the Korean War. This period marks strong expressions of friendship, the most popular slogan in India during this period being "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai"—the Indians and Chinese are brothers. Leaders of both countries exchanged visits and received an enthusiastic welcome from the people of the host country. India and China worked together in the political sphere. India and several other countries sponsored the Afro-Asian Conference in 1955 at Bandung where Chou-en-Lai demonstrated his diplomatic skills and statesmanship in dealing with a large number of Asian and African countries.²⁶ Towards the end of the 1950s, Sino-Indian friendship experienced strain. Chinese maps included the territory in the Himalayas which India claimed as its own.

Meanwhile China's relations with Pakistan remained cool, but correct. Pakistan's entry into SEATO was regretted by China but it was not made a special propaganda issue by the Chinese leaders, who showed considerable restraint in dealing with Pakistan at the height of its association with the West.²⁷ Unlike the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries, China refused to regard Kashmir as "an integral part of India". In 1960, during the meetings of the Chinese and Indian officials regarding boundary demarcations, when the Indians tried to include in the talks the border between Pakistan and Indian-held Kashmir, China refused to discuss this part of the boundary. Pakistan reacted favourably to China's decision

and sent a diplomatic note to the Chinese government suggesting a boundary agreement between the two countries.

Relations in the 1960s: The 1960s brought the mistrust and suspicion in Sino-Indian relations to the surface, and the golden era of their friendship came to an end in early 1960. Their relations deteriorated in 1959 when incidents occurred along their Himalayan borders—one in the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and the other in the Ladakh area of northeast Kashmir. Other factors, which produced a drift between these two countries, included President Kennedy's new policy towards South Asia which regarded India as a counterpoise to China. As India turned away from China, Pakistan turned towards it.

In late 1962, India and China had a little war in the Himalayan mountains. The initiative was taken by India when it attacked China's border posts.²⁸ The massive counterattack launched by the Chinese over-powered the Indian forces. India suffered its greatest military setback since independence. China, by announcing a unilateral ceasefire, left India alongwith the rest of the world bewildered, but one thing was then clear: China had proved its superior power.

The Sino-Indian war put an end to the "two thousand years of friendship"²⁹ and had a great impact on the South Asian triangle. It brought China's differences with the Soviet Union to the surface. Disappointed with the United States' attitude, Pakistan started its policy of bilateralism—which not only resulted in closer links with China, but also normalized its relations with the U.S.S.R. Another repercussion of the Sino-Indian war was the strengthening of India against Pakistan. After the death of Nehru, Prime Minister Shastri found his country weak, and took steps to consolidate its position in Kashmir and to renovate its armed forces.

The 1960s brought Pakistan and China, two countries with completely divergent social, economic, and political orders, closer. India considered these new Chinese diplomatic moves towards Pakistan as antipathy to India. China claimed to base its relationship with Pakistan in the 1960s on the five principles of coexistence, which guided its relations with India in the 1950s; while Pakistan's

interpretation was referred to as mutual national interests.³⁰ As pointed out earlier, Pakistan in its quest for security turned to new friends and new allies in the changed circumstances in the 1960s. Of all major powers, China seemed more sympathetic to Pakistan's anxiety over India, and this provided the big incentive to Pakistan's inclination towards Peking.

The boundary pact between China and Pakistan was the first major step in the Sino-Pakistan friendship which has grown steadily for the last fifteen years. In 1959, President Ayub had already shown his willingness to approach China for a peaceful settlement of the boundary between the two countries. The ceasefire line in Kashmir in 1958 resulted in entrusting Pakistan the responsibility of defense of the areas contiguous to China's province of Sinkiang from the Karakoram pass in the northeast to the furthest point in the northwest. The border region comprises two distinct areas, Baltistan and Hunza, and in this region lies one of the greatest mountain complexes the Karakoram range of high mountains, deep valleys, and turbulent rivers. No boundary line had ever been shown in the sector west of the Karakoram pass on any Pakistani map.

On Pakistan's initiative, both countries agreed to have talks on the matter to demarcate the boundaries. Negotiations started in September 1962 between the foreign ministers and the boundary agreement was finally signed on March 2, 1963.³¹ According to the agreement, China actually ceded some 750 square miles of territory. In doing so, China's main objective was to demonstrate its willingness to settle the boundaries in a peaceful manner with its neighbors, such as Afghanistan, Burma, Mongolia, and Nepal. This was a source of embarrassment as well as annoyance to New Delhi. It was a triumph for China, particularly among the Afro-Asian countries.

As for international implications, the agreement had worsened the Indo-Pakistani relations. In Washington, the agreement was resented not so much because of the actual line of demarcation or its contents but for the new trends in Pakistan's foreign policy leaning towards Peking. Pakistan's foreign policy began to move more to the pleasure of Peking resulting in annoyance and displeasure by the Johnson administration in Washington, worries in New Delhi, and uneasiness in Moscow.

A series of agreements between China and Pakistan followed the signing of the border agreement. More significant, however, were the political, diplomatic, and military cooperation and dialogues. Between 1963 and 1966 there were a number of exchange visits between top Chinese and Pakistani leaders culminating in Ayub's state visit in March 1965. There was a wide range of discussions in a much more relaxed and friendlier atmosphere than what Ayub had in Moscow in April 1965. Mao and other Chinese leaders assured Pakistan of China's full support in the event of any external aggression.

During the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965, China gave open and unequivocal support to Pakistan. Between September 16, when China issued an ultimatum to India,³² and the Chinese troops began to move along the Sikkim border, and September 22, when Pakistan accepted the ceasefire resolution, the world remained suspended by the crucial question of whether the war would escalate into a wider, longer and graver conflict between India, China and Pakistan with the potential involvement of the two super powers directly or indirectly.

By this time, due to the pressure both from the U.S. and from the U.S.S.R., President Ayub agreed to accept the ceasefire. The Chinese leaders also showed their statesmanship and understanding of Pakistan's difficulties. They were quite ready to come to Pakistan's rescue and agreed to provide any assistance Pakistan needed at that time. While the Chinese appreciated Pakistan's difficulties and seemed to recognize that Pakistan had no option but to accept the ceasefire, they were certainly not happy to see the role of the Soviet Union as peacemaker in South Asia at the Tashkent Conference. When Liu Shao-Chi came to Pakistan in March 1966, Ayub had to make great efforts to reassure the Chinese leaders about the Tashkent Declaration.³³

After the War of 1965, Ayub looked toward China for immediate help in a fast deteriorating situation for Pakistan's security and defense problems. China assured Pakistan of all types of help in the case of another war with India. In the meantime, China began to give Pakistan the much-needed military supplies. Pakistan received

substantial military aid after 1965; in fact, China proved to be the principal arms supplier to Pakistan in the years 1955-70.³⁴

Pakistan's moves in the direction of the Soviet Union during President Ayub's visit to Moscow in 1967 and Kosygin's visit to Pakistan in early 1968, culminating in the Russian decision to give Pakistan some military supplies,³⁵ raised suspicions in Peking. Ayub was also disturbed by the news of the internal upheaval caused by the Cultural Revolution in China. He probably thought that a change of leadership in China might affect his country's special links with it. China's relations with Pakistan, however, remained unchanged during the Cultural Revolution. There was apparently no sign of a crack in China's attitude towards Pakistan. But before the fall of Ayub in 1969, China seemed to have some "second thoughts" on Pakistan.

China's relations with India and Pakistan in the 1970s

When Yahya Khan became President in March 1969, Pakistan was involved in serious internal problems. During this period Pakistan had hardly any foreign policy. But then came the unexpected but most significant assignment for Yahya, to act as a "messenger" between Washington and Peking.³⁶ This gave Pakistan a good opportunity to further develop better relations with China and also with the U.S. under Nixon.

In this situation, Yahya Khan visited China in November 1970 and had lengthy and exclusive talks with Chou En-Lai and also a meeting with Chairman Mao. The discussions were not confined to China-Pakistan relations but significantly a good part of the dialogue was spent on Sino-American relations in which Yahya had been playing a role.

During that time, China and Pakistan agreed to build the first road linking the two countries, an all-weather route, three miles high, through the Himalayas. It follows the trace of an ancient mule track, known as the "Silk Road" more than 1,600 years ago.³⁷ The new road is regarded as having far more political than military or economic significance. India, however, was concerned over its

construction. Though the road has no significant potential of being used as an "invasion route", this is the only road between the two countries sharing a common boundary in Kashmir. It runs from remote Kashgar to the Mintaka Pass, in Sinkiang Province of China, 15,450 feet above the sea level; on the Pakistani side it runs 80 miles down to Gilgit in Pakistani-held Kashmir. The road was ceremoniously inaugurated in February 1971 and referred to as the "Highway of Friendship".

Yahya Khan's visit contributed to a better understanding between the two countries. China promised substantial economic aid to Pakistan for her fourth five-year plan. Military assistance from China was also discussed. Pakistan's open support at the U.N. for China's entry in October 1970 was greatly appreciated.

But it was a period of great change and uncertainty in Pakistan. China, like any other country, could see the impending crisis in Pakistan. The ruling army junta's unwise handling of the situation in the East wing as well as the uncompromising attitudes of the two principal leaders of East and West Pakistan, Mujib and Bhutto, had added to that confused situation. China was watching the situation with concern and sympathy. In such an uncertain situation, China seemed supportive of Pakistan's well being. When the tragic happenings over the crisis in East Pakistan began, China was caught in a dilemma:³³ whether to support a friendly military regime or a popular movement. As a major power, China could not watch with equanimity the disintegration of Pakistan, its closest ally in South Asia, and the birth of a new country which was destined to be friendly to New Delhi and Moscow, both having a hostile attitude toward China.

When the trouble finally started in East Pakistan in March 1971, the Chinese press and government did not make any hasty comment. The first reaction was expressed in the *People's Daily* on April 11, 1971. It neither supported Pakistan's military action nor attacked the Bengali movement in East Pakistan. Its main attack was against "open interference in the internal matters of Pakistan by the Indian Government". The Russian role, particularly Pod-

gorny's letter to Yahya, was also criticized as an "interference" in Pakistan's internal affairs.

China, like the United States, was very careful of not getting involved in the crisis. The Chinese did not relish the prospect of supporting a military regime of West Pakistan against the elected representatives of East Pakistan. China had always supported liberation movements all over the world and it could not suddenly give up that role for the ruling elite of West Pakistan. At the same time, it could not see the prospect of a major diplomatic triumph of the Soviet Union and India in South Asia where she had an important role to play. These diplomatic realities in South Asia, particularly Sino-Soviet rivalry in the area, put it in an awkward position.

Under these circumstances, China stood with Pakistan in those difficult times, but it was unhappy over the military atrocities in East Pakistan. When Bhutto visited Peking in November 1971 as Yahya's special emissary, China publically demanded that a "rational solution" should be found for East Bengal. As regards the Chinese help and cooperation in the case of war with India, the Chinese left Bhutto with no doubt that Pakistan should not expect any such help of intervention as China had promised and provided during the 1965 War. Pakistan got a "declaration of support" from Peking, but China made no specific commitments and assurances to Pakistan.

When the war finally broke out as a result of Indian military intervention, China supported Pakistan in the Security Council but its support was confined to words and its real anger was expressed against Russia and India. China's role during the war revealed the bitter rivalry between the two communist giants in South Asia. It was bitter over the success of Russian diplomatic gains in the area but not over the emergence of a new nation in the subcontinent.

Relations in the 1970s: In the 1970s as in the last 15 years, Pakistan continues to maintain a special relationship with China. After becoming President, the first great power Bhutto visited was China. Peking reaffirmed its friendship and support to Pakistan in the joint communique issued after Bhutto's visit—China condemned "India's naked aggression" and reiterated its "firm support to the

Pakistan government and people in their just struggle to preserve their state sovereignty and territorial integrity against outside aggression". The close relations of China and Pakistan are likely to be continued as the relationship is based on mutual advantages and identity of interests in the affairs of the subcontinent. Before Bhutto's ouster by the military regime in July 1977, he visited China a couple of times, and every time the joint communiques indicated "opening of new vigorous phases" in bilateral ties. China also supplied Pakistan with military equipment. China's total military aid is said to be equal to the sum of U.S. arms provided to Pakistan during the period 1954-1965.

After Bangladesh's emergence, Sino Indian relations have also taken a new turn. This was confirmed when a decade after the India-China War, China offered to reestablish full diplomatic relations with India in 1973, as noted by Indian Deputy Foreign Minister S.P. Singh in Parliament.³⁹ This Chinese move was also appreciated by India and indications were found that India would also respond to these "gestures of realism". In this regard India has preferred a step by step approach during the last five years and the atmosphere has been quite favorable to the normalization of relations between the two countries. In early February 1978,⁴⁰ a non-official goodwill delegation from China visited New Delhi. This indicated that China was interested in initiating the process of Sino-Indian normalization. Before that a Chinese trade team had already visited India to explore the possibilities of trade between the two countries. This trip was considered as a positive new sign of improving Sino-Indian relations.⁴¹

On the other hand, it is clear also that India is not likely to move toward friendly relations with Peking if this would endanger its relationship with Moscow, and Peking will probably not seek New Delhi's friendship at the expense of that with Islamabad.

Analysis of the Attitude and Interests of the Big Powers in the Region

The critical factor in the international politics of South Asia has been the power balance and the general relationship between

India and Pakistan. In 1971, Pakistan broke in half and with that the power balance in the subcontinent tilted sharply in favor of India, which enjoyed comparative political stability and superior national power. Pakistan's capacity to challenge and attempt to reverse the South Asian states and China has been reduced greatly after the events of 1970-71. The American decision to restore arms aid and other supplies in February 1975 had very little to do with its Indo-Pakistan policy. It is rather attributed to American approaches towards China and its strategic position in the oil-rich Persian Gulf. The effect of such American support for Pakistan on Indo-Pakistani relations remains a moot question. American policies towards South Asia in the post-1971 period have been of relatively low profile. Now the American strategies primarily are related to other regions, e.g., the Middle-East, China or the Indian Ocean.

Washington has also realized that it cannot curtail Soviet influence in South Asia by pitting a hostile Pakistan against India. Such an American strategy would only result, as it had done in the past, in driving India further towards the Soviet Union in an attempt to restore any Indo-Pakistani balance upset by American actions.

Therefore, in the final analysis, while American policy towards Pakistan would in part be shaped by the latter's proximity to the oil-rich Gulf and its capacity to enhance American interests in that strategic region, this American interest in Pakistan is bound to be limited by consideration of the adverse effects it might have on American interests in India and the rest of Asia. In the light of these events, one can safely assume that the U.S. would not be so committed on Pakistan's behalf as to encourage that country once again to have a confrontationalist attitude towards India.

China has been the main supplier of arms to Pakistan after 1971. In addition to that, its political support to Islamabad is not a secret. But China would also be cautious in encouraging Pakistan's anti-Indian sentiments beyond a certain limit, because this would only push India further into the Soviet "orbit". This would be counterproductive as far as China's own long-term interests are concerned. Soviet influence in the contiguous state of Afghan-

istan, which supports Pathan and Balochi autonomists, continues to be high and China would, therefore, be apprehensive of the fact that such a dismemberment of Pakistan would ensure for the Soviet Union an outlet to the Arabian Sea. This would result in increasing Soviet naval strategies in the Indian Ocean region. Therefore, on this count alone, China is bound to have a vital stake in Pakistan's territorial integrity as well as its political stability. For this it would seem essential for Peking that Indo-Pakistani tensions be kept within limits, especially since China's capacity to come to the aid of Pakistan physically is very much limited.

As far as the third major power, the U.S.S.R., is concerned, it has, since the mid-1950s, traditionally adopted a pro-Indian stance. It has no reason to prevent the emergence of good relations between India and Pakistan. In fact, Moscow would welcome the idea since it may help to wean away Pakistan from China and the United States.

References

1. For the detailed study of the Big Power interests in the region, see Ference A. Vali, *Politics of the Indian Ocean Region* (New York: Free Press, 1976).
2. G. W. Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Major Powers* (New York: Free Press, 1975), pp. 77-83.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 84-90; see also, Sukhbir Choudhry, *Indo-Pak War and Big Powers* (New Delhi: Trimurti Publications, 1972), pp. 1-17.
4. Hugh Tinker, *India and Pakistan: A Political Analysis* (London: Pall Mall, 1967), p. 2.
5. Choudhury, Chapter 5.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-118.
7. For the important factors in changing American foreign policy in the subcontinent during that period, see Choudhury, chapter 6.
8. Choudhury, pp. 59-101.

9. *The New York Times*, December 8, 1971.
10. Pakistan has withdrawn from SEATO, because after its loss of the East wing, Pakistan's membership in SEATO would be untenable.
11. Choudhury, p. 7.
12. In a speech of Nehru in 1946, as the Minister of External Affairs of the Interim Government. Cited Choudhury, p. 10.
13. For Soviet Russia's hard attitude towards India and Pakistan in the early 1950s, see Bhabani Sen Gupta, *The Fulcrum of Asia: Relations among China, India, Pakistan, and the U.S.S.R.* (New York: Pegasus, 1970), pp. 41-52.
14. Choudhury, pp. 9-18.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-24.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-44. See also, S.M. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).
17. Gupta, pp. 141-240.
18. "Mrs. Gandhi's protest Against Russian Arms Sales", *The Statesman*, July 10, 1968.
19. Choudhury, pp. 63-68; also Anwar H. Syed, pp. 48-51.
20. The text of this agreement is in the *Kessing's Contemporary Archives* (London), (August 21-28, 1971), p. 24773.
21. President Daud has been killed in another coup. The military proclaimed martial law in Afghanistan on April 28, 1978.
22. For Sino-Indian relations in early 1950, see Gupta, pp. 93-108.
23. Choudhury, pp. 159-164.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
25. Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are as follows: (1) respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) mutual non-aggression; (3) non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) equality and mutual benefit; and (5) peaceful coexistence.

26. Choudhury, pp. 150-159.
27. See Anwar H. Syed, pp. 54-60.
28. The grand designs of Indian expansion have been discussed in detail by Choudhury, chapter 8.
29. For detailed discussions on the factors why China chose confrontation with India, see Gupta, pp. 166-175.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 193-197.
31. See Anwar H. Syed, pp. 81-85.
32. For factors behind China's ultimatum and the happenings on the international scene during that period, see Gupta, pp. 212-218.
33. Cited by Choudhury, pp. 189-191.
34. For economic and military assistance from China to Pakistan, see Syed, pp. 139-144.
35. Russia sold MIG-21 and MIG-23 fighters. The Soviet arms supply was quite modest in quantity.
36. See Choudhury, pp. 140-145.
37. Syed, pp. 134-139.
38. For the Chinese role during the Bangladesh crisis, see Choudhury, pp. 210-214.
39. *The Guardian*, August 10, 1973.
40. *The Hindu-International*, February 18, 1978.
41. *Ibid.*