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ASIA'S OTHER GIANT: RECOGNIZING INDIA'S ROLE IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis illustrates why India should play a more important role in U.S. strategic planning and policy making by demonstrating that India is an established regional power with innate aspirations of becoming a great power. This is accomplished by forecasting India's global role in the twenty-first century using a historical analysis of modern Indian history, and augmented by an indepth analysis of three key indicators of India's great power potential: the issue of Kashmir, the Indian Navy, and the Indian Economy. The thesis recommends that the United States acknowledge that India is approaching the threshold of true great power status and plan accordingly.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India has been identified as a potential great power in the twenty-first century. India's strategic location, immense population, vast untapped resources, growing military power, and expanding economy warrant more attention in U.S. strategic circles, yet it remains only a peripheral concern to the United States. This thesis argues that India will play a more important role in the post-Cold War world, therefore, the United States should elevate the priority of India in its foreign policy hierarchy.

A forecast of India's role in the international political structure of the twenty-first century will be accomplished through an analysis of the events, policies, and personalities that have shaped India's great power potential from independence in 1947 to the present day. This analysis will be conducted chronologically and focus on four time frames:

1947-1962: Nehru and nation building

1962-1971: The clash of realpolitik and idealism

1971-1990: Regional hegemony and the Cold War

1990-1994: Beyond socialism and the Soviet Union.

This chronological analysis will be augmented by an indepth analysis of three key indicators of India's great power potential: the issue of Kashmir, the Indian Navy, and the Indian economy.

The thesis concludes by recognizing that India is an established regional power with the potential to become a

great power during the first half of the twenty-first century. In addition to this hypothesis, six general assertions are deduced from the body of the thesis:

1. India has and will maintain intrinsic great power aspirations.

2. For the time being, India will remain a peripheral concern for U.S. foreign policy. India continues to be considered half as important as China, receiving minimal attention in U.S. strategic circles even though it is an established regional power and a potential great power.

3. India's economic reforms will continue but New Delhi's successes will be overshadowed by the rapid growth of other, more dynamic Asian economies (i.e. China, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea).

4. The Indian Navy will continue to be the Indian Ocean's dominant indigenous maritime power well into the foreseeable future. Its formidable power projection capabilities are likely to grow in proportion to the Indian economy (i.e. the percentage of India's defense spending will remain relatively constant).

5. The issue of Kashmir will continue to be a political albatross for New Delhi in the twenty-first century. Tensions between India and Pakistan over this disputed territory will hamper economic cooperation and growth throughout South Asia.

6. India's central government and democratic institutions will continue to be tested by communal violence and ethno-religious conflicts but will survive.

Sooner or later the United States will have to acknowledge the growing international status of India. A highly visible, pragmatic, and co-operative U.S. approach toward India now would be the most cost effective means to pursue the current U.S. national interests -- regional stability, an expansion of economic trade, and the reduction and elimination of WMD -- in South Asia in the future.

In addition to the current U.S. national interests with regard to South Asia, a healthy, enduring bilateral relationship with India could also serve as a continental and maritime Asian counter-balance against a potentially belligerent Russia, China, or Japan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology and trade have made the world smaller and more interdependent. In the wake of the Cold War, regional political events will have a greater impact on U.S. domestic and foreign policies. The uncertainty of today's international political environment necessitates a reevaluation of U.S. national interests and security strategies. This reevaluation should concentrate on those regions and countries which will have the greatest impact on the long-term security and economic well being of the United States.

India has been identified as a potential great power in the twenty-first century. In his final book, Beyond Peace, Richard Nixon warned that:

> The stakes are enormous. We [the United States] have a profound interest in India's success in implementing free-market economic reforms. . .it [India] will become a great power by the next century if it continues down the road toward free-market economics.[1]

India's strategic location, immense population, vast untapped resources, growing military power, and expanding economy warrant more attention in U.S. strategic circles. Yet for most Americans, "India is half as important as China and gets one tenth the attention."[2] When our attention is drawn to

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[1] Richard M. Nixon, Beyond Peace (New York: Random House, 1994) 158-165.

[2] Emily MacFarquhar, "America and the un-China," U.S. News and World Report 23 May 1994: 49.

India it is usually due to some unfortunate circumstance or for controversial issues such as: nuclear proliferation, human rights violations, unfair labor practices, overpopulation, and most recently, outbreaks of pneumonic and bubonic plague.

America's benign apathy towards India resulted from the policies and practices of the Cold War. The "with us or against us" mentality of the U.S. anti-communist crusade pushed India closer to the Soviet Union and caused a half-century of uneven, estranged Indo-American relations.[3]

While the end of the Cold War presents many challenges for U.S. policy makers, it also offers new opportunities for dealing with South Asia. The United States has the opportunity to expunge Indo-American relations of misunderstandings and misconceptions that arose from Cold War politics. A strong, healthy relationship flowing from the convergence of U.S. and Indian national interests (i.e. free market economic growth, the survival of multi-cultural democracy, and a relaxation of tensions in South Asia) could lead to lasting peace and prosperity in the region.

The goal of this thesis is to explain why South Asia should be an integral component of post Cold War U.S. strategic thinking and planning. This is to be accomplished by demonstrating what kind of global power India is likely to become. A worthwhile prediction of India's future must be

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[3] Dennis Kux, India and the United States: Estranged Democracies (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1992) 447.

based on a solid understanding of the major developments of the latter half of the twentieth century.

A forecast of India's role in the international political structure of the twenty-first century will be made through an analysis of the events, policies, and personalities that have shaped India's great power potential from independence in 1947 to the present day. This analysis will be conducted chronologically and focus on four time frames:

1947-1962: Nehru and nation building

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India's recognized nuclear capability, large standing army, vast pool of highly skilled labor, and enormous population are worthy of more attention in U.S. strategic circles than smaller nations lacking these attributes. On the flip side, however, India's inefficient bureaucracy, high level of poverty, and myriad of violent ethno-religious conflicts are not the marks of a great power. This historical analysis will highlight key determinants that support India's claim to great power status and also explain the primary factors obstructing New Delhi's efforts to play a greater role in world events.

Two indicators of great power status are economic capacity and naval strength. As Captain Mahan predicted:

> Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This Ocean is the key to the Seven

> Seas. In the 21st century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters.[4]

Because economic vitality and naval might will continue to be high priorities for tomorrow's world powers, this thesis will also evaluate India's economic and naval power potential.

A section of this thesis will also be devoted to the historical and contemporary sources of India's ongoing Kashmiri imbroglio. Many of modern India's domestic, regional, and international difficulties are a result of the long standing feud between New Delhi and Islamabad over Kashmir. A peaceful resolution of this conflict could stabilize relations in the region and lessen domestic tensions throughout South Asia, thus, accelerating India's drive toward great power status. If the belligerent rhetoric and saber rattling between India and Pakistan were to intensify, however, the ensuing economic and political erosion could lead to a fourth war, possibly with nuclear consequences.

A concise analysis of India's modern history, keying on the forces that have and will shape India's future world role, combined with an indepth examination of the Indian Navy, economy, and the Kashmir conflict will provide valuable insights as to the future of India's strategic role in the post-Cold War world.

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[4] Alfred T. Mahan as quoted in Monoranjan Bezboruah, U.S. Strategy in the Indian Ocean (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977) 3.

The proceeding chapters will also demonstrate that India believes its "tryst with destiny" is to become one of the world's great nations. India has been the dominant regional power in South Asia for over two decades. If India's economy takes off and sustains consistent high rates of growth like so many of its Asian neighbors, New Delhi will emerge as a major powerhouse in the Asia-Pacific region by the middle of the twenty-first century.

Future global economic development and growth will inevitably make the Indian Ocean and the subcontinent of Asia even more vital to world commerce and trade. Today as India approaches the threshold of great power status, however, the United States continues to overlook the economic potential and strategic importance of this region.

II. 1947-1962: NEHRU AND NATION BUILDING

Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, initiated India's great power aspirations. Nehru felt that because of its ancient history, immense population, economic potential, geographic location, and sheer size, India was destined to be an influential player on the world stage. While non-alignment and its corollary, panchsheel (peaceful coexistence), were designed to give India the political freedom it needed to build a strong, secure state, the 1962 war with China demonstrated the vulnerability of the embryonic republic to external military threats. Nehru's personality and moral commitment to the establishment of the world's largest democracy greatly contributed to India's global stature. His egalitarian values and charismatic leadership imparted a lasting imprint on India's international demeanor.

India's laudable ideals and founding principles, however, were overshadowed by its abject poverty and military weakness. Unfortunately for newly independent India, great powers were not based on moral righteousness but on their economic and military muscle.

A. NON-ALIGNMENT

A key leader in the drive for independence from Britain and the first Prime Minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru was the architect of Indian foreign, economic, and national security policy. Because Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and campaign of non-violence helped expel the British from the subcontinent, Nehru felt that military force was not the primary method to accomplish his political agenda.[5] His vision for the future of India was based on a combination of British parliamentary democracy, secular liberalism, Fabian socialism, the ideals of Gandhi, and the centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union.

Although Nehru's primary goal was the social and economic improvement of India he was keenly interested in foreign affairs. Nehru realized that India's foreign relations would have a major impact on his domestic agenda. As an accomplished scholar and writer, he was unusually well versed in world history and international relations. It was no surprise to those around him that Nehru chose to serve as his own foreign minister. With an inward-looking, secular perspective, Nehru believed that India should "keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another" and focus on its own agricultural and industrial modernization,

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[5] B.R. Nanda, ed., Indian Foreign Policy, the Nehru Years (Delhi: Vikas, 1976) 2.

the construction of a solid democratic infrastructure, and the eradication of poverty.[6] He realized that agricultural innovations and massive industrialization were necessary in order to raise the overall standard of living for the great mass of India's people. Nehru also understood that these advancements were crucial if the young republic ever hoped to fulfill his lofty global aspirations.

Nehru's ideas of neutrality with regard to the Cold War and his concentration on India's domestic problems led him to a policy of non-alignment. What Nehru described as staying clear of foreign entanglements the United States interpreted as condoning Soviet communism. Prime Minister Nehru's rationale for non-alignment was also based on his perception of India as a potential great power:

> I can understand some of the smaller countries of Europe or some of the smaller countries of Asia being forced by circumstances to bow down before some of the greater powers and becoming practically satellites of those powers, because they cannot help it. The power opposed to them is so great and they have nowhere to turn. But I do not think that consideration applies to India. . . **India is too big a country herself to be bound down to any country, however big it may be.**[7]

Dominance over neighboring states, territorial conquest, and regional hegemony were not Nehru's concerns. As Prime Minister he felt that the resolution of India's immense

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[6] Nanda 3.

[7] Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy ([Delhi]: unknown publ., [1961]) 32. (emphasis added).

internal problems was his chief objective. The mass migration that followed partition led to horrendous communal violence between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. Poverty, communalism, and ethnic conflict threatened to destroy the Indian Union before it could hope to achieve its "rightful" place in the global pecking order.

One of the best summaries of how and why non-alignment became the basis of Indian foreign policy is in the form of a personal letter written by Nehru to the first Indian ambassador to the People's Republic of China:

> Our general policy is to avoid entanglement in power politics and not to join any group of powers as against any other group. The two leading groups today are the Russian bloc and the Anglo-American bloc. We must be friendly to both and yet not join either. Both America and Russia are extraordinarily suspicious of each other as well as of other countries. This makes our path difficult and we may well be suspected by each of leaning towards the other. This cannot be helped.[8]

This brief letter explains the dilemma that faced India's founding father. If he embraced the United States and its allies, he would upset his powerful neighbor, the Soviet Union. On the other hand, if Nehru was perceived as backing the Soviets too much, Washington would put India on its list of enemies. Again, in Nehru's words:

> Our foreign policy will ultimately be governed by our internal policy. That policy is far from being Communistic and is certainly opposed to the Communist Party of India. Nevertheless, there is a great and growing

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[8] Nanda 134-35.

> feeling in India in favour of some kind of vague socialist order of society. There is much goodwill for America and expectation of help from her in many fields, especially technical. There is also a great deal of sympathy for the work of the Soviet Union and the remarkable change that this has brought about among the people. The Soviet Union, being our neighbour, we shall inevitably develop close relations with it. We cannot afford to antagonize Russia merely because we think that this may irritate someone else. Nor indeed can we antagonize the USA.[9]

Relations between the United States and India, never robust to begin with, grew progressively worse. India and the United States were politically opposed on many issues: the French presence in Indochina, the creation of Israel, the non-recognition of Communist China, and the international regulation of nuclear power.

Personal relationships between India's leaders and U.S. officials were not much better. After meeting with Nehru during his first visit to the United States in the fall of 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote that Nehru "was one of the most difficult men I have ever had to deal with."[10] The Indian Prime Minister later remarked that he found the dinner conversation at the White House "less than intellectually scintillating".[11] Thus, the tone was set for the future of personal relations between Indian and U.S. high-level officials.

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[9] Nanda 134-35.

[10] Kux 70.

[11] Kux 70.

In an attempt to demonstrate the importance of India in world affairs the Nehru government tried to play peacemaker during the Korean War. India sought to bridge the communication gap between North Korea's allies and the United States. Nehru notified President Truman that if U.N. forces crossed the 38th parallel, China would enter the war on behalf of North Korea. Truman dismissed the warning as a ruse. When Chinese troops did attack, Nehru gained little favor with Washington for being right.[12]

Languid diplomatic and personal affiliations between India and the United States hampered the emergence of strong, friendly relations. Washington saw non-alignment as a policy of appeasement towards Soviet Communism. By not opposing the Soviet Union, therefore, U.S. policy makers reasoned that India had lent its tacit support to Moscow's expansionist ideology. Nehru's policy of non-alignment violated America's prime directive--the containment of communism. Washington's simplistic view that all communist movements were being directed and ultimately controlled by Moscow was not accepted by Nehru.[13] He felt that the U.S.-led crusade against communism, especially in South East Asia, was suppressing Asian nationalism by supporting the remnants of European imperialism. Unyielding in their principles and beliefs,

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[12] S.N. Misra, India The Cold War Years (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1994) 83.

[13] Misra 103.

Nehru and Truman talked past one another. This caused the formation of a mutual misunderstanding of each country's grand strategy. This misunderstanding later became institutionalized in the foreign policy making bureaucracies of both governments.

Ashok Kapur, a prominent Indian scholar, offers a different perspective on the development of non-alignment. He proposes that the strategy of non-alignment developed from pure realpolitik vice Nehruvian idealism. Kapur implies that Nehru used idealist rhetoric to mask India's military and economic weakness in order to engage in the power politics of the bipolar world:

> Indian nonalignment is nothing but a strategy of being engaged in power politics but doing so preferably through diplomacy, given India's military and economic weakness.[14]

Mr. Kapur's deduction suggests that Nehru was trying to form a third, non-aligned pole in the U.S.-Soviet dominated world order.

Whether non-alignment is based on egalitarian Indian ideals, pure power politics, or a combination of both, its stated goals were clear: keep India out of foreign entanglements, establish peaceful relations with the world's strongest nations, and raise India's status in the global order. In retrospect, one can conclude that non-alignment was not very successful in achieving its stated objectives.

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[14] Ashok Kapur, India's Nuclear Option (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1976) 48.

By not joining with the United States and its allies against the Soviet Union, non-alignment involved India in what it so desperately wanted to avoid. Although fighting never erupted between the United States and the Soviet Union in South Asia, superpower influence and presence did increase in the region.

The United States became distrustful of Indian motives and indifferent to Indian desires. Having "lost" mainland China, dogmatic U.S. policy makers, like John Foster Dulles, did not see non-alignment as a middle road between the two emerging power blocks. The consensus in Washington was that Indian neutralism was the equivalent to being pro-communist.[15]

Although non-alignment may have gained some attention in strategic circles, the Third World, and the media, it did not make India a great power. In the United States, India, once described as "the pivotal state in non-Communist Asia by virtue of its relative power, stability and influence" was now shunned and ignored by the premier superpower.[16] With the military, political, and economic might of the United States still expanding, India rejected the security of a potential omnipotent ally and, instead, opted for the flexibility of non-alignment.

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[15] Harold A. Gould, "U.S.-Indian Relations: The Early Phase," in Harold A. Gould and Sumit Ganguly, eds., The Hope and the Reality U.S.-Indian Relations from Roosevelt to Reagan (Boulder: Westview Press 1992) 34.

[16] Kux 87.

Non-alignment failed to keep India out of Cold War politics, but it did demonstrate Nehru's desire for great power status. By offering the developing world an alternative to the emerging bipolar balance of power, Nehru felt that India could establish its own influential position among the great powers. India would create and offer to lead the non-aligned movement in the hope that many Third World nations would follow.

B. PANCHSHEEL

In October 1950 Chinese troops occupied Tibet and asserted control. Nehru displayed diplomatic patience and restraint towards China's overt aggression against India's northern neighbor. Nehru did not want to challenge China over Tibet. Instead he sought "to bring them [China] round to an uninhibited, peaceful and good neighbourly attitude."[17] Nehru felt that by appeasing China on this issue he could alleviate any fears and suspicions it might hold concerning India's ultimate strategic motives. Nehru felt that cooperation and peaceful coexistence with Communist China were necessary in order to focus attention on India's pressing domestic problems.

A natural corollary to non-alignment, panchsheel (peaceful coexistence) materialized as part of the 1954 Sino-

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[17] Nanda 16.

Indian agreement over Tibet.[18] Panchsheel consisted of five principles:

1. Mutual respect for each other's integrity and sovereignty
2. Non-aggression
3. Non-interference in each other's national affairs
4. Equality and mutual benefit
5. Peaceful coexistence.

Although the Chinese signed the document, they did not put as much faith in the aims of panchsheel as did India's Prime Minister. The Chinese leadership believed much of their own rhetoric about the inevitable clash between communism and capitalism. More importantly, however, Chinese strategic interests differed from those of India, especially in the disputed border regions between the two states.[19] India's choice to remain a member of the British Commonwealth, was also misinterpreted by China. Chairman Mao and his sycophants were distrustful of India's ties to Western capitalism.

Nehru was forced to strike a balance between his sympathetic feelings for the plight of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people and peaceful relations with India's powerful neighbor, China. Prime Minister Nehru feared that a strong,

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[18] John Lall, Aksaichin and Sino-Indian Conflict (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1989) 238.

[19] For more information on China's strategic interests during this time frame refer to Steven A. Hoffman, India and the China Crisis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) or John Lall, Aksaichin and Sino-Indian Conflict.

centrally controlled China might try to expand its borders as it had during past dynasties. Keeping with the spirit of panchsheel, Nehru chose to ignore the age old advice of Kautilya (that neighboring states should be treated as enemies or potential enemies) for he felt that any sort of military or political action might provoke the Chinese.

C. SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTES

Colonial India's borders had been the responsibility of Great Britain. In the northern most regions of British India, because of the mountainous terrain, sparse population, and the lack of overall investment value, the Crown had felt that flexible buffer zones and not rigid, linear borders were sufficient means to protect against Russian and Chinese encroachment on Britain's prosperous holdings in Northern India. Historically the peoples of inner Asia viewed the area between India proper and China as boundless and unrestricted. European linear borders were alien to these peoples' nomadic traditions and customs.

In light of the hostilities between Pakistan and India over Kashmir, Nehru needed to establish a definable northwestern border. In addition to Kashmir, the occupation of Tibet also created the requirement for definable northern borders. Independent Tibet had served as a buffer between China and India. Nehru realized that a recognized border was

the first step necessary in order to establish a line of defense against any future threat from Chinese occupied Tibet.[20]

Acting as his own Minister for External Affairs, Nehru concluded that the modern Sino-Indian border was clearly defined by the linking of known border points on the basis of the highest watershed, certain topographical features, trade, grazing practices, administration, revenue collection, and the legal precedence of past colonial treaties.[21] Based on this logic Nehru established India's northeastern border as the McMahon Line (1914) in the Assam Himalayas. This area included the disputed Tawang tract (refer to Appendix A). To delineate the outer boundaries of Indian controlled Kashmir, Nehru utilized the Ardagh-Johnson line (1897). This put the Indian border well to the north of the Karakoram mountain range, and included the Aksai Chin plateau (see Appendix A).

Consistent with his foreign policy and the preservation of the spirit of panchsheel, Prime Minister Nehru chose not to militarize the declared borders in the northeast and Aksai Chin regions . By the late 1950s a series of events had raised doubts about the future of Sino-Indian relations. A dispute over the Bara Hoti grazing ground on the Uttar Pradesh-Tibet border, and the discovery of a Chinese built

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[20] Steven A. Hoffmann, India and the China Crisis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 24.

[21] Hoffmann 26.

road that ran through the Indian portion of the Aksai Chin plateau connecting the Sinkiang province of China with Tibet further strained Sino-Indian relations (see Appendix A).

Fighting between Indian and Chinese troops first occurred on 25 August 1959 around an Indian NEFA (Northeast Frontier Agency) outpost called Longju. Chinese troops fired on an Indian patrol, killing one Indian rifleman. All the other Indian soldiers involved were taken prisoner, but many later managed to escape. The next day the Chinese attacked the Longju outpost forcing the Indian troops to withdraw.[22]

China claimed that Longju and other Indian posts were erected on Chinese territory. China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) also suspected that Indian armed forces were covertly supporting Tibetan resistance fighters. Indian sentiments and public outcry over this and other related border incidents gave the illusion that India was being victimized by an overly aggressive China.

Nehru corresponded with Chinese Premier Chou En-lai several times over the disputed border regions in an attempt to learn China's long term designs and strategies. Nehru then elected to take a diplomatic hard line with China over the border issue. This course of action caused friction to aggregate in Sino-Indian relations.

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[22] Hoffmann 69.

D. 1962 SINO-INDIAN WAR

In 1962 Prime Minister Nehru escalated Indian military activity in the disputed border regions. His "forward policy" directed Indian personnel to attempt to cut Chinese lines of communication with their frontier posts. Indian troops were also ordered to hold their ground and open fire if PLA forces tried to push them back.[23] Revealing his own idealistic hubris, Nehru ordered additional troops to Ladakh (northeast Kashmir) and established additional outposts. China responded by constructing more border stations.

On 20 October 1962, after many small border skirmishes, Chinese troops attacked Indian positions and advanced simultaneously across the disputed border areas in Ladakh and Assam. As Indian forces were rolled back at both ends of the McMahon line, Nehru, fearing an all-out Chinese invasion, declared a state of emergency. Realizing India was woefully unprepared to defend itself militarily against the Chinese assault, Prime Minister Nehru made a desperate appeal for military assistance to the United Kingdom and the United States. British military hardware arrived immediately, while the first American supplies came within a few days of Nehru's request.

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[23] Lorne J. Kavic, India's Quest For Security: Defence Policies, 1947-1965 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967) 170.

By 19 November 1962 the situation had grown so desperate in the NEFA/Assam theater that Nehru made an additional request to Washington for air support to counter the advancing PLA forces. On 21 November 1962, before President Kennedy could send his reply, the Chinese unexpectedly announced they would pull back beyond the McMahon line provided Indian troops did not try to occupy the vacated territory. India had no choice but to comply.

E. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SINO-INDIAN WAR

The most glaring result of the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict was India's military weakness. Chinese troops easily assaulted and out maneuvered Indian defenses. Indian command and control, logistics, and battlefield tactics were lacking. The PLA could have overrun the entire North Eastern Frontier Agency at will, but instead the Chinese leadership chose to withdraw its forces.

The loss of the Sino-Indian border conflict was a humiliating setback for India's "tryst with destiny." Nehru's vision of newly independent India instantly attaining an influential station among the great nations of the world was dealt a crushing blow. China's victory proved that even in the twentieth century great power still flowed from the barrel of a gun.

Nehru had focused his government's efforts and resources on nation building and economic development. Various domestic programs were initiated in order to modernize India's agriculture and industry, decrease the level of poverty, provide educational opportunities, and build a strong economic base for the future. While these programs were both necessary and commendable, they came at the expense of Indian national security.

India's embarrassing defeat forced Nehru to acknowledge the overall lack of preparation for the defense of India and the danger of a moralistic foreign policy. Confirming these central themes, one scholar summarized that:

> Nehru made the cardinal blunder of neglecting India's strength while pursuing friendship with China. History shows us no illustrations where two competitors managed to develop a genuine relationship of mutual respect and friendship with great inequalities in their economic and military strength.[24]

Nehru was also forced to compromise his policy and principle of non-alignment during the China crisis. By asking for and receiving military aid from the Western powers, non-alignment would, henceforth, be open to interpretation by successive generations of Indian leaders.

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[24] Baljit Singh, Indian Foreign Policy: An Analysis (Lucknow, India: Ananda Press, 1976) 78.

F. THE LEGACY OF NEHRU

Like George Washington, Nelson Mandela, and other renowned liberators, Jawaharlal Nehru will be remembered for his leadership during India's struggle for independence. In addition to his exploits against British imperialism, Nehru also judiciously governed India for seventeen years. During this formative period "Nehru gave India a place on the world stage through sheer force of personality."[25] Prime Minister Nehru also drafted the blueprints for India's political, economic, and military future.

Politically, Nehru's concentration on domestic, economic, and social programs gave rise to a non-aligned foreign policy which has endured, in one form or another, throughout the later half of twentieth century. The five principles expressed in panchsheel (peaceful coexistence) were a direct corollary to Nehru's concept of non-alignment and continue to serve as the basis of India's foreign policy.[26]

In addition to non-alignment and panchsheel, Nehru also further consolidated the Indian Union by reconfiguring the states along linguistic lines and negotiating the transfer of the French enclaves of Pondicherry and Chandernagar to Indian

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[25] Robert Bradnock, India's Foreign Policy Since 1971 (New York: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990) 17.

[26] Bradnock 17.

control. He was also responsible for the decision to send Indian troops to annex the Portuguese colony of Goa in 1961.

Nehru stressed secular and egalitarian ideals for all of India's people, including women, the lower castes, and untouchables. With this in mind, both the Congress party and Nehru set out to reduce the overall level of poverty. Employing Soviet-style central planning techniques in a mixed economy (directed by the central government but sustaining capitalist traits), a series of five year plans were initiated with the goals of improving agricultural yields, restoring consumer-good production, and kick starting heavy industry.

Nehru's admiration of socialist central economic planning, an abhorrence of colonial imperialism, and his own policy of non-alignment led India down the road of import substitution and other costly autarkic economic practices. Nehru chose a socialist economic route for India because of his impassioned humanism and genuinely good intentions. But due to the economic course selected by Nehru and continued by his immediate successors, India is just now beginning the process of integrating its economy with the more successful capitalist, free market global community.

In hind sight, Nehru's decision to devote the vast majority of India's resources toward industrialization and economic improvement before developing a sound military defense proved to be costly. The humiliating defeat by the Chinese in 1962 obliged Nehru to be more pragmatic towards

military matters. A significant portion of India's budget would be devoted to the construction of modern air, land, and maritime forces--funds Nehru would have much rather spent on educational and social programs.

Thirty years after his death, Nehru's legacy continues to influence Indian domestic, foreign, and economic policies. Although his dynastic line ended with the assassination of his grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, India's leaders continue to abide by Nehru's nobel principles as expressed in the Indian constitution:

> to secure to all its citizens . . . **JUSTICE** social, economic and political; **LIBERTY** of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; **EQUALITY** of status and opportunity; and to promote among them all **FRATERNITY** assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation.[27]

These liberal ideals continue to survive in what appears to be a fatalistic, communal society on the verge of anarchy. Yet, due to Prime Minister Nehru's determined leadership strong democratic institutions developed and managed to survive amongst vast linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity. Perhaps Nehru's greatest contribution to India's drive for great power status was his commitment to the ideals embodied in the Indian constitution.

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[27] Stanley Wolpert, A New History of India, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) 356.

III. 1962-1971: THE CLASH OF REALPOLITIK AND IDEALISM

The nine years between 1962-1971 delineate the second phase of independent India's existence. During this time frame the ideals, goals, and aspirations of Nehru were challenged by internal and external events and forces. India emerged from this turbulent decade not as a great global power but a potential regional one.

The smooth succession of Lal Bahadur Shastri to Prime Minister following Nehru's death lent credibility to India's democratic institutions. Shastri's brief but pivotal administration had to contend with many difficulties: a war over Kashmir with Pakistan, internal language riots, China's first nuclear explosion, the expanding Cold War, and domestic debate over the indigenous production of the atomic bomb.

When Shastri became the second Indian Prime Minister to die in two years, Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter and confidante, was chosen to lead the country. Like her father, Indira also desired a great global role for India. Mrs. Gandhi's quest for political power, war on poverty, and foreign policies drew both criticism and adoration. Her pursuit of national interests would earn India the title of regional hegemon.

A. SHASTRI COMES TO POWER

Jawaharlal Nehru governed India until his death on 24 May 1964. Nehru's successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, was chosen by a consensus of the Congress party elite. A man of humble origins, Shastri diligently worked his way to the top of the Congress party hierarchy during the struggle for independence from Great Britain. In 1950 he became general secretary of the Congress party while Nehru ascended to the presidency of the organization.

Shastri took office on the ebb of India's declining international influence. The force and magnetism of India's leadership of the non-aligned movement began to fade with Nehru's death. Congruently, the centrally planned Indian economy had made little progress in the war on poverty, while national prestige had never recovered from China's humbling show of force in 1962 border conflict. In addition to these pressures, India's second prime minister was also forced to settle crucial domestic dilemmas.

In 1963 parliament passed the Official Languages Act, which called for Hindi, written in the Devanagari script, to be the official language of the country beginning January 26, 1965. As this date approached anti-Hindi riots broke out in southern India. Southern Indian states, with Dravidian based languages, viewed the implementation of the Official Language Act as internal ethno-linguistic oppression. As a result of

the violent opposition to the adoption of Hindi, the Shastri government struck a compromise with the southern states, and agreed in 1965 to an indefinite continuation of English as the second official language of the country.[28]

In October 1964 the People's Republic of China tested a nuclear weapon and became the world's fifth declared nuclear power. The Chinese test sparked an intense nuclear debate inside India. To date India's nuclear program (initiated under the Nehru Administration) had been utilized only for peaceful purposes. In light of the 1962 Sino-Indian war and the Chinese nuclear test, Indian public opinion called for a policy shift. In response to this intense political pressure, Shastri permitted research to begin on a peaceful nuclear explosion.[29]

While Shastri's strategy of compromise resolved India's predicaments *de jour*, his "[d]iminutive, retiring, and moderate" leadership style projected an image of weakness, especially to Pakistan's leader, Ayub Khan.[30] Khan's estimation of India's lack of political resolve and military strength was fortified in April of 1965 when Pakistani forces scored an apparent victory in the Rann of Kutch.

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[28] Craig Baxter, Yageudra K. Malik, Charles H. Kennedy, and Robert C. Oberst, eds., Government and Politics in South Asia, 3rd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993) 48.

[29] Navnita Chadha, "India's Nuclear Policy Changing Thrusts" in S.D. Muni, ed., Understanding South Asia (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1994) 191.

[30] Kux 231.

B. THE RANN OF KUTCH AND THE SECOND INDO-PAKISTANI WAR

The Rann of Kutch is a large, uninhabited tidal mud flat located between Pakistan (West Pakistan in 1965) and India and bordering the Arabian Sea (see Appendix B). Both countries laid claim to the area which had little strategic or economic value. Early in 1965 Pakistani forces began patrolling the northern edge of the Rann to assert their territorial claim. The Indians also sent patrols and clashes erupted. A brigade size battle was fought on 27 April 1965 which concluded with the withdrawal of Indian troops. Later a cease-fire agreement was brokered by the British which effectively ended hostilities over the Rann.

Based on India's declining status and the apparent weakness of the Shastri government, Khan decided to launch a military campaign to capture the much disputed region of Kashmir. Operation Gibraltar, as it was known, called for a mass infiltration of Pakistani trained guerrillas into Indian held Kashmir. The guerrillas were to agitate the masses and start a peasant uprising against Indian forces. The revolt would provide justification for regular Pakistani troops to assist their Kashmiri comrades.

The plan did not materialize as Khan had envisioned. Many of the infiltrators were caught by Indian forces, and the "oppressed" Kashmiri masses did not rise up as anticipated. Rather than acknowledge defeat, Khan launched a major

offensive in southern Kashmir in an attempt to cut off Srinagar, the capital, from Indian control. The Indians unexpectedly countered by launching a strike into West Pakistan, which reached the outskirts of Lahore.

The Soviets and Chinese opted to stay out of the fighting. The United States cut off all economic and military aid to both India and Pakistan. As the war, which neither side could afford, reached an inconclusive state of attrition, the Soviet Union offered its good offices to negotiate a peace settlement. The United States, which had its hands full in Vietnam, acquiesced to the Soviet offer to mediate.

Shastri and Khan met with Soviet Premier, Andrei Kosygin in January 1966 at Tashkent in Soviet Central Asia. The accord that was signed between India and Pakistan was considered a significant achievement given the level of hostility between the two neighbors. The jubilation of the Tashkent Accords was short lived, however, as Prime Minister Shastri died of a heart attack only hours after signing the agreement.

Shastri's reign was short but significant. Nehru's "diminutive" successor permitted the research which resulted in a peaceful nuclear explosion in less than a decade. Under his leadership India maintained its national interests by stopping Pakistan from taking Kashmir by force. Shastri's willingness to compromise also led to an overall improvement in relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union.

The untimely death of India's second prime minister and the smooth transition of power to Mrs. Gandhi demonstrated the great resilience of India's democratic institutions, and proved that democracy could survive in India after Jawaharlal Nehru.

C. THE RESILIENCY OF THE INDIAN STATE

Political stability is the first step for all states that aspire for greatness. Economic prosperity, military might, and international reputation all flow from lasting political stability. Ethnic, communal, and linguistic tensions have sparked riotous separatist movements and chaotic violence throughout India. Yet somehow the democratic, multi-national union has managed to maintain relative political stability despite numerous internal and external crises.

During the Nehru years (1947-1964), India's political institutions appeared to be in a rudimentary stage. Nehru's charismatic leadership was thought to be the principal component that held the newly formed union together. The smooth shift of power to Shastri after Nehru's death reflected the durability of India's political institutions. Unlike most post-colonial, developing states, India's constitutional, democratic infrastructure possessed enough inertia to carry on even after the passing of its revolutionary founding father.

For Ayub Khan India's sheer size, huge population, and

great power aspirations meant India could and would continue to increase its military strength until it eclipsed that of Pakistan. Khan, therefore, decided to launch a preventive war against India while he still had a chance for victory.

The outcome of the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war was evidence of India's institutionalized resolve to maintain the integrity of its vital national interests, including Kashmir. It also dispelled the widely held myth that the martial skills of one Muslim soldier equalled those of ten Hindus.

Unlike Pakistan and many other newly independent states created from former European colonies, India's government never became the victim of a military coup d'etat. Three strong institutions laid the foundation for India's solid and secure form of government: 1) the National Congress Party; 2) the "steel frame" of the British bureaucracy; and 3) the professionalism of the Indian army.[31]

Under Nehru the military arm of this triad of sturdy institutions was given the lowest priority until after the Sino-Indian conflict. Upon Nehru's death the maintenance and leadership of these entrenched institutions passed to Lal Bahadur Shastri. In 1966 Indira Gandhi, India's third prime minister, inherited the reigns of India's resilient institutions. She would hold these reigns tight for fifteen years (1966-1977 and 1980-1984).

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[31] Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., India Under Pressure: Prospects for Political Stability (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984) 5.

D. INDIRA RAJ BEGINS

Indira Gandhi was brought to power by the same seasoned elite of the Congress Party (also known as the Syndicate) who had selected her predecessor. Mrs. Gandhi was chosen by the Syndicate in order to block the more conservative and ambitious Morarji Desai from reaching the office of Prime Minister. The Syndicate also felt that the daughter of Nehru would win them many votes through her renowned surname. The party bosses also believed that Indira was a docile, malleable woman, who would easily be manipulated to serve their specific political agenda.

While Mrs. Gandhi proved to be highly popular at the polls, she was not the marionette the Syndicate calculated her to be. After three years in office, a decisive and strong willed Indira Gandhi split the Congress party in order to shore up her position as Prime Minister. Her wing of the party (Congress (I)) boasted a more active, egalitarian social platform than the remaining Congress Party controlled by the Syndicate.

In the midst of consolidating of her own political power, Indira Gandhi implemented a new economic agenda that steered India toward what was considered a more socialist path. Mrs Gandhi's "mildly radical" economic agenda called for: the nationalization of banks, the abolition of privy purses for former princely rulers, the devaluation of the rupee, the

denouncement of industrial monopolies, and liberal loans for the poorest sectors of Indian society.[32] However, other scholars argue that:

> Her actual economic policies, however, were conservative and capitalist-oriented rather than radical. They did not appear to benefit the lowest rungs of India's socio-economic hierarchy immediately, or contribute to the officially endorsed long-term goal of a 'socialist form of society'.[33]

Whether "mildly radical" or conservative in nature, Mrs. Gandhi's economic policies earned her credibility from a wide array of poor peasants and cosmopolitan intellectuals alike.

Like her father, Indira Gandhi focused the majority of her energies as Prime Minister on foreign policy.[34] Mrs. Gandhi understood that her egalitarian social programs were linked to India's foreign policy posture. Sound foreign relations with both the East and the West were required in order to secure the financial aid, technological assistance, military hardware, and large reserves of foreign exchange needed to proceed with the Prime Minister's extensive domestic plans. Mrs. Gandhi also believed, like her father, that India's high global profile as the self-proclaimed leader of the non-aligned movement helped construct a collective Indian

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[32] Baxter, Malik, Kennedy, and Oberst 64.

[33] Surjit Mansingh, India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy 1966-1982 (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984) 12.

[34] A.K. Damodaran and U.S. Bajpai, eds., Indian Foreign Policy: The Indira Gandhi Years (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1991) ix.

personality. Both Nehru and his daughter believed that a collective national identity would furnish the diverse peoples of India with a binding "Indianess" to prevent the Balkanization of the subcontinent.

E. MRS. GANDHI'S CONTRIBUTION TO NON-ALIGNMENT

Indira Gandhi strongly supported her father's vision of non-alignment. To Mrs. Gandhi non-alignment meant self-reliance and autonomy for India. As Nehru's daughter and closest confidante, she had seen first hand how non-alignment based solely on ideals, was drowned out in the blaring bi-polar international arena. As Prime Minister she was determined to bolster her nation's economic and military power in order to "prevent any erosion of [India's] independence."[35]

Nehru's original concept of non-alignment matured into an alternative socio-economic development model for the newly independent states of the post-colonial world. Based largely on moral righteousness, non-alignment offered its supporters a middle path somewhere in between the East-West power blocks.

Non-alignment also served as India's most economically sovereign ticket to co-equal status among the great "imperial" and communist powers of the twentieth century. Following India's humiliating defeat by China in 1962, however, Nehru

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[35] K.P. Misra, ed., Foreign Policy of India ([New Delhi]: unknown publ., [1977]) 164.

was forced to set aside the principle of non-alignment and ask for military aid from the West. Henceforth, India's unprejudiced leadership of the non-aligned movement was somewhat discredited.

Indira Gandhi was much more pragmatic and flexible with her interpretation of non-alignment than either Nehru or Shastri. Her thinking was not guided by any theoretical world view. Mrs. Gandhi made decisions and policy based on her current understanding of the facts and circumstances of a given situation. Having witnessed the shortcomings of non-alignment, Indira wanted to stress that movement was not synonymous with appeasement. In her first radio broadcast as Prime Minister she stated:

> In keeping with our heritage, we have followed a policy of peace and friendship with all nations, **yet reserved to ourselves the right to independent opinion.** The principles which have guided our foreign policy are in keeping with the best traditions of our country, and are **wholly consistent with our national interest, honour and dignity.** They continue to remain valid.[36]

Mrs. Gandhi aspired to the spirit of non-alignment as set forth by her father, but she also wanted to strengthen India's relative power. Her aim was to increase India's military and economic strength in order to give non-alignment a backbone.

Mrs. Gandhi also felt that non-alignment did not mean that India was relegated to silence in international affairs.

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[36] Indira Gandhi as quoted in Damodaran and Bajpai 47. (emphasis added).

India, according to Indira Gandhi, was free to tilt towards one side or the other depending on national interest and principle. For example, during the height of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war, Mrs. Gandhi repeatedly criticized the Johnson administration for its bombing of North Vietnam even though India was virtually dependent on U.S. food assistance. While this annoyed President Johnson greatly, it boosted India's image among the other non-aligned nations.

By late 1970 Indira Gandhi's "mildly radical" social and economic programs were in full swing when, to her surprise, the Indian Supreme Court struck down her executive order to abolish privy purses for the former princely rulers. Prime Minister Gandhi had also begun to clash with her own cabinet over land reform and other drastic resource distribution programs. Bent on realizing her political agenda, Mrs Gandhi declared, "We are concerned not merely with remaining in power but with using that power to ensure better life to the vast majority of our people and satisfy their aspirations for just social order."[37] Indira Gandhi's quest for absolute political control appeared to be directly proportional to the amount of opposition pitted against her.

While Indira Gandhi's domestic policies and efforts to improve the military, social, and economic well being of India were laudable, some scholars are critical of her overall accomplishments. Surjit Mansingh suggests that, "her

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[37] Wolpert 386.

preference for tangible power and her predilection for dealing with crisis situations on an ad hoc basis may have served to constrain and not enhance India's power."[38] Indira Gandhi's quest for political control in order to conduct her domestic agenda infused India's political institutions with a heavy dose of realpolitik. While her *carpe diem* crisis management style may have lacked long-range strategic vision, Mrs. Gandhi's major contribution to India's role in international affairs was "her endeavour to put an end to the policy of seeking peace without strength."[39]

F. THE THIRD INDO-PAKISTANI WAR

While Mrs. Gandhi was consolidating her power in India, events in East Pakistan were leading up to a civil war. Mujibur Rahman's Awami League had emerged as the overwhelming victor in Pakistan's general elections of 1970. This meant that, for the first time in its short history, the Pakistani government would be dominated by Bengali Muslims from East Pakistan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, leader of the opposition Pakistan People's Party, was not willing to accept Mujibur as Prime Minister, nor was general Yahya Khan, Pakistan's Commander-in-Chief.

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[38] Mansingh xi.

[39] K. Subrahmanyam, "Indira Gandhi's Quest for Security" in Damodaran and Bajpai 89.

After a week of unproductive negotiations in March of 1971, Yahya Khan's military assumed control of East Pakistan, which promptly declared itself the independent state of Bangladesh. Mujibur Rahman was arrested by Khan's forces while his Awami League colleagues sought refuge in India.

Many Bengali members of Yahya Khan's military establishment in East Pakistan joined the Mukti Bahini (Bangladeshi freedom fighters). While Khan's troops tried to suppress the rebel Mukti Bahini forces, millions of Bengali refugees poured into the already troubled Indian states of Assam, Tripura, and West Bengal. By July, 1971 an estimated 6.9 million refugees were living in 1000 camps throughout these impoverished Indian states.[40]

By September 1971 India was spending close to $200 million a month just to feed the Bengali refugees.[41] While the refugee issue had a major impact on the moral conscience of the world, the potential destabilization of West Bengal, Assam, and the tribal hill states of the northeast threatened India's national security. Northeastern India had a history of communal and tribal violence. The refugee situation added unnecessary fuel to the fire.

International criticism of Islamabad's military crack down in East Pakistan coupled with intense domestic pressure

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[40] Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, War and Secession: Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 152.

[41] Wolpert 389.

for New Delhi to stop the tide of refugees streaming into the country made it clear to Mrs. Gandhi's what her course of action should be. After careful consideration at all the pertinent levels of analysis (i.e. international, regional, and domestic), Indira decided it would be in India's best interest if East Pakistan achieved independence as Bangladesh. Fearing continued communal, tribal, and irredentist violence spreading throughout northeastern India, Indira Gandhi's government also wanted a stable, preferably democratic, administration to rule Bangladesh.

On August 9, 1971, India and the Soviet Union signed a twenty-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation. Mrs. Gandhi, having received tacit superpower approval, escalated Indian involvement in the Pakistani civil war. Aid and assistance was increased to the Mukti Bahini. In response the Pakistani government ordered the full mobilization of its armed forces. India answered by mobilizing its armed forces.[42] In late November 1971, three divisions of Indian troops advanced and held key territory along the border areas of East Pakistan. The official Indian statement was that this was a defensive response to Pakistani shelling of Indian territory. Then in early December of 1971, Pakistan's leader General Kahn, unsure of Indian ambitions, ordered the Pakistani Air Force to attack several major airfields in northwestern India. India retaliated with a full scale

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[42] Kux 289-307.

invasion of East Pakistan. Dhaka, the capital of East Pakistan, was captured within a month. General Khan's forces surrendered and Bangladesh became an independent state.

IV. 1971-1990: REGIONAL HEGEMONY AND THE COLD WAR

India's quasi-alliance with the Soviet Union, the creation of Bangladesh, and the 1972 Simla agreements with Pakistan marked the emergence of India as South Asia's unparalleled regional power. With Soviet backing and the threat of Pakistani military incursions into Kashmir temporarily nullified, India could once again set its sights on achieving great power status. First, however, India needed to turn inward in order to address its multitude of domestic problems.

In March 1971, prior to the third Indo-Pak war, Indira Gandhi and the Congress (I) party swept India's fifth general election. Indira's political machine won a clear majority in the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). Trying to fulfill her popular campaign catchphrase, "*Garibi Hatao*" (eliminate poverty), Mrs Gandhi continued to lead India down a centrally controlled, socialist path. In order to carry out her plans Prime Minister Gandhi greatly increased the power of the central government at the expense of state and local authorities. In her effort to consolidate domestic support Mrs. Gandhi strained the already tense ethnic, communal, and caste divisions of the Indian body politic. This ultimately led to her demise in the aftermath of Operation Bluestar.

While the effects of Mrs. Gandhi's economic policies and her quest for political power may have hampered India's drive

for great power status, the victory over Pakistan, the detonation of a nuclear device, and the continued modernization of the armed forces certainly did not. India's close friendship with the Soviet Union in conjunction with President Nixon's tilt toward Pakistan further distanced India from the U.S. led Western alliance. Despite American alienation and several violent domestic crises, India maintained its position of regional supremacy throughout the 1980s.

A. INDO-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP

Indo-Soviet relations had continued to develop ever since the death of Stalin. Under Indira Gandhi, the bond between India and the Soviet Union reached its high water mark with the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation in August of 1971. Short of a full fledged alliance, the treaty was a formal acknowledgement of the "combination of convergences and divergences" in Soviet and Indian foreign and domestic policies.[43] The treaty ultimately led to a strong and lasting military association between the Soviet Union and India.

Although it may have appeared as if India was under the Soviet thumb, Indira Gandhi had no intention of joining forces with the Communist Bloc. She pursued international

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[43] Mansingh 131.

relationships for their pragmatic value. Indira Gandhi herself expressed that:

> The Soviet Union is a neighbour. We have to think of it differently from overseas powers.[44]

The Soviet Union's geographic proximity and Pakistan's strong links to the United States and China left India with few alternatives for powerful friends.

B. NIXON'S TILT TOWARD PAKISTAN

Mrs. Gandhi had a three pronged approach to U.S.-Indian relations: 1) win U.S. support for India's vital national security interests; 2) demonstrate India's resolve to maintain its international independence; and 3) promote Indian economic development.[45] Mrs. Gandhi was unsuccessful at achieving these goals largely due to Cold War politics and the resulting U.S. lack of interest.

When Richard Nixon took up residence in the White House in 1969 his number one priority in Asia was to get the United States out of Vietnam with honor. Nixon and Kissinger felt that their "policy objective on the subcontinent was, quite simply, to avoid adding another complication to [the] agenda."[46] Nixon also held preconceived notions about Indian

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[44] Mansingh 131.

[45] Mansingh 68.

[46] Kux 279.

non-alignment, dismissing some of his predecessors beliefs on the subject as "alleged obsequiousness toward India" and "liberal soft-headedness."[47]

Nixon and Kissinger's perceptions of the troubles in East Pakistan were tainted by their view of the Cold War. President Nixon believed that India was being prodded by the Soviet Union to split Pakistan. Indian support for the liberation of Bangladesh was interpreted by Nixon and Kissinger as a plot to destroy Pakistan, a staunch U.S. ally in the crusade against communism. Unbenounced to India and the world, Pakistan's strategic importance to the United States had been secretly elevated due to its advantageous link to the People's Republic of China. Throughout the crisis in East Pakistan the Nixon Administration had been using Pakistan as a conduit to open relations with China. Because of Kissinger's clandestine dealings via Pakistan, the United States had stumbled into the problems of South Asia, which it had previously declared were of little interest. Nixon proceeded to further embroil the United States in South Asia's latest regional dispute by his endorsement of General Kahn's efforts throughout the civil war. Nixon needed Pakistan's cooperation in order to court Chinese friendship.[48]

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[47] Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979) 848.

[48] Kux 288-95.

Nixon and Kissinger claimed that their policy in South Asia maintained the global balance of power by thwarting Soviet aggression. India, they believed, was a Soviet surrogate that sought to eliminate Pakistan and embarrass the United States. Nixon felt that strong support for West Pakistan would check the USSR and simultaneously demonstrate to the Chinese that America supports its friends even during unpopular crises. Nixon ordered the *USS Enterprise* battle group into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 to intimidate India from attacking West Pakistan. This action infuriated the Indians, pushing them even closer to the Soviets. Some even believe that Nixon's actions accelerated India's nuclear testing program.[49]

India viewed General Khan's crack down in East Pakistan as a domestic and regional concern. India had little interest in Superpower politics. Because of West Pakistan's brutal efforts to suppress the Mukti Bahini close to ten million East Pakistani Bengalis had sought refuge in northeastern India. This posed a major threat to the security of the entire Indian state.

Goaded by personal antipathy, the rift in U.S.-Indian relations grew, primarily due to each country's opposing, altruistic political objectives which emanated from the Cold War. Nixon, who had a special affinity for Pakistan, tilted U.S. foreign policy in favor of India's principal antagonist

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[49] Kux 307.

in pursuit of U.S. global interests. Mrs. Gandhi, on the other hand, gravitated closer to the Soviet Union in her quest for strategic leverage and balance in order to pursue regional aims. Because of the mutual miscommunication, mistrust, and alienation between the Nixon administration and the government of Indira Gandhi, Indo-American relations declined to an all-time low.

C. INDIA'S PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

On 18 May 1974 the Indian Atomic Energy Commission detonated an underground nuclear device at Pokharan, a test cite located in the Rajasthan desert. Reversing her previous "no nuke" position, Mrs. Gandhi gave the go ahead for India's Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in order to boost her sagging popularity at the polls by tapping Indian pride.[50]

The success of the Pokharan test inspired India's domestic nuclear proponents and earned India membership in the exclusive nuclear club. Before Pokharan only the Soviet Union, United States, France, Britain, and China had demonstrated an overt atomic weapons capability. India now had become the world's sixth nuclear power.

Prime Minister Gandhi received international criticism for the Pokharan test. Canada, a principal supplier of technology and material to India's nuclear program, condemned

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[50] Kux 314.

the explosion and cut off all nuclear cooperation.[51] In the United States, the nuclear nonproliferation lobby along with many members of Congress wanted to punish India for its peaceful nuclear explosion.[52] The Nixon's administration, besieged by the Watergate scandal, offered only a mild statement concerning the Pokharan test. Secretary of State Kissinger felt that strong, punitive actions against India would only worsen the already poor state of Indo-American relations.

The Pokharan test once again demonstrated India's collective desire for great power status. Unlike Kissinger and Nixon, Indira Gandhi did not base her foreign relations on Cold War dogma. Her decision to explode a nuclear device was strongly influenced by her perception of the domestic political fortune she stood to lose.[53] India's prominent scientific bureacracy also was a major factor in Mrs. Gandhi's decision to conduct the PNE.

Rampant inflation caused by the devaluation of the rupee, the 1973 oil embargo, increasing unemployment, and the failure to implement her 1971 campaign promises caused Mrs. Gandhi's popularity to plummet. Prime Minister Gandhi perceived that a majority of Indians favored India's joining the nuclear elite nations of the First World. The symbolism of becoming

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[51] Kux 315.

[52] Kux 316-17.

[53] Kapur vii.

a nuclear power greatly appealed to the voter's national pride, and diverted attention away from Mrs. Gandhi's failed domestic policies.

D. THE EMERGENCY

Indira Gandhi's augmentation and centralization of federal power caused the voting population to focus all responsibility for government action and or inaction on the office of prime minister.[54] In 1973 and 1974 food shortages, rising prices, and local political grievances began to give rise to mass demonstrations. These demonstrations turned violent in the states of Gujarat and Bihar. Mrs. Gandhi's sycophantic chief ministers proved incapable of handling these crises.

In June of 1975, adding to the Prime Minister's difficulties, the Allahabad High Court ruled that Mrs. Gandhi's 1971 landslide election victory was invalid due to "corrupt practices" during the campaign.[55] The court ruling greatly eroded Mrs. Gandhi's political legitimacy and sparked even stronger opposition against her.

On 26 June 1975, at the request of Prime Minister Gandhi, the President of India, Fakruddin Ali Ahmed, declared a state

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[54] Francis Robinson, ed., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 175.

[55] Robinson 175.

of emergency as per Article 352 of the Indian Constitution. Defacto martial law was declared and all key members of Mrs. Gandhi's opposition were jailed. The upcoming 1976 elections were suspended, the press censored, and civil liberties curtailed as Prime Minister Gandhi assumed authoritarian control of India.

By 1977 Indira Gandhi could no longer ignore the mass discontent with her authoritarian rule. She called for new parliamentary elections and relaxed some of the emergency restrictions. To her surprise the opposition parties, led by the Janata (People's) Party gained a two thirds majority of the Lok Sabha.

The Janata Party chose Moraji Desai, a long time opponent of Mrs. Gandhi, as Prime Minister. The Desai government returned the country to normal democratic rule and improved relations with the West. President Jimmy Carter's visit to India in January of 1978 and a reciprocal visit in April by Prime Minister Desai denoted the overall progress in Indo-American relations. The continued improvement of relations, however, was checked by the non-proliferation issue, specifically the refueling of India's Tarapur nuclear facility.[56]

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[56] For a detailed description of the events surrounding President Carter's dealings with the issue of refueling the Tarapur nuclear facility see pages 356-362 in Dennis Kux's India and the United States: Estranged Democracies.

E. INDIRA RETURNS TO POWER

In 1980 Mrs. Gandhi and the Congress (I) Party were swept back into power, capturing 350 of the 542 parliamentary seats. Mrs. Gandhi's reelection came on the heels of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan intensified the Cold War and elevated South Asia to a high foreign policy priority for President Carter. Washington immediately began trying to court Pakistan's President Zia ul-Haq. The controversy concerning Pakistan's questionable non-proliferation status was pushed aside as the United States attempted to revive past security ties in the region. Mrs. Gandhi's tacit approval of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan gave the United States no other alternative but to seek closer ties to Pakistan.

The newly elected Reagan Administration had made it clear that rearming Pakistan would be necessary to check the expansion of the "Evil Empire." President Reagan, thus, proposed a 2.5 billion dollar economic and military assistance program to Pakistan.[57] As could be expected, this did not sit well with New Delhi.

In October 1981 President Reagan met with Indira Gandhi in Cancun, Mexico while the two leaders were attending a summit on global economic issues. Their friendly, personal discourse warmed Indo-American relations, but did not lead to

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[57] Kux 382.

any major U.S. or Indian shifts in foreign policy. In 1982, however, President Reagan invited Mrs. Gandhi to visit Washington D.C.. The Prime Minister gladly accepted and arrived in October of the same year. For her own reasons Mrs. Gandhi wanted to strengthen ties with the United States even though the two nations were at odds on numerous major issues.

Mrs. Gandhi made an effort to improve foreign relations with the West because India was becoming increasingly dependent on limited Soviet technology for industrial and military development. Utilizing the warm, friendly relationship that had been established between herself and President Reagan, Mrs. Gandhi tried to sell India's position with regard to the superpowers to Washington. While U.S.-Indian relations did improve somewhat, Washington did not significantly shift the thrust of its policy towards India.

Mrs. Gandhi always believed that India was a potential great power. In her mind "self-reliant development [was] not merely desirable, it [was] the only possible way" to overcome India's massive economic woes and achieve a rightful place amongst the great nations of the world.[58] Indira's style of self-reliant realpolitik was clearly evident in her interpretation and formulation of Indian foreign policy. On 30 October 1981, in an address before the students and faculty of

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[58] Indira Gandhi, People and Problems (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 181.

India's prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University, Mrs. Gandhi proclaimed:

> Non-alignment is a policy, but not an objective by itself. The objective is freedom of judgement, and of action , so as to safeguard the nation's true strengths and basic interests. . .Military alliances entail obligations that may not be entirely consistent with a nation's interests. Hence many countries, even within such alliances, are somewhat restive and apprehensive about bases and missiles located in their territory. . .**Nations cannot be classified as permanent enemies or permanent allies.**[59]

Mrs. Gandhi's incorporation of Lord Palmerston's famous maxim (i.e. England has no permanent friends or allies, only permanent interests) in this speech was no mistake. It does seem somewhat ironic, however, that a champion of the non-aligned movement would employ the political philosophy of former colonial masters to rationalize its own foreign policy.

F. OPERATION BLUESTAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

Mrs. Gandhi's relentless effort "to safeguard the nation's true strengths and basic interests" channelled power to the central government at the expense of the states. This expansion of the federal government was challenged in the Punjab, where Sikhs comprised a slight majority of the population, but disproportionally dominated government and business.

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[59] I. Gandhi 180. (emphasis added).

The affluent Akali Dal party drew its support by tapping Sikh communal sentiments. Akali Dal leaders preached that New Delhi was trying to "Hindu-ize" the Punjab and destroy Sikh culture. In 1981 the party hierarchy called for mass demonstrations against the central government. Then in 1982 the President of the Akali Dal issued a resolution that stated that the principal purpose of the Akali Dal was to:

> preserve and keep alive the concept of distinct and independent identity of the Panth [Sikh community] and to create an environment in which national sentiments and aspiration of the Sikh Panth will find full expression, satisfaction and growth.[60]

The resolution also listed seven objectives designed to increase provincial autonomy for the Punjab. More Punjabi autonomy would fortify the political power of the Akali Dal.

Akali Dal agitation gave way to violence as militant Sikh groups took up the cause. The most prominent Sikh fundamentalist leader was Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Preaching Sikh orthodoxy, Bhindranwale was implicated in various politically motivated murders but never convicted. In 1981 he and a band of armed extremists established their headquarters in the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the most holy site of the Sikh faith.

The Gandhi government viewed "the Akali mixing of religion and politics [as] incongruous with the secular and

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[60] Rajiv A. Kapur, Sikh Separatism: The Politics of Faith (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986) 219.

democratic character of the Indian polity."[61] The strategy and tactics of the Akali Dal and Bhindranwale's militant terrorists were analogous to Northern Ireland's Irish Republican Army and its political wing, Sinn Fein. And like Great Britain, India too would deal with terrorism by calling on the army.

Typical of her style, Indira cracked down hard on the separatist Sikhs. Operation Bluestar, as it was known, called for regular Indian Army troops to seal off the Punjab and round up all suspected Sikh terrorists. On the evening of 5 June 1984, troops from the Indian Army assaulted the Golden Temple in order to capture Bhindrawale and his loyal band of extremists. What resulted was 576 deaths, 335 wounded, and 1512 extremist arrests.[62] Operation Bluestar "provoked a wave of deep anguish and resentment among Sikhs."[63] Although many Sikhs did not support the violent methods prescribed by Bhindrawale, their sympathies clearly shifted in the wake of the shoot out in Amritsar.

In October of 1984 Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated by two of her own Sikh bodyguards. An alienated Sikh community showed little remorse for the slain Prime Minister. In New Delhi and

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[61] Quote taken from "The Sikhs in Their Homeland India", a government of India publication published in 1984.

[62] These figures reflect combined Army and extremist casualties, and were taken from the government of India publication, "The Sikhs in Their Homeland India".

[63] R. Kapur 235.

other cities throughout India, mobs attacked and looted Sikh neighborhoods. In all over 2,000 Sikhs were killed and 10,000 were rendered homeless before the Army was called in to restore order.[64] Further government inaction to investigate allegations that Congress party officials had instigated anti-Sikh violence consolidated the Sikh community behind what remained of the Akali Dal. Martial law and military rule restored order in the Punjab but stoked existing communal tensions.

G. RAJIV GANDHI: THE END OF THE NEHRU DYNASTY

After the assassination of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv, her son, was chosen as Prime Minister. At 40 years old Rajiv was the youngest Nehru family member ever to lead India. American educated, Rajiv had worked as an airline pilot prior to entering politics. His personal style, good looks, and family name made him extremely popular throughout India.

Under Mrs. Gandhi, the Indian government had pursued four main foreign policy goals: 1) the enhancement of India's territorial security; 2) optimal external economic relations to accelerate modernization; 3) regional preeminence; and 4) the amplification of India's voice in Third World politics.[65]

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[64] R. Kapur 236.

[65] Harish Kapur, "India's Foreign Policy Under Rajiv Gandhi," The Round Table October, 1987: 469.

Mrs. Gandhi succeeded in enhancing India's territorial security, achieving regional supremacy, and amplifying India's voice in Third World politics, however, her socialist programs severely retarded the country's economic development.

A technocrat, Rajiv seemed to be more interested in personal computers than the intricacies of foreign policy. Thus, he accepted the practice of non-alignment and continued to follow the same foreign policy goals delineated by his mother. Rajiv, however, shifted the priority of these goals, stressing economic liberalization and modernization above all else. His ambition was to make India a model industrialized power in the developing world.[66] He used his "star quality" to court Western nations, making numerous visits abroad to improve relations and drum up business.

Unlike his mother, Rajiv felt that a loosening of India's license-permit raj and a more market oriented economy would stimulate growth. Using Reaganomics as a model, Rajiv cut taxes on wealth and inheritance, hoping to reverse the stagnation of the centrally planned Indian economy.[67] But as consumerism and economic liberalization began to take off Rajiv's political popularity went into decline.

Rajiv Gandhi had come to power on a wave of sympathetic and optimistic popularism. Claiming that "our politics should

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[66] Deepak Tripathi, "India's Foreign Policy: the Rajiv Factor," The World Today July 1988: 112.

[67] Wolpert 423.

be clean," Rajiv was perceived by the masses to be uncontaminated by the institutionalized corruption that embodied Indian politics.[68] His squeaky clean character was soon tainted in successive domestic aspersions. Rajiv had pledged democratic reforms for the Congress Party, but failed to hold internal party elections as promised.[69] He also dismissed his finance minister, V.P. Singh, because Singh allegedly dug to deep into a kickback scandal involving a $1.4 billion dollar defense contract with Bofors, a Swedish armaments firm. Singh's investigation had churned up evidence which implicated the brother of a close personal friend of the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Gandhi continued his campaign to improve India's relations with its smaller neighbors, Western Europe, Japan, China, the United States, and the Soviet Union even though he faced serious political difficulties at home. He maintained a high international profile and achieved significant success in bilateral relations with a myriad of countries.

For example, in 1984, after only a month in office, U.S. and Indian negotiators signed a memorandum of understanding concerning high technology transfers between the two countries. Rajiv followed this up with an official visit to the United States in the summer of 1985, where he "made an

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[68] Wolpert 423.

[69] Kux 412.

excellent impression on his American hosts."[70] Only a month before arriving in Washington Rajiv had befriended Mikhail Gorbachev during a visit to Moscow in which India's special relationship with the Soviet Union was reaffirmed by the signing of two economic agreements which called for continued Indo-Soviet cooperation until the year 2000. That same year Prime Minister Gandhi also signed an agreement with Pakistan's General Zia which was hailed as a break through. The agreement proclaimed that in the advent of war neither state would conduct a first strike on the other's nuclear facilities.

Rajiv's push for multilateral relations between India and her smaller neighbors culminated in the creation of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985. SAARC was envisioned as an organization that would seek solutions to the complex problems facing South Asia. It was hoped that this association would develop into a South Asian version of the Organization of American States or possibly even an entity resembling the European Union. Doomed from its inception, SAARC never achieved any of its grandiose designs and was reduced to little more than a forum for cultural exchange. This was due in part to its charter which stipulated that "bilateral and contentious issues will be excluded from the deliberations of the organization."[71]

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[70] Kux 403.

[71] H. Kapur 474.

In 1987 Prime Minister Gandhi sent several thousand Indian troops to Sri Lanka to assist in counter-insurgency operations against the rebel forces of the Tamil Tigers. In a situation akin to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, troop strength soon escalated to 50,000 but remained largely ineffective against the stubborn Tamil rebels. Then in 1988 Rajiv once again sent Indian troops abroad, this time to suppress a coup in the Maldives, one thousand miles south of India.

To the surprise of the Gandhi Administration both operations won support from the United States. To the members of SAARC, however, these operations confirmed India's regional military supremacy and willingness to project power through out South Asia.

In the end Rajiv's domestic difficulties overwhelmed any gains he might have made in either economic modernization or foreign policy. In 1989 with Indian troops still bogged down in Sri Lanka and trouble brewing in Kashmir, Rajiv faced national elections. Rajiv's well-intentioned but "Quaylesque" image generated difficulty for the Congress (I) Party at the polls. Losing more than half its seats in the Lok Sabha, Gandhi was ousted and a minority government under the leadership of V.P. Singh, Rajiv's former defense and finance minister, assumed control of the government.

During his five years in office, Rajiv had exercised India's regional hegemony and enhanced external economic

relations in pursuit of modernization. He also further irritated India's deep seated communal tensions by trying to expand the control of Congress (I), ergo, fueling the rise of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party a.k.a Hindu nationalist party). While staging a political comeback in 1991 Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a suspected Tamil terrorist.

Like his mother before him, Rajiv's murder was an indirect result of his political policies. His death left Congress (I) leaderless. Many in the party wanted his Italian born widow, Sonia, to succeed her slain husband. When she declined the offer, Congress (I) leadership defaulted to P.V. Narasimha Rao, Gandhi's 69 year old Minister of External Affairs.

Prior to Prime Minster Rao, India had been governed by two consecutive weak, coalition governments. V.P. Singh's Janata Dal Party minority government collapsed after less than a year in office due to political infighting. Chandra Shekar and 62 other defectors broke away from Singh's coalition and joined forces with Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party and its allies. This gave Shekar a controlling share of Parliament's 512 seats but only at the mercy of Rajiv Gandhi. Gandhi had only backed Shekar in order to splinter support for V.P. Singh. He was scheming to unseat Shekar when he was murdered by a suicide bomber.[72]

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[72] The Economist 9 March 1991: 20, 31-32, and Newsweek 3 June 1991: 28-32.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s India's relative regional power continued to rise despite its myriad of internal problems. Under Indira Gandhi's leadership India fought and won a war with Pakistan, became a nuclear power, and built a potent military force.

In the mid-1980s Rajiv Gandhi flexed India's military muscles in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, demonstrating New Delhi's willingness and capability to project power throughout the Indian Ocean region. He also initiated some economic reforms, and improved relations with Europe, the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, and China, which also contributed positively to India's international status.

India entered the 1990s as South Asia's unchallenged regional master. Although India continued to face immense social, political, and economic challenges, its intrinsic desire to be recognized as a great global power remained strong.

V. 1990-1994: BEYOND SOCIALISM AND THE SOVIET UNION

The confusion and chaos of the Indian government in the wake of the Nehru dynasty paralleled the disorder of the post-Cold War World. Early in 1990 the United States and its allies crushed Iraq with a dazzling display of high tech weaponry. While the Gulf War forced India to acknowledge the preeminent military power of the United States, the disintegration of the Soviet Union cast the subcontinent adrift, in search of moorings in a new world order.[73]

The demise of the Soviet Union marked the beginning of India's fourth phase of modern development. The collapse of the Soviet economy meant the end of India's preferential trade agreements. As India's economy loomed on the verge of collapse Prime Minister Rao's pledge to initiate economic reforms held great promise. As the new economic programs began to take shape, old wounds from India's past threatened to undermine any potential successes. Hindu communalism, disintegrating Indo-Pakistani relations, and an outbreak of the pneumonic plaque were just some of the events that put the brakes on any immediate Indian hopes for joining the elite clique of First World powers.

India was not alone in its struggle to make sense of the disorder of the post-Cold War World. The United States was

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[73] Thomas P. Thornton "India Adrift: The Search for Moorings in a New World Order," Asian Survey vol xxxiii no.12, December 1992, 1063-77.

also reassessing its policy options and strategies for coping in the new, unpredictable political era it helped create. While Indo-American relations appeared to improve, India remained a low priority in U.S. foreign policy.

A. INDO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS: FROM COMRADES TO COMPANIONS

Contrary to the proclamations of U.S. cold warriors, the nature of the Indo-Soviet relationship was never founded on ideological similarities but rather on "[g]eopolitical considerations, power politics, and pragmatism".[74] Although Nehru had been impressed with the Soviet Union's rapid industrialization and centrally planned economy, he disagreed completely with Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Many of independent India's national interests coincided with those of the Soviet Union. India felt that it deserved to be recognized as the major regional power in South Asia. It wanted to strengthen its military forces to deter Pakistan and China. India also wanted to prevent further U.S. military expansion in the region. As the Cold War evolved India quite naturally leaned toward its most powerful neighbor, the Soviet Union.

Indo-Soviet friendship was formally ordained under the reign of Indira Gandhi. In 1971 India and the Soviet Union

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[74] W. Raymond Duncan and Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahl, Moscow and the Third World under Gorbachev (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) 105.

signed a twenty-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation. The treaty fell short of an actual mutual alliance, but not in the eyes of Western cold warriors.

By signing the treaty Moscow pledged to serve as the guardian of India's interests in international forums; promised the Indian government sweet deals on Soviet military hardware; and made generous trade concessions in New Delhi's favor. In return India was asked only to lend Moscow its moral support from time to time.[75] The actual Soviet motives behind this seemingly one way relationship were threefold: 1) to ensure its own territorial security; 2) to contain U.S. and Chinese influence in South Asia; and 3) to advance its interests in the Third World, specifically the non-aligned countries.[76]

The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation induced a lasting, symbiotic relationship between two of Asia's largest, multi-ethnic states. India reaped great benefits from "the most enduring and trusting friendship enjoyed by the Soviet Union with any country outside the Soviet Bloc."[77] Contrary to the spirit of non-alignment, however, India became dependent on Soviet armaments for its security. The Indian government, realizing this dependence,

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[75] A clear illustration of this moral support was the Indian government's failure to condemn the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan.

[76] Duncan and Ekedahl 105.

[77] Bradnock 105.

sought alternative indigenous and Western sources for its weapons procurement, nonetheless, by the 1990s defense production was still 75% Soviet based.[78]

In the mid-1980's Mikhail Gorbachev's new thinking and rapprochement with the West, caused concern for India. New Delhi was outwardly supportive of Gorbachev's broad international themes of global cooperation, interdependence, and the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts. The Soviet pullout from Afghanistan combined with improved relations with China, the United States, and Pakistan signalled the end of India's exalted status in Soviet foreign policy.

Soviet backing had empowered India's political flexibility in South Asia. Declining Soviet support would mean India would have to fly solo in the region. As Mr. Mark Tulley points out, true Indian leadership in South Asia without Soviet support presented more disadvantages than advantages.[79] In the face of flaccid Soviet support, India accelerated its bid to improve relations with its smaller neighbors, China, and the West. Rajiv Gandhi's SAARC initiative, renewed Sino-Indian border talks, and an overall strengthening of U.S.-Indian relations resulted from the altered dynamics between India and the Soviet Union.

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[78] Mark Tulley, "India and the Developments in the Soviet Union," Asian Affairs vol. xxiii, part II, June 1992: 146.

[79] Tulley 144.

While India was slowly reorienting its economic and foreign policies to be more harmonious with the global ground swell of interdependency and cooperation, the Soviet Union suddenly imploded. Through out the latter half of the 1980s rust spots in the Iron Curtain had exposed the decaying frame of the Soviet monolith to the powerful forces of democracy, nationalism, and the free market. India watched in horror as chunks of the multi-ethnic empire of the former Soviet Union splintered off and or dissolved into bloody ethno-nationalist conflicts.

The collapse of the Soviet Union had a profound impact on India. In fact, as Professor Raju G.C. Thomas rightly points out:

> [t]he disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War has been the single most important external cause of change in South Asia.[80]

Economically strapped, Russia now demanded hard currency for its military hardware. The generous barter agreements for general trade and commerce also came to an end, causing a major crisis for the already stagnant Indian economy. By 1991 the severity of the economic situation had forced India's Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh to declare, "we have not experienced anything similar [regarding the depth of India's economic crisis] in the history of independent India."[81]

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[80] Raju G.C. Thomas, "South Asian Security in the 1990's," Adelphi paper 278 July 1993: 5.

[81] Ramashray Roy, "India in 1992," Asian Survey vol. xxxiii, no. 2, February 1993: 120.

The financial tragedy of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) clearly demonstrated what the future would hold for India if drastic economic reforms were not implemented quickly. In addition to its economic collapse, the breakdown of Soviet central authority led to increased ethnic, separatist, and criminal violence. Bloody conflicts erupted almost immediately in South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Moldova. In all, twenty actual or potential flashpoints threatened the security of not only Russia, but Central and South Asia as well.[82]

In summary the collapse of the Soviet Union accelerated India's integration into the global economy. India's domestic economic reforms were based on expanding foreign investment and global trade, which required better relations with China, Japan, ASEAN, and the West. As India increased its trade and relations with these states it also worked to maintain close links with Russia and the CIS.

Russia's continued cooperation and friendship, although altered by the end of the Cold War, were still seen as critical for many reasons. The Indian defense establishment, which was in the process of diversifying and indigenizing its procurement of weapon systems and armaments, still remained largely dependent on the former Soviet Union. Although Russia and India were seeking "good neighborly" relations with China,

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[82] Taken from a chart entitled "Ethnic/Territorial Flashpoints in the Former Soviet Union" produced by the United States Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center, Washington D.C.

both realized that traditional animosities (e.g. over border disputes) remained and could flair up in the future.

Russian and Indian economic interests also continued to converge in the post Cold War era. Both nations were forced to initiate major macroeconomic reforms, which it was hoped would raise the overall standard of living, increase GNP, and lead to steady long term growth.

For India the most frightening aspect of the collapse of the Soviet Union was the wave of ethno-nationalist conflicts that broke out in the former Soviet republics. If the central Indian government were to disintegrate in a similar fashion it was feared India would be awash in blood, as violent tribal, communal, and ethnic conflicts were already a fact of life in Assam, the Punjab, and Kashmir.

While the survival of Russia's fragile parliamentary democracy serves as the basis for amicable, long term U.S.-Russo relations, this is not the case with India. India's relationship with Russia is and has been based on geopolitical realities.

From the mid-1950s through the 1980s India's status in Soviet foreign policy was heightened due to the charged ideological environment of the Cold War. When the Soviet Union collapsed India lost its privileged position in Russian strategic policy, nevertheless, the two maintained a close rapport. This close association will endure major shifts in

ideology and forms of government as long as both India and Russia's national interests continue to converge.

B. THE RISE OF COMMUNALISM: THE INCIDENT AT AYODHYA

> The greatest threat to communal peace in India today is the communalization of politics.[83]

On 6 December 1992 in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, Babri Masjid, a mosque constructed during the reign of Emperor Babar of the Mogul Dynasty, was demolished by thousands of agitated members of the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP) and *Rashtriya Swayam Sevaks* (RSS), two Hindu nationalist organizations affiliated with the BJP.[84] Hindu zealots claimed that the mosque had been constructed on the very spot where Lord Ram, an avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu and the protagonist of the Sanskrit epic, the Ramayana, had been born. The declared aim of the VHP and RSS was to erect a temple in honor of Lord Ram in place of the Babri Masjid.

Right wing Hindu organizations had been gaining public support throughout the Hindu heartland of Northern India by skillfully tapping into the growing dissatisfaction and distrust of the central government. Their leaders painted a gloomy picture of a passive Hindu India being eroded by the

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[83] Amiya Kumar Bagchi, "Predatory Commercialization and Communalism in India" in Sarvepalli Gopal, ed., Anatomy of a Confrontation: Ayodhya and the Rise of Communal Politics in India (London: Zed Books, 1993) 213.

[84] Sumit Ganguly, "Ethno-religious Conflicts in South Asia," Survival, vol.35, no.2, Summer 1993: 103.

rising tide of Muslim fundamentalism emanating from the oil rich Middle East and war torn Southwest Asia. Adherents of this view saw India's large muslim population as a potential fifth column in some kind of global Islamic conspiracy.[85]

Since the mid-1980s the BJP had supported right wing Hindu groups in their anti-mosque campaign in an effort to court Hindu votes. Their election logic was based on the simple fact that India's population was 80% Hindu. Therefore, by stoking religious and nationalist sentiments L.K. Advani and other BJP leaders hoped to capture a majority of the seats in parliament and depose the ruling Congress (I).

The construction of a temple to Lord Ram in Ayodhya became a pivotal issue in the BJP's political agenda. The disputed mosque, which had not been used for worship since 1949, had come to symbolize the Indian government's commitment to secularism and the protection of the Muslim minority. For Hindu nationalists, however, the mosque represented centuries of alleged Muslim repression and decades of Congress'(I) draconian affirmative action plans enacted to win the vote of the scheduled castes and other minorities at the expense of the Hindu majority.[86]

The destruction of the mosque touched off a wave of communal violence across India. To many observers inside and

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[85] Ganguly 104.

[86] Robert D. King, "Incident at Ayodhya," National Review, vol.45, no.5, March 15, 1993: 24.

outside the country it appeared as though Indian society was in an inescapable decline.[87] The BJP's attempt to harness the energy of Hindu-Muslim tensions for its own short term political benefit backfired; causing negative reverberations well beyond the subcontinent. Anti-temple riots in Bangladesh fueled the growth of theocratic political parties there, while work visas for Indian guest workers in the Persian Gulf were restricted.[88]

While the razing of the Babri Masjid was an "egregious example of Hindu extremism", the BJP and its allies were not alone in bearing the responsibility for the entire affair.[89] As Professor James Manor points out:

> The simultaneous occurrence over the last two decades of both a political awakening and political decay has prepared the ground for the divergence of society and state.[90]

Weakened political institutions and impotent minority governments were eroding the secular frame work of the Indian Union. Congress' (I) short sighted goal of maintaining control of the central government superseded their responsibility to uphold the ideal of secularism.

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[87] Ashutosh Varshney, "The Diminution of India," India Today December 31, 1992: 64g.

[88] Sandy Gordon, "Religious fissures widen," Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter, 1994 Annual reference ed., 48.

[89] Ved Mehta, "The Mosque and the Temple," Foreign Affairs, vol.72, no.2, spring 1993: 16.

[90] James Manor, "India: State and Society Diverge," Current History vol.88, no.542, December 1989: 430.

As was expected Prime Minister Rao's leadership during the crisis was heavily criticized. Congress' (I) weak position in parliament had necessitated a quasi-alliance with the BJP. Rao naively accepted the assurances of the BJP controlled state government of Uttar Pradesh that the mass of VHP and RSS supporters gathering at Ayodhya were there for a peaceful demonstration only. The BJP leadership promised the Prime Minister that it could and would prevent the right wing Hindu groups (VHP and RSS) from demolishing the Babri mosque.

When he was informed of the mosque's destruction, Rao declared that, "the demolition of the Ayodhya structure was an act of utter perfidy."[91] BJP officials claimed they were unable to control the chanting and shouting throngs of Hindu fanatics, whose numbers were reported to be in excess of 200,000. The huge mob surged through security lines and flattened the 400 year old structure in less than 6 hours.[92]

In the months following the demolition of the Babri Masjid, riots in Bombay alone resulted in nearly 500 deaths. This tragedy was followed by bomb blasts that rocked the city killing an additional 400 persons.[93] Coinciding with Indian press reports that the general public's confidence in the Rao

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[91] Zafar Agha, "How did Rao Blunder?," India Today December 31, 1992: 31.

[92] Dilip Awasthi, "A Nation's Shame," India Today December 31, 1992: 17.

[93] Sidney Bearman, ed., "South Asia: Back to the Bad Old Ways," Strategic Survey 1993-94 (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1994) 182.

government had sank to an all time low, the people of India went to the ballot box. In November, to the surprise of many, the BJP was soundly defeated in four out of six provincial elections. The election results, which were interpreted as a general mandate against the BJP's actions in Ayodhya, granted Rao and Congress (I) a second chance.

Just as the popularity of Rao began to rebound, accusations of bribery in connection with a $1.6 billion dollar stock market scandal were leveled at the Prime Minister and his Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh. Singh, touted as one of the most honest men in public service, resigned in protest. Prime Minister Rao refused to accept Mr. Singh's resignation and survived the credulous charges. In the midst of these crises the Rao government managed to push ahead with its economic reforms which proved to be remarkably successful.

For the time being communal violence and agitation seem to be held in check, however, underlying tensions still remain. The destruction of the Babri Masjid proved to be a difficult test for India's secular democracy. But as Dr. Kripa Sridharan, a faculty member of the Department of Political Science of the National University of Singapore notes:

> ...what bears emphasis is that Indian democracy may seem bafflingly chaotic to some observers but it is in fairly good working order. Its institutions, though not as robust

> as before, exhibit a fierce capacity to survive and are capable of regeneration.[94]

Presently, Rao's Congress (I) government remain in power and the economic reforms are pushing ahead, but foreign investors still "wonder whether it is safe to invest in a country where religious passions threaten governments as well as mosques."[95]

C. INDO-U.S. RELATIONS: STRATEGIC OPTIONS AND THE POLICIES OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

In recent years South Asian experts and scholars have put forth many new and improved strategic options for the United States with regard to India. For example, during the last quarter of the Bush Administration Mr. Selig S. Harrison, a senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, concluded that:

> The United States now has an opportunity for a fresh start in South Asia and should move toward a more detached policy that avoids embroilment in the region's military rivalry while giving appropriate emphasis to India as South Asia's more important power.[96]

Mr. Harrison also listed seven clear guidelines for U.S. foreign policy vis-a-vis India:

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[94] Kripa Sridharan, "India's transition to cautious optimism," Business Times, (published by Singapore Press Holdings Ltd.), Weekend Edition, September 24-25, 1994: I.

[95] "Testing India's Structure," The Economist December 12, 1992: 41.

[96] Selig S. Harrison, "South Asia and the United States: A Chance for a Fresh Start," Current History vol.91, no.563, March 1992: 97.

1. Avoid involvement in the Indo-Pakistani military rivalry

2. Enlarge multi-lateral economic support

3. Condition aid on economic reforms

4. Promote a regional rapprochement

5. Support Indian membership in the U.N. Security Council

6. Give India and China equal treatment

7. Encourage nuclear restraint.[97]

Before implementing these guidelines Mr. Harrison suggested that the United States first adopt a more detached military posture, and reassess its position on the nuclear issues facing the region.

In April of 1992 the National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) co-hosted the third Indo-U.S. Strategic Symposium in conjunction with India's Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA). For three days Indian and American scholars and policy experts exchanged views and ideas concerning the future of Indo-U.S. relations in the post Cold War era. At this symposium Professor Stephen Cohen presented a paper entitled, "India's Role in the New Global Order: An American Perspective." In it he listed five possible strategic alternatives for dealing with India:

1. Sheer Apathy: Let India reach its own natural strategic balance by disengaging and doing nothing.

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[97] Harrison 104-5.

2. Containment: Enact a strategy similar to that used against the former Soviet Union to prevent India from conflicting with U.S. interests in the area.

3. Appeasement: Recognize India as the regional hegemon and support--or at least not strongly oppose--Indian ambitions in the region.

4. Alliance: Obligate to formal agreements with India in pursuit of U.S. interests.

5. Cooption: Blend elements of containment, appeasement, and alliance strategies in order to offer a combination of inducements and pressure to advance U.S. interests in India.[98]

Professor Cohen surmised that cooption was the most sensible of the five strategies outlined. He went on to describe how this strategy of "tough cooperation" could be structured in order to advance important U.S. interests in South Asia, such as non-proliferation and war-avoidance.

In more recent articles and conferences Professor Cohen has expanded his cooption concept by proposing the creation of a South Asian Regional Initiative (SARI).[99] According to Mr. Cohen, SARI should be based on the premise that the United States has no vital national interests at stake in South Asia worth going to war over. Therefore, in order to pursue such continuing U.S. interests as democracy, non-proliferation, economic liberalization, and the like, a new strategic

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[98] Stephen Philip Cohen, "India's Role in the New Global Order: an American Perspective," The United States and India in the Post-Soviet World, Proceedings of the Third Indo-U.S. Strategic Symposium (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1993) 63-6.

[99] Stephen Philip Cohen, "The United States and India: Nuclear Policy, Arms Control and Military Cooperation" prepared for a conference on "India and America After the Cold War", 7-9 March 1993: 8.

framework is needed. Professor Cohen explained that this new policy structure should be modelled on the Middle East peace process, with the central objective of first normalizing Indo-Pakistani relations. According to Mr. Cohen, time and high level attention would be the primary U.S. assets necessary for this strategy to succeed.[100]

Yet another view on U.S. options in South Asia is offered by Mr. Lawrence E. Grinter in an article entitled "The United States and South Asia: New Challenges, New Opportunities" which appeared in the summer 1993 edition of Asian Affairs. In this article, as in Professor Cohen's, Mr. Grinter also concludes that the U.S. has no vital interests in South Asia, but he goes on to add that:

> the area [South Asia] has begun to loom larger in American perspectives in part because the end of the cold war is allowing India and the United States to develop a more natural relationship with market economics as a focus.[101]

Mr. Grinter then lists five systematic criteria for evaluating future U.S. policy options for South Asia:

1. American initiatives in South Asia must not encourage arms races, or prompt unilateral military buildups.

2. The United States should gear proposed policies to enhance access and/or influence in the area.

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[100] Stephen P. Cohen, "A Fresh U.S. Policy for South Asia," India Abroad, April 2, 1993: 2-3.

[101] Lawrence E. Grinter, "The United States and South Asia: New Challenges, New Opportunities," Asian Affairs vol. xx, no. 2, summer 1993: 112.

3. Such proposals should promote and encourage democracy.

4. All U.S. South Asian initiatives should ultimately stimulate market economics.

5. U.S. policies should be aimed at lowering the hostility levels in the region and encouraging the peaceful settlement of issues.[102]

In addition to these five systematic criteria, Mr. Grinter also creates three pessimistic, future scenarios for South Asia:

1. Another India-Pakistan war

2. Disintegration of Afghanistan, or the rise of a radical islamic regime in Kabul

3. Rupture of the United States-Pakistan relationship.

From these he concludes there are three general strategies for the United States with regard to South Asia: 1) Downgrade Pakistan; 2) Upgrade India; or 3) use a region wide approach.[103] He fleshes out this structural skeleton by designing and/or endorsing specific policies (e.g. the creation of a South Asia working group between U.S. CENTCOM and PACOM, and the Clinton Administration's adoption of President Bush's proposal for a five-power conference on nuclear-free South Asia).

Mr. Harrison, Mr. Cohen, and Mr. Grinter all present long term strategies for the improvement of U.S. foreign policy with regard to India. All three of the aforementioned

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[102] Grinter 112-13.

[103] Grinter 113-15.

strategies require assets which succeeding U.S. administrations have been unwilling to devote to the region: time and attention.

President Clinton, who was elected largely due to the popularity of his proposed domestic agenda, initially was disinterested in the formulation of foreign policy. Accordingly, South Asia, which was already low on the foreign policy totem pole, became even less important in U.S. strategic planning.

Early in 1994 the Clinton Administration inadvertently angered the Indian government with a series of statements on the sensitive issue of Kashmir.[104] Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphel, an Oxford classmate of the President, was sent to New Delhi to rectify the situation. Ms. Raphel calmed Indian officials by articulating a clear U.S. position on Kashmir, which called for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the issue in accordance with the 1972 Indo-Pakistani Simla Accord. The statement also petitioned for a reduction in human rights violations and opposition to any outside aid for Kashmiri militants.[105]

With the matter of Kashmir out of the limelight and economic ties growing between the United States and India, Ms.

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[104] John F. Burns, "White House Statements on Kashmir Rights Anger Indians," New York Times 10 March 1994.

[105] K.K. Katyal, "Raphel Outlines 5-Point Approach on Kashmir," The Hindu 02 April 1994.

Raphel and her colleagues focused their attention on the issue of counterproliferation in South Asia. The Clinton Administration attempted a carrot and stick approach with Pakistan on the issue. By dangling the transfer of 38 F-16 aircraft (worth an estimated $658 million) in front of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Washington offered weapons that would bolster Pakistan's conventional security in return for a verifiable cap on its nuclear weapons program.[106]

Indian officials were alarmed by the possible transfer of F-16s to Pakistan and the simultaneous increase of pressure on India to come to the nuclear bargaining table. The Clinton Administration wanted India to join a proposed nine-nation summit to denuclearize the subcontinent. Some Indian experts read U.S. initiatives to cap nuclear proliferation on the subcontinent as an attempt to weaken and eventually destroy Indian nuclear capabilities.[107]

To smooth out relations, eliminate misunderstandings, and perhaps boost India's sagging pride, the Clinton Administration invited Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao to visit Washington D.C. in the spring of 1994. Prime Minister Rao gladly accepted and arrived in the United States in May.

After delivering a moving speech before a joint session of Congress, Prime Minister Rao met with President Clinton the

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[106] Raj Chengappa, "Nuclear Dilemma," India Today 30 April 1994: 48.

[107] Chengappa 53.

following day at the White House. Their meeting was described as "friendly and fruitful" and a "good beginning", but the shortage of press coverage in the United States reflected the overall low priority of India in U.S. strategic circles.[108]

President Clinton and Prime Minister Rao later issued a joint statement in which they agreed on several broad issues:

1. A new partnership should be formed between the U.S. and India.

2. Democracy, respect for human rights, and economic liberalization provide the best foundation for global stability and prosperity in the post-Cold War world. India and the United States would cooperate to solve the problems posed by weapons of mass destruction, AIDS, environmental degradation, population growth, poverty, international terrorism, and trafficking of illegal narcotics.

3. Expanding the pace and scope of high level exchanges concerning political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological, and social issues.

4. Increasing Indo-American cooperation at the United Nations.

5. The need for bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan (as per the Simla Accords) in order to resolve all outstanding differences, specifically the issue of Kashmir.

6. Strong support to reduce and progressively eliminate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

7. Intensification of cooperative efforts to achieve a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty.

8. The removal of impediments that exist in Indo-American bilateral commerce in order to further stimulate trade and investment.

9. Satisfaction with the ongoing U.S. and Indian scientific exchange programs, cooperation on a new science and

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[108] Quoted from press reports carried in L.A. India Journal 27 May 1994. (This publication is an English language, weekly newspaper for Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans residing in the Los Angeles metro region.)

technology agreement, and the signing of two agreements on drug awareness and the preservation of cultural heritage sites.[109]

The Clinton-Rao joint statement reflects the convergence of Indo-American national interests in the wake of the Cold War. Although President Clinton and Prime Minister Rao appeared to be in harmony on these broad issues many substantive disagreements remain. One major point of contention is the United States' commitment to the capping, reduction, and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in South Asia.[110] This policy is central to the President's national security strategy of engagement and enlargement. According to the White House's National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement:

> South Asia has seen the spread of democracy, and our strategy is designed to help the peoples of that region enjoy the fruits of democracy and greater stability through efforts aimed at resolving long-standing conflict and implementing confidence building measures. This advances U.S. interest in halting nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation. **The United States has engaged India and Pakistan in seeking agreement on steps to cap, reduce and ultimately eliminate their weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile capabilities.**[111]

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[109] "Rao--Clinton Joint Statement," L.A. India Journal 27 May 1994: I13 and I20.

[110] Taken from the Clinton Administration's report to Congress, entitled "Update on Progress Toward Regional Nonproliferation in South Asia," April 1994.

[111] William J. Clinton, President, United States, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, (The White House: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1994) 26. (emphasis added).

India interprets President Clinton's plan to cap, roll back, and eliminate Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) as hypocritical and discriminatory. One Indian strategist summarized that:

> They [the United States and its Western allies] would like to prevent any other nation from joining their exclusive club as proliferation of WMD is a cause of concern but would like to hold on to their own arsenals: **WMD in their hands are acceptable. Selective regional disarmament and not global riddance of WMD would appear to be their objective.**[112]

This reasoning and logic is also cited in defense of India's refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which is also viewed as discriminatory.

The Clinton Administration's support of continued bilateral discussions, high level visits, and confidence building measures will enhance relations between India and the United States in the future. While the overall improvement of diplomatic and commercial ties between the United States and India is a notable foreign policy achievement, some Asia specialists, such as Harry Harding, wonder if "the Administration's apparent accomplishments in Asia were more the result of good fortune than of careful planning.[113]

President Clinton could build on the present Indo-American "good fortune" by adopting one or a combination of

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[112] Lt. Gen. A.M. Vohra, (ret.), "Indo-Pak Divide and South Asian Cooperation," Indian Defence Review vol.9, (3), July 1994: 43.

[113] Harry Harding, "Asia Policy to the Brink," Foreign Policy no. 96, Fall 1994: 57.

all the long term strategies outlined by Mr. Harrison, Mr. Cohen, and Mr. Grinter. A more balanced, somewhat detached but co-opting approach would not detract from President Clinton's strategy of engagement and enlargement. In fact, a carefully crafted, long term strategy for South Asia could achieve the Administration's stated objectives with fewer resources and in less time.

In addition to President Clinton's stated counterproliferation objectives for the subcontinent, there are other important reasons why the United States should devote more time and energy to developing a strong, positive relationship with India. For example, encouraging and supporting India's economic reforms and its intergration with the Asia-Pacific region would prove to be both economically and strategically beneficial for the United States. For as one author suggested:

> no one country should be allowed to dominate Asia Pacific. Another Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere led by any country would be a disaster. Although Japan is economically very powerful, it is Greater China, if not China itself, which could threaten domination. India has the potential to assist in obviating such a threat.[114]

India could serve as a military counterbalance against any potential Chinese threat as well as a huge market for American exports.

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[114] M.S. Dobbs-Higginson, Asia Pacific Its Role in the New World Disorder (London: Heinemann Ltd., 1994) 205-6.

A major shift in U.S. geo-political strategy toward India, however, is unlikely given the Clinton Administration's current engagement in Haiti, the Persian Gulf, North Korea, the never-ending conflict in Bosnia, and a host of other foreign policy crises which relegate Indo-American relations and the problems of South Asia to the back burner.

D. THE CURRENT STATE OF INDO-PAKISTANI RELATIONS

The hostility between India and Pakistan dates back to the creation of the two states in 1947. Then as now, the focal point of each country's animosities, fears, and frustrations centered around the partitioned state of Kashmir.

Indo-Pakistani relations have remained strained since the spring of 1990 when India and Pakistan were on the brink of war. The most publicized account of this confrontation appeared in early 1993 in New Yorker magazine. The story, entitled "On the Nuclear Edge" read like a Tom Clancy novel. In it the author, Seymour Hersh, recounted the alleged details of what he called "the most dangerous nuclear confrontation of the postwar era."[115]

While the immediate threat of war on the subcontinent has subsided for the time being, the sources for tension between India and Pakistan remain. India continues to accuse Pakistan

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[115] Seymour M. Hersh, "On the Nuclear Edge", The New Yorker 29 March 1993: 56.

of covertly supporting Kashmiri separatists and exporting terrorism to Kashmir and the Punjab. Pakistani officials counter by pointing out that the Indian armed forces occupying Kashmir continue to violate the human rights of the Kashmiri people.

The United States and the other great powers with interests in South Asia (namely Russia and China) have tried to steer clear of the Kashmir quagmire. The dispute over Kashmir has also fueled Indo-Pakistani ballistic missile proliferation. Pakistan's alleged purchase of short range M-11 ballistic missiles from China and its arsenal of Hatf I and Hatf II short range missiles (70-120 km) are the raison d'etre for India's indigenous construction of the Prithvi ballistic missile.[116] Both states claim that these deadly weapons are for defensive purposes, but the quest for more technologically advanced Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) could trigger a destabilizing arms race. The situation is uncomfortably reminiscent of the nuclear stand off between the United States and the Soviet Union during the early stages of the Cold War.

Domestic politics in India and Pakistan also contribute to the tensions between the two states. Both Indian and Pakistani leaders must take a tough stand on Kashmir and the related issue of defense in order to succeed at the polls.

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[116] Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Near East/South Asia daily report 17 August 1994, "Paper Finds Motive Behind Bhutto's Missile Proposal," Navbharat Times in Hindi, 17 Aug 1994. *(India also produces a longer range ballistic missile called Agni, which has the capability to reach continental China.)

One example of this phenomenon occurred recently when Pakistan's former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, who would like to unseat the incumbent Benazir Bhutto, declared that Pakistan possessed nuclear weapons. Western analysts believed that Mr. Sharif's primary motive behind this claim was to embarrass Ms. Bhutto, nonetheless, his statement had international ramifications.[117]

Mr. Sharif's statement also happened to coincide with revelations of a Pakistani link to the plutonium smuggling operations broken up by German authorities.[118] This has not made India optimistic about the future of Indo-Pakistani relations, thus, raising the level of tension between India and Pakistan once again.

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[117] Shekhar Gupta, "Nawaz Sharif's Bombshell," India Today 15 September 1994: 29.

[118] FBIS, Near East/South Asia daily report 22 August 1994, "Germany Asked to Inform on Plutonium Smuggling Case," Delhi All India Radio Network, 22 August 1994.

VI. THE BURDEN OF KASHMIR

Since the days of Nehru, New Delhi has viewed Kashmir as the linchpin of India's multi-cultural, secular union. Indian domestic and foreign policies have consistently maintained that Kashmir must remain an integral part of the country in order to prevent the "Balkanization" of India. This unyielding position, however, has linked many of India's domestic, regional, and international problems to the burden of Kashmir.

A peaceful resolution of this nagging problem in India's favor would advance and accelerate its drive toward great power status, while the economic, military, and political drain of a fourth Indo-Pakistani war over Kashmir could prove to be fatal for India's great power aspirations in the twenty-first century. Because Kashmir represents such a major impediment to India's great power status, an in depth and detailed account of this complex issue is necessary. Understanding the history behind the struggle for Kashmir is also essential if one is trying to forecast India's role in the international political structure of the twenty-first century.

A. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. Basic Geography and Demographics

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is located in the northernmost region of the Indian subcontinent and is bounded by China and Chinese controlled Tibet to the north and east, Pakistan to the west, and India to the south (see Appendix C). J&K covers approximately 86,000 square miles of strategic, mostly mountainous (Himalayas) territory. The region is divided between Pakistan and India. Indian controlled Kashmir with its capital at Srinagar includes the Vale of Kashmir, the mostly Dogra (Hindu) province of Jammu, and the Buddhist majority area of Ladakh. Indian controlled Kashmir has an approximate population of six million, the majority being Muslims. Azad ("free") Kashmir, resource poor and desolate in comparison with the Indian state of J&K, has a nearly exclusive Muslim population of 1.5 million.[119]

2. British Rule and its Legacy on Kashmir

The British empire established its foothold on the Indian subcontinent in the seventeenth century. Great Britain perfected the practice of divide and rule during its long reign over South Asia. The British believed that Indian

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[119] "Kashmir", Encyclopedia Americana (1985, volume 15) 329-330.

society was divided into homogeneous religious communities which shared common economic, political, and social interests. They assumed it to be in their best interest to govern the subcontinent based on this notion. Because of the vast size of India, however, direct British rule was numerically impossible. The colonial government, therefore, granted autonomy to over five hundred princely states after they recognized the reign of the British Crown. Kashmir would later become the largest of these autonomous princely states.

After their defeat by the British in 1846, the Sikhs (then rulers of Kashmir) were forced to sign the Treaty of Lahore. Unable to pay the war reparations demanded, the Sikhs were then compelled to cede Kashmir to the British. Later, under the Treaty of Amritsar, the state of Jammu & Kashmir was created and Gulab Singh was installed as the first Maharajah (princely ruler). Gulab Singh also conquered the Buddhist area of Ladakh and incorporated it under his rule. Thus began the century long, hereditary rule of Hindu Maharajahs over a predominantly Muslim population.

Consecutive victories for the British in World Wars I and II proved to be economically and politically costly. Great Britain needed to concentrate on reconstruction of its own industries, cities, and economy. Loyal Indian subjects to the crown who fought in Europe returned to the subcontinent with new ideas about their future. During this period the drive for Indian independence had been slowly gaining strength.

Charismatic leadership from Gandhi and Nehru eventually bonded all segments of Indian society together in a non-violent push for independence. Their Congress party platform was founded on the establishment of a secular democratic, non-aligned government and united by a common desire to end British hegemony. The leadership of the Congress party connected the drive for independence with the belief of a common historical experience. They postulated that all the indigenous peoples of British colonial India shared a common history and possessed enough cross cultural ties to mark them distinctly as Indians. Nehru, Gandhi and Patel politically mobilized the masses by focusing on the common goal of forcing the British out of India. The Congress platform also called for the establishment of a democratic, secular state.

Gandhi and Nehru were not the only vocal leaders competing for the hearts and minds of the Indian people. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, leader of the All-India Muslim League, also wanted independence from Great Britain, but his political appeal was based on a different concept. Jinnah ascended to power by capitalizing on the British induced tradition of communalism. India was comprised of two separate nations, one Hindu and the other Muslim (i.e. Two Nation theory) proclaimed Jinnah. By accentuating differences and politically mobilizing along religious lines, Jinnah carved out the leadership role he desired.

In the end even the force of Gandhi and Nehru's leadership was not enough to overcome the entrenched communalism of the subcontinent. The British exodus and partition of India in 1947 resulted in widespread communal violence, mass migration across the newly created Indo-Pakistani borders, war between the two newly formed states, and ultimately the death of millions of ordinary citizens.

While violence and destruction spread throughout the rest of India during this time frame, Kashmir's ruler Maharajah Hari Singh waffled about which path to take. The British had declared that the rulers of the princely states throughout the subcontinent had three legal options: 1) accede to India, 2) accede to Pakistan, or 3) remain independent. Although the ultimate decision was to be left to the ruler, geographic location with regard to Pakistan and communal constitution of the population were held to be the essential determinants for accession to India or Pakistan. Simply put, if a state had a Muslim majority and a contiguous border with East or West Pakistan that state should accede to Pakistan.

Although the majority of Kashmiri Muslims, led by the popular and secular Sheik Abdullah's National Conference, desired union with India, Maharajah Hari Singh, a Hindu himself, felt that independence was his only viable option for maintaining power. Abdullah, a close, personal friend of Nehru and arch rival of Singh, was sure to replace him upon Kashmir's accession to India. Accordingly, in an effort to

postpone the inevitable, Hari Singh entered the Standstill Agreements with India and Pakistan on 12 August 1947. These agreements, suggested and sponsored by the Cabinet Mission, were designed to cover the transitional period of partition.[120]

Later that month, the British commander of the Maharajah's army reported that tribal raids from groups in Pakistan were wreaking havoc on Kashmiri towns and villages. A few months later, to make matters worse, Pakistan cut off supply lines into Kashmir. By late October 1947 the Pushtun tribal raiders controlled many towns and villages and were pressing within fifty miles of the Kashmiri capital of Srinagar.

Because of the tribal invasion and suspected Pakistani ties, Hari Singh made a desperate plea for help to the Indian government. In order to obtain support, the Maharajah was compelled to sign the Instrument of Accession, which gave legal claim to the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India on 26 October 1947.[121] Indian troops arrived in Kashmir immediately and managed to beat back the Pushtun raiders.

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[120] Damodar R. SarDesai, "The Origins of Kashmir's International and Legal Status" in Raju G.C. Thomas, ed., Perspectives on Kashmir, The Roots of Conflict in South Asia (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) 83-84.

[121] SarDesai 84.

3. Independent India and Kashmir

In early 1948 the Indian government lead by Jawaharlal Nehru took the matter before the United Nations Security Council. His aim was to gain international support for Kashmir's accession to India and seek military assistance to drive out the remaining tribal raiders.

After many accusations and counter accusations from India and Pakistan, the United Nations Security Council established the U.N. Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) and passed numerous resolutions, three of which are significant to the current stalemate between Pakistan and India:

1) 17 January 1948: both parties should refrain from the use of force and inform the council immediately of any material change in the situation;

2) 13 August 1948: after proving Pakistani troop involvement, UNCIP made any further action on the issue of Kashmir conditional on Pakistani and Pushtun tribesmen withdrawal. The three part resolution consisted of:

   a) a mutual cease fire and a line of demarcation.
   b) a staged withdrawal of forces from the area.
   c) talks concerning the future status of Jammu and Kashmir and the will of its people to determine that end. (Each part of this resolution was conditional on the previous part.);

3) 5 January 1949: established that a plebescite be held to determine the future status of Kashmir following the compliance of the provisions of the 17 January and 13 August UNCIP resolutions.[122]

Throughout the ongoing negotiations fighting continued between Pakistan and India over the fate of Kashmir. A line

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[122] SarDesai 87-88.

of control emerged between Pakistani controlled Azad Kashmir and the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. U.N. brokered talks continually stalled as both sides refused to demilitarize the occupied areas.

In 1954 Pakistan joined the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), thus, firmly allying itself with the United States against the rising tide of Soviet dominated communism. India, under Nehru's Congress government, had declared itself nonaligned and had hoped to remain neutral in the developing bipolar Cold War. But by taking no stance and failing to denounce the Soviet Union, India and the Kashmir issue were largely ignored by the United States and its Cold War allies.

With Kashmiri Nationalist leader Sheik Abdullah jailed and any cry for independence squelched, Nehru decided to annex the state of Jammu and Kashmir. On March 29, 1956 Nehru gave a famous speech before the Lok Sabha in which he justified the withdrawal for a Kashmiri plebescite. He based his decision on three grounds: 1) Pakistan never removed its forces from occupied (Azad) Kashmir; 2) Kashmir's Constituent Assembly had approved the merger with the Indian Union and accepted the Indian Constitution; and 3) Pakistan's security agreements with the United States had drastically changed the situation

and reflected Pakistan's desire to seek a military solution concerning Kashmir.[123]

In the early 1960s India suffered a series of political setbacks and misfortunes which gave the impression that the nation was weak. In 1962 war erupted between the People's Republic of China and India over border disputes. India suffered a humiliating defeat. In 1963 communal rioting broke out in Kashmir after a holy relic was stolen from the Hazratbal Mosque. A year later India's prominent and powerful Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru died. Then in 1965, Pakistani forces scored a small victory over Indian troops in the swampy Rann of Kutch. All these events were misperceived as signs of India's weakness, hesitancy, and vulnerability by Pakistan.

Confident of India's political indecisiveness and its own American equipped armed forces, Pakistan launched "Operation Gibraltar."[124] The plan called for Pakistani backed Mujahideen and commandos to infiltrate the porous line of control between Azad Kashmir and Indian controlled Kashmir. Once there, it was believed, that their very presence would create an uprising. Pakistani troops would then roll in to help the insurgents. The plan, however, backfired, as Kashmiris assisted Indian troops in finding the instigators. India also

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[123] Ashutosh Varshney, "Three Compromised Nationalisms: Why Kashmir Has Been a Problem" in Raju G.C. Thomas, ed., Perspectives on Kashmir, The Roots of Conflict in South Asia 215.

[124] Gowher Rizvi, "India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Problem, 1947-1972" in Raju G.C. Thomas, ed., Perspectives on Kashmir, The Roots of Conflict in South Asia 69-70.

out maneuvered Pakistani forces, and after twelve days of fighting, an American arms embargo, and a Soviet brokered cease fire the hostilities, which neither side could afford, stopped.

In 1971 fighting erupted again between Pakistan and India, but the bone of contention this time was East Pakistan and not Kashmir. Discriminated and disillusioned Bengali Muslims fought and won secession from Punjabi dominated West Pakistan and formed the state of Bangladesh. India entered the war on the side of the Bengali insurgents. Pakistan, once again, miscalculated the strength of India's armed forces and suffered a crushing defeat.

Pakistan's leader, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and India's Indira Gandhi signed the Simla Accord in the summer of 1972. This agreement called for the recognition of the cease fire line as the current line of control between Azad Kashmir and Jammu & Kashmir, and a promise that neither side would violate this line with the use of force. The Simla agreement also called for bilateral resolution to the question of Kashmir.

In 1975 the Indian government reopened dialogue and negotiations with Kashmir's most celebrated leader, Sheik Abdullah. Abdullah signed an agreement with India later that year which stated that Kashmir would be a "constituent unit of the Union of India" in return for maintaining Kashmiri autonomy as provided under Article 370 of the Indian

constitution.[125] [126] After further political wheeling and dealing, Abdullah emerged as Chief Minister of Kashmir.

Abdullah's leadership was electorally legitimated in 1977, and continued until his death in 1982 at which time his son, Farooq, succeeded him.[127] Farooq's National Conference party scored a major victory in the 1983 state elections. Indira Gandhi had personally campaigned against Farooq's National Conference party in an attempt to strengthen Congress's power in Kashmir. Mrs Gandhi was trying to centralize power in the federal government in New Delhi. In her quest to gain votes for centralization, Indira Gandhi inflamed underlying communal tensions throughout India. Non-Congress party state governments were under siege from New Delhi and Kashmir & Jammu was no exception. Ultimately Farooq was dismissed and replaced with a more malleable Chief Minister.

After the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi, her son, Rajiv Gandhi, became the Prime Minister of India. In 1986 Rajiv forged a marriage of convenience with Farooq Abdullah's Kashmir National Conference party and his own Congress party. Disillusioned Kashmiris saw this as a sell out and support for opposition groups began to rise. By 1987 a coalition of

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[125] Varshney in Perspectives on Kashmir 217-218.

[126] Article 370 grants Kashmir special status among other Indian states, the principal axiom being that non-Kashmiris are not allowed to buy property or settle in Kashmir.

[127] Varshney in Perspectives on Kashmir 218.

Islamic groups known as the Muslim United Front (MUF) presented a serious challenge to the Conference/Congress campaign team. Farooq emerged as the winner of the state elections that year amidst allegations of widespread election fraud and rigging.

By the beginning of 1988 anti-Farooq riots had given way to active resistance to the central Indian government. Kashmiri militant groups supported by and operating out of Pakistan began a hit and run campaign against the Indian government and armed forces. Local security forces began cracking down hard on suspected militants and sympathetic civilians which further agitated the insurgency. In 1990 after mounting unrest and cyclically escalating violence, the central government dismissed Farooq's administration and placed Jammu & Kashmir directly under rule from New Delhi.

B. IDENTIFYING THE SOURCES OF CONFLICT

Today after five years of savage fighting the political issue of Kashmir is no closer to being resolved than it was at the time of partition. There are more than 500,000 Indian troops in Kashmir combatting various militant groups, the two principal bands being the muslim Hizbul Mujahideen and the secular Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). A Kalashnikov culture has taken root in the Vale of Kashmir, especially among the disillusioned younger generation. The

brutalities of the occupying Indian armed forces have also contributed to the cycle of violence by stoking the sentiments of insurrection.

In India the reaction to the carnage occurring in Kashmir is emotional and strong. Like Bosnia, Lebanon, Northern Ireland and so many other places where ethno-religious wars rage, public opinion demands a quick solution to end the violence. As the other trouble spots have demonstrated, unfortunately, a quick solution only temporarily postpones the bloodshed. In order to achieve a lasting peace the roots of the hostilities must be identified, discussed, negotiated and settled upon. Thereafter all parties involved must commit themselves to a disciplined path that will require patience, mutual understanding, and a lengthy period of time to persevere.

The origins of Kashmir's problems are complex and intertwined. A colonial past, secular Indian nationalism, the Two Nation theory, United Nations involvement, the Cold War, communalism, Kashmiriyat (Kashmiri nationalism), self-determination, the international demonstration effect, charismatic leaders (or the lack thereof), an abundance of weapons, and internal politics are the primary variables which have shaped Kashmir's history and generated the present day situation. The road to lasting peace begins by identifying and understanding these variables.

The democratic institutions and processes adopted and constructed by the British educated Indian elite to rule an independent India were not indigenous to the subcontinent. India had a long history of hierarchial rule. While the uneducated and illiterate masses did not have the slightest notion of what Western democracy meant, others like Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his Muslim league interpreted the Congress party's conception of government as a Hindu version of the British Raj. Jinnah and his supporters pontificated that Muslims would face discrimination and persecution under a Hindu dominated government.

The British found it attractive and cost effective to control India based on ethno-religious differences. So called "martial races" such as the Sikhs, Rajputs and Gurkhas were utilized in the British led colonial army because it was believed that these peoples had some sort of inborn will to fight. Maharajahs and Sultans were allowed to rule the subcontinents five hundred plus princely states as long as they were loyal to the British Crown.

By emphasizing ethnic and religious differences and rewarding Anglification of the Indian culture, the British sent mixed signals to the Indian populace. Democracy was praised while communalism was allowed to flourish and grow. Democratic institutions and processes, thus, became entwined with strong communal organizations. This systemic defect would become a major source of violence and conflict in South

Asia. The British, as in South Africa, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East, had unintentionally sown the seeds of future ethno-religious confrontations.

As fate would have it Kashmir was caught in the ideological and political cross fire of the partition of the subcontinent. According to the Two Nation theory, Kashmir, because of its Muslim majority should have been incorporated as an integral part of newly established Pakistan. The addition of Kashmir to the Indian Union, however, was also crucial to Nehru's vision of a secular, democratic India. Hence, both Pakistan and India found themselves locked in a diametrically opposed struggle for control of the area. These powerful external forces set the stage for the brutal conflict that continues today.

Shifting from a regional to an individual level of analysis, the personalities and motivations of key figures such as Jinnah, Nehru, and Sheik Abdullah also must be taken into consideration when studying the problems of Kashmir. Here are some of their thoughts on the subject of Kashmir:

> **Nehru**: We have always regarded the Kashmir problem as symbolic for us, as it has far reaching consequences in India. Kashmir is symbolic as it illustrates that we are a secular state . . . [128]

> **Jinnah**: it is a dream that Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality . . . They neither intermarry, nor interdine

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[128] Varshney in Perspectives on Kashmir 202. (The fact that Prime Minister Nehru had been born and raised in Kashmir may have also influenced his thinking on the issue.)

> together, and indeed they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas . . .[129]
>
> **Abdullah:** I and my organization never believed in the formula that Muslims and Hindus form separate nations. We did not believe in the two-nation theory, not in communalism or communalism itself. . . We believe that religion had no politics.[130]

These key leaders held differing beliefs which each used to justify their positions on Kashmir. Whether they actually held credence in their own words is questionable, at least in the case of Jinnah. The fact remains they influenced the thinking and actions of generations of Indians, Pakistanis, and Kashmiris to come.

As if regional and individual differences were not enough, the international dimension must also be considered when studying the Kashmir issue. Nehru was the first to try to sway world public opinion in his favor by submitting the Kashmir problem to the United Nations. Initially Nehru scored what seemed a moral and legal victory for the incorporation of Kashmir into the Indian Union. Once tensions were eased and Pakistani troops pulled back the people of Kashmir would hold a plebescite to decide their own fate. Later, however, the issue became a political football in the realpolitik of the Cold War. Pakistan's security arrangements with the United States alienated Nehru and compelled him to lean more towards

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[129] Varshney in Perspectives on Kashmir 199.

[130] Varshney in Perspectives on Kashmir 201.

the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance. The plebescite that would have settled the question of Kashmir was never held.

In the wake of the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan a violent uprising began in Kashmir. Young Kashmiri youth joined well armed groups of militants, who were led and trained by former Afghan mujahideen. These groups conducted ambushes against Indian soldiers and attacked local and national government officials. In order to combat the insurgents the Indian army and the local security forces cracked down hard on suspected militants and in the process committed a number of atrocities against innocent civilians.

In May of 1989 India Today ran a cover story on Kashmir entitled "Valley of Tears." Inderjit Badhwar, the author of the piece, gave an inciteful description of the trials and tribulations of average Kashmiris. He profiled several youths who actively supported the insurgency. One such youth, Wazir Ahmed, as he is known by his nom de guerre, when asked by Badhwar why he did not work within the system to change things democratically replied:

> We've tried it [democracy]. It doesn't work. for us, all politicians are fakes, liars, thieves. We will make sure that the entire valley boycotts the next election.[131]

The article painted a dreary picture of the lives of Kashmir's numerous youth. In 1989 approximately 40% of the population

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[131] Inderjit Badhwar, "Valley of Tears," India Today 31 May 1989: 37.

of the Kashmir valley was between twenty and thirty years of age. Of this percentage, roughly one third were unemployed.[132] As in the Punjab and the Israeli occupied territories, disillusioned youth turned to violence to vent their anger and frustration with a system they saw as undeniably corrupt.

The uprising of Kashmiri youth is similar to that of the Palestinian Intifada in many ways. Disillusioned youth, raised in a hostile and violent climate, bombarded with political propaganda, and governed by a harsh occupying force become agitated and release their angst on those they view as the oppressors. In Kashmir, as in the Israeli occupied territories, village elders and businessmen secretly applaud the young rebels, to whom a violent death signifies martyrdom.

World wide coverage of the Palestinian Intifada may have contributed to the Kashmiri insurgency that began in the late 1980's. However, it is by no mean the principal cause for the cycle of violence that continues in Kashmir today. In the same India Today article, Mr. Badhwar suggested that,

> The immediate cause for the anger and violence--even Farooq's ministers now readily admit--is the universal belief, not without foundation, that the election was rigged.[133]

The falsified election was interpreted as a sell out of the hopes and aspirations of all Kashmiris, especially the young,

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[132] Badhwar 38.

[133] Badhwar 38.

unemployed Muslim males of the valley. The author also alluded to the rise of communalism, arms and training supplied by Pakistan, a similar separatist movement in neighboring Punjab, and an inept Indian bureaucracy as some of the other primary factors for the continuance of the violent insurgency.

C. INDIA'S OPTIONS

What are New Delhi's policy options and goals with regard to Kashmir? More importantly: which policy would best advance India's national interests and contribute to the quest for great power status? There have been a multitude of suggestions from genuine South Asian scholars and arm chair experts alike on this very subject. The following is a list of some of India's non-military alternatives concerning the future status of Kashmir:

1. the secession of the Kashmir Valley to Pakistan;
2. the creation of an independent Kashmir;
3. granting Kashmir more autonomy, but maintaining it as an integral part of India;
4. permanently dividing the state along the existing line of control (LOC) between India and Pakistan and suppressing the insurgents with force (i.e. maintaining the status quo);
5. changing the demographics of Kashmir by encouraging Hindu settlements (i.e. abolishing article 370 of the the Indian Constitution);
6. govern Kashmir via some type of joint Indo-Pakistani

bureaucracy.[134]

Based on India's commitment to maintain Kashmir as an integral part of a secular, democratic republic some of these aforementioned policy options are null and void. For example, the current Congress (I) administration could not justify the session of Kashmir to Pakistan given the current domestic political climate. It is just as unlikely that Prime Minister Rao would grant Kashmir its independence after expending so much Indian blood and treasure trying to suppress the insurgency there. So where does this leave India?

In 1990 the then governor of Kashmir, Girish Chandra Saxena, stated that:

> I will put it bluntly. Independence is out. And they [the various separatists groups] have to come to terms with it. They must realise it. But having said that, everything else is open.[135]

Governor Saxena's statement demonstrated India's commitment to the territorial status quo, however, it left room for some compromise concerning the status of Kashmir.

The Rao Administration has chosen to suppress the insurgency in Kashmir via military means. Recent military operations in Kashmir were reported to have killed 43 persons

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[134] These policy options are a combination of suggestions taken from Maj Sudhir Sawant, (Retd.) M.P., "India's Option in Jammu and Kashmir," Indian Defence Review vol.9(2), April 1994: 39. and Raju G.C. Thomas, "Reflections on the Kashmir Problem" in Perspectives on Kashmir 30-34.

[135] Rajesh Kadian, The Kashmir Tangle (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993) 147.

-- 29 militants and 14 civilians -- in separate incidents in a single day.[136] These reports have become all too familiar for the people of Kashmir.

On the regional front the Rao government also remains committed to solving the matter of Kashmir bilaterally with Pakistan in accordance with the Simla Accords of 1972. The Bhutto government, on the other hand, persists in trying to focus the international spotlight on Kashmir, hoping for world public opinion to back the Pakistani position. While both sides continue to wage rhetorical warfare against one another, the international community repeats its appeal for the resumption of some sort of dialogue between the feuding South Asian states.

The violence that exists in Kashmir today evolved over successive generations and involves intertwined complex issues. A simple solution is unlikely to be found anytime soon. The decay of Indian political institutions in Kashmir led to the "rigged" state elections in 1987. This was the straw that broke the camel's back for large numbers of disillusioned, unemployed Kashmiri youths, thus, triggering the brutal insurgency and counter-insurgency of the last five years. Like Bosnia, the Israeli-occupied territories, and other ethno-religious trouble spots throughout the world,

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[136] FBIS, Near East/South Asia daily report 9 September 1994, "Home Minister Reviews Kashmir Situation," Delhi All India Radio Network, 9 September 1994.

decisive third party intervention is the best hope for ending the cycle of violence in the short term.

As the United Nations, which has been involved in Kashmir since 1947, has failed to resolve the situation, this leaves, only the European Community, the United States, Russia, and China with the influence, capacity, and resources to force India and Pakistan to the negotiating table. None of which has shown any particular interest in getting directly involved in the Kashmir conundrum.

Because of the abundance of weapons, overall lack of international interest, and the internal politics of both Pakistan and India, it appears as if the status quo of insurgency and occupation will last into the foreseeable future. The issue of Kashmir is of vital national importance to India. The integrity and strength of its secular, democratic institutions are linked to how the Rao government handles the issue.

India can not become a true great power until its own house is in order. Although the territorial status quo seems to be in India's favor, the long term political, economic, and social costs of suppressing the Kashmiri militants will impede India's drive for great power status. India's fervent efforts to hold on to Kashmir, however, demonstrate the resiliency of the country's innate political ideals. These ideals, most notably the maintenance of genuiune multi-ethnic, secular democracy, will advance India's drive for great power status.

VII. THE INDIAN NAVY: REGIONAL POWER BY DEFAULT

> . . . the Royal Navy had usually been the largest in the world. . .The salient feature of the eighty years which followed Trafalgar was that no other country, or combination of countries, seriously challenged Britain's control of the seas. . . the Royal Navy was at some times probably as powerful as the next three or four navies in actual fighting power.[137]
>
> Paul Kennedy

From the mid-eighteenth to the early half of twentieth century Great Britain was the preeminent great power of the world. Pax Britannia was made possible courtesy of England's domination of the high seas. Like the Spanish and Portuguese empires before it, England demonstrated that seapower could enable a state to become a great international power.

India learned this lesson the hard way. The Royal Navy enabled Great Britain to dominate the subcontinent for over two centuries. As Imperial Spain, Great Britain, and, most recently, the United States have proven, a strong navy can be a cornerstone for great power.

K. M. Panikkar once stated, "it is peninsular India jutting out a thousand miles into the seas which stamps its name on this warm embayed ocean."[138] Although never formalized in a strategic document or white paper, yearnings

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[137] Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers (New York: Vintage Books, 1989) 154.

[138] K. M. Panikkar as quoted by Vice Admiral Mihir K. Roy, PVSM, AVSM (Retd.), "The Agony and Ecstasy of India's Oceanic Heritage," Indian Defence Review vol. 9(1), January 1994: 44.

to become a great power motivated
expansion in the late 1970's and 1980's.
Soviet Union and the high cost of main
drove home the realization that what Ind
a medium sized blue water force, which cc
and safeguard the country's expanding n
Despite a sharp decline in ship procurem
modernization, and fiscal outlays the In
South Asia's dominant local seapower.

An analysis of the history, strate
and overall capabilities of the moder
demonstrate that India's innate desire to
is being exhibited at sea.

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although India's climate, physical ge
resources facilitated maritime transport
Indians never developed seafaring aspiratio
reason for Hindu maritime antipathy has been
religious and cultural traditions of th
Central Asia who conquered the subcontine
The sacred literature of the Aryans, their
and the hierarchial caste system which t

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[139] Vice Admiral S.P. Govil, PVSM, AVSM (
Its Shape and Size," Indian Defence Review v
18.

indigenous population discouraged seafaring as an honorable profession.

Post-Vedic Aryan literature specified ocean voyages as a prohibited act. The prohibition of sea travel was reinforced by strange Aryan anti-sailing myths. One such myth hypothesized that there were giant lodestones at the bottom of the sea. To avoid the magnetic pull of the lodestones and the sinking of their vessels, Indian ship builders would use only non-ferrous fasteners. This self imposed engineering constraint limited the size and seaworthiness of Indian vessels, inhibiting trans-oceanic voyages.[140]

Another impediment to India's maritime development was the rigidity of the caste system. In order to maintain caste purity, hence societal status, members of different castes were discouraged from associating with one another for long periods of time. The possible financial rewards from extended periods at sea in small, confined craft did not outweigh the social costs of violating the self-imposed segregation of the caste system.

These institutionalized cultural aversions to sea travel prevented India from realizing the strategic advantages of sea power. Thus, India's naval ignorance led to centuries of European domination beginning with the arrival of the

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[140] Joel Larus, "India and its Ocean: The Atypical Relationship Ends" in Robert H. Bruce, ed., The Modern Indian Navy and the Indian Ocean (Developments and Implications) (Canberra, Australia 1989) 56-60.

Portuguese explorer, Vasco Da Gama at Calicut in 1498. In 1608 the British East India Company established its foothold in South Asia. British dominance of the subcontinent would continue for three and a half centuries largely due to the Royal Navy's unparalleled sea power.

B. INDEPENDENT INDIA AND ITS EMBRYONIC NAVY[141]

India finally gained its independence in 1947. The crown jewel of the British Empire was divided into the separate states of India and Pakistan. Assets of the Royal Indian Navy stationed throughout the subcontinent were turned over to the newly created states with India receiving the lion's share of men and material. India received thirty-two vessels of various types, a naval facility in Bombay, and approximately one thousand officers and ten thousand enlisted personnel. Pakistan received a handful of ships (the largest being a frigate), four training schools, 180 officers and 3,400 enlisted men.[142] In the decade following partition and independence both navies were unbalanced and completely dependent on Great Britain for material, training, and leadership.

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[141] For a summary of important events in India's naval development see appendix D.

[142] Lorne J. Kavic, India's Quest for Security (Berkeley: California Press, 1967) 116.

In late 1947, under the direction of British admiralty and with the approval of the Indian government, the Indian Navy began a ten year program to expand its capabilities. The program called for the total Indianization of the Royal Indian Navy as soon as possible and the additional procurement of two light aircraft carriers, three light cruisers, eight to nine destroyers, and some support ships. Although the force was destined for a defensive role, it was envisioned that, if necessary, offensive power could be projected well beyond the coastal regions of the Indian subcontinent.[143]

Countering the military might of the Soviet Union was the driving force behind the British contribution to the independent Indian Navy. Britain wanted India to have a competent naval force in order to deter Soviet submarines from operating in the Indian ocean. British officials also hoped that the Indian Navy would assume a large portion of the ASW burden in the I.O. if the Cold War were to turn hot.

Indian military planners, however, were more concerned with the immediate continental threat posed by Pakistan and Communist China. The Indian government, led by Prime Minister Nehru, championed the non-aligned movement. Under Nehru, Indian strategy was to remain neutral in the event of any East-West conflict. The military threat of Pakistan coupled with Nehru's strategy of non-alignment diverted already limited funds away from the fledgling Indian Navy.

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[143] Kavic 117.

Non-alignment, international cold war politics, the genuine military threat from Pakistan, and the financial constraints of Great Britain all acted in concert to squelch the aspirations of British and Indian naval enthusiasts. The optimistic ten year program to construct a viable Indian Navy dragged on for decades.[144] The Army and Air Force took priority and the Navy lagged behind in financial outlays, technological improvement, operational readiness, and strategic primacy.[145] The Navy continued to be neglected for the next two and half decades.

C. THE TURNING POINT

In 1971 India fought its third war with neighboring Pakistan in twenty-four years. The Indian Navy played a decisive role in the conflict. Naval air power from the flight deck of the *Vikrant*, an ex-*Hermes* class light aircraft carrier of British origin, disrupted Pakistani lines of communication and damaged air bases on the ground in East Pakistan. Indian naval forces successfully blocked the escape and resupply of 90,000 Pakistani troops in East Pakistan who

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[144] Total Indianization of the Navy did not occur until 1962 when an Indian flag officer replaced a Royal Navy Captain as Chief of Naval Aviation.

[145] Ashely J. Tellis, "Securing the Barrack: The Logic, Structure and Objectives of India's Naval Expansion" (part I), Naval War College Review, Summer 1990 edition: 78.

were subsequently taken as prisoners of war.[146] Indian surface combatants also sank two Pak warships and a merchant vessel off Karachi, the headquarters of the Pakistani Navy.[147]

As the 1971 Indo-Pak war progressed President Richard Nixon grew fearful that India, which was on friendly terms with the Soviet Union, would completely destroy Pakistan. The United States, struggling to contain communism in Vietnam, could not tolerate the loss of another Cold War ally.[148]

As India materialized as the victor in the third Indo-Pak war, President Nixon tilted U.S. policy towards Pakistan and sent the *Enterprise* battle group into the Bay of Bengal as a tacit show of force. Although the *Enterprise* battle group did not directly influence the outcome of the war it did send home the message to the Indian political and military establishments that continental India was still vulnerable to attack from the sea.

Indian command of the seas proved vital in defeating Pakistan, but was insufficient to contend with a naval superpower such as the United States. These facts gave Indian military planners justification to allot the Navy a

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[146] Capt. Arun Prakash, IN, "A Carrier Force for the Indian Navy", Naval War College Review, Autumn 1990 edition: 59.

[147] Prakash 59.

[148] In 1971 President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger relied heavily on Pakistan's President, Yahya Kahn for their clandestine attempt to establish relations with the People's Republic of China.

larger share of the defense budget in an attempt to modernize and upgrade the fleet.

The Third Indo-Pak war also led to a closer military association between India and the Soviet Union. India had felt vulnerable and threatened by Nixon's gunboat diplomacy in the Bay of Bengal. The U.S. also continued to support Pakistan, the foremost antagonist of India. In response the Indian government stepped up its "peaceful" nuclear program. It also acquired various armaments from the USSR, becoming heavily dependent on Soviet technology and hardware to modernize its naval forces.

D. THE SOVIET CONNECTION AND THE *INS CHAKRA*

The Indian Navy procured many Soviet ships, planes and submarines in its effort to modernize. Kashin destroyers, Il-38 May maritime reconnaissance aircraft, and Foxtrot and Kilo diesel submarines became the mainstays of the Indian Naval force. The Indians became heavily dependent on Soviet technology and spare parts. The most noteworthy Soviet contribution to the Indian Navy, however, was the lease of a Charlie I class, nuclear powered attack submarine in 1988. Many wondered why India, a non-aligned, third world nation needed a nuclear powered submarine?

Because of its size, strategic location, ancient culture and massive population, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime

minister, sincerely believed that India was destined to be a great power. Indian military and political leaders recognized that being a great power in the Western sense translated, in military terms, to possessing a blue water navy with a nuclear capability. This logic was reenforced by the *USS Enterprise's* venture into the Bay of Bengal in 1971. In addition to its obvious military advantages, the lease of the Charlie I (renamed *INS Chakra* by the Indian Navy) was also influenced by India's desire for great power status.

Another reason for the acquisition of the *INS Chakra* can be attributed to India's passion for a self-sufficient, indigenous naval force. Since its independence the political elite of India had embraced an economic program of import substitution. The objective was to transform India into an autarkic state and insulate the country against foreign encroachment. Militarily this meant India would have to develop a technologically advanced, indigenous defense and armaments industry. The *Chakra* was, thus, envisioned as a mobile trainer which would be studied in detail and later reverse engineered and produced at home.

The Indian lease on the *Chakra* expired in 1991. The sub was returned to the Russian port of Valdivostock in January of that year.[149] Although many glitches were reported, Indian naval engineers gleaned valuable information from the *Chakra*

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[149] Capt. Richard Sharpe, RN, Jane's Fighting Ships, 95th edition (London: Jane's Information Group Ltd., 1992) 268.

and incorporated it in an ongoing research and development project entitled the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV). The ATV program called for an Indian designed Pressure Water Reactor and a submarine hull based on a Russian model.[150] Indian naval planners optimistically hoped to have between three to six nuclear submarines in operation by the year 2000.[151]

E. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF INDIAN NAVY[152]

The Indian Navy is an all volunteer force manned by 55,000 officers and personnel. The Navy, like all India's armed services, is under civilian control from the democratically elected government in New Delhi. Below the Chief of Naval Staff, the force is divided into three major commands: The Western Command headquartered in Bombay, the Eastern Command located in Vishakapatnam, and the Southern Command based in Cochin.

The majority of ships, subs, and aircraft operated by the Indian Navy are of Russian origin. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, Indian naval planners have been trying to

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[150] Capt. Richard Sharpe, RN, Jane's Fighting Ships 96th edition (London: Jane's Information group Ltd., 1993) 277.

[151] The completion of a single nuclear submarine by the year 2000 would be a tremendous Indian achievement, however, this seems highly improbable.

[152] See Appendices E and F for a complete list of Indian Naval assets.

diversify the fleet with Western technology and equipment in an effort to stimulate and improve indigenous warship construction programs. For example, in 1989 India ordered General Electric LM 2500 gas turbine engines for the construction of its Godavari class frigates. This independently produced class of ships integrated Russian and European weapon systems, an Indian designed hull with an American propulsion plant.[153]

The decision to build two new aircraft carriers in 1989 to replace the aging *Viraat* and *Vikrant* is more evidence supporting India's efforts to idigenize, diversify, and modernize its fleet. A design study contract was awarded to a French firm for a 28,000 ton ship similar to the French Navy's *Charles de Gaule* but without nuclear propulsion. The design had to incorporate the limited size of Indian construction facilities as the ship was to be built in India. Later naval planners scaled back the project to a 15,000 ton model based on the Italian carrier, *Guiseppe Garibaldi*. The smaller carrier would operate Sea Harriers and helicopters but would not be capable of supporting conventional (non-VSTOL) fighter aircraft.[154] These plans appear to have been delayed due to financial constraints.

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[153] Ashely Tellis, "Securing the Barrack: The Logic, Structure and Objectives of India's Naval Expansion" (part II), Naval War College Review, Autumn 1990 edition: 39. and Captain F.G. Satterthwaite, USNR, "Indo-U.S. Navy to Navy Relations", Asia-Pacific Defense Forum, Winter 1991-1992: 36.

[154] Sharpe, Jane's Fighting Ships 95th edition: 61.

Articles that appear in prominent news magazines routinely describe the Indian Navy "in troubled waters" and muddling along at "slow speed ahead."[155] Aging ships, a decaying infrastructure, and budgetary constraints point to a medium sized force, developing much slower than Indian naval planners would like. While the Indian naval inventory continues to grow numerically, prominent Indian naval scholars, such as Ashley Tellis, point out that "a large fleet does not a maritime power make."[156]

In 1990 Tellis described the Indian Navy as a Model II fleet: coalition capable, performing extended sea-lane defense and peninsular sea control while striving for blue water capability. He projected that the Indian Navy would not become a Model III (possess true hemispheric power projection and extra-continental lift capabilities) navy until the first quarter of the 21st century.[157] Tellis also points out that the expanding Indian Navy lacked "a comprehensive rationale for such a major naval investment program."[158]

Western naval experts continuously compare and categorize contemporary fleets based on the ambiguous term "blue water." For Tellis, in order for India to achieve a "true blue- water"

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[155] Sunil Dasgupta, "In Troubled Waters" India Today April 30, 1994: 70-71.; and Hamish McDonald "Slow speed ahead" Far Eastern Economic Review 10 October 1991: 20-22.

[156] Tellis, (part II) 55.

[157] Tellis, (part I) 91-4.

[158] Tellis, (part I) 78.

capability India first "must be able, on a continuous basis, to deploy simultaneously at least three battle groups centered on large conventional aircraft carriers of 40-50,000 tons each."[159] When these statements were published in 1990 no navy in the world, with the exception of the United States, was capable of achieving this goal. This is still the case today.

Perhaps, Mr. Tellis was asserting that if India desired to control the entire Indian Ocean and truly become a great power it would have to, at a minimum, match the naval power that the United States was capable of projecting into the region. Given the financial and political realities of India this would be impossible well beyond the first quarter of the 21st century. What then is India's grand naval strategy? How does it apportion its limited resources to achieve its regional and strategic objectives?

F. INDIAN NAVAL STRATEGY

The most significant feature of Indian naval strategy is its ambiguity. Neither the Indian government nor the Navy has ever issued a comprehensive written naval doctrine. The lack of an Indian Naval white paper has caused concern and suspicion, especially from India's small littoral neighbors.

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[159] Tellis, (part I) 94.

India's primary national security threat stems from the continuing internal separatist movements and ethno-religious conflicts occurring within its borders. In Kashmir, the Punjab, and Assam the Indian military, principally the Army, is engaged in counter-insurgency operations.

Indian regional security is also based on a continental threat and strategy. Deterring a Pakistani incursion into Kashmir and preventing border clashes with China are the major concern of the Indian Army and Air Force.

For these reasons and because there is no identified, immediate naval threat to continental India and its island possessions, the Indian Navy continues to be the lowest funded branch of the military services, consistently receiving between 10% to 13% of the overall defense budget. In 1991, for example, the Navy received only 11% of the 6.5 Billion dollar Indian defense budget ($715,000,000).[160] While this figure may seem a paltry sum in terms of annual U.S. defense spending, it must be emphasized that it is immense relative to the combined naval budgets of India's impoverished neighbors.

As domestic pressure forces deeper cuts in overall defense spending, the Navy's budget will be reduced even further. This is especially painful considering that most of its aging warships, which were acquired throughout the 1980's via generous barter agreements with the former Soviet Union,

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[160] Proceedings March 1992: 129. (In 1991 the U.S. defense budget was larger than India's GNP.)

are in dire need of spare parts and overhaul. With Russian defence production at an all time low and no workable system of payments, maintenance of the Indian fleet will cost more than ever.[161]

Despite shrinking defense budgets and the military's emphasis on suppressing internal conflicts, the Indian Navy has emerged as the dominant naval power homeported in the Indian Ocean. The Indian government and admiralty have aspired to the self-proclaimed responsibility of guardian of the sea lines of communication in the region. Expanding maritime trade is the umbilical cord of the new and improved Indian economy. The Navy and newly formed Coast Guard have also broadened there missions to cover India's 2.2 million square mile economic exclusion zone.[162]

Yet today India still has no formal, well articulated overall grand naval strategy. Based on numerous opinions and assumptions the Indian Navy's primary roles and missions can be summarized as follows:

1. Deterrence of potential enemies via sea denial.
2. To exercise sea control in specified areas of interest in the Indian Ocean.

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[161] Russian factories are losing money in the production of spare parts for ex-Soviet built military hardware in India due to the rising cost of raw materials, a drop off of Russian production, and the current system of payments, which requires Russian defence exporters to buy Indian goods and sell them in Russia.

[162] VADM Mihir K. Roy, IN(retired), "The Indian Navy from the Bridge", Proceedings March 1990, p.73

3. To safeguard national interests in contiguous waters, EEZ, and island territories.

4. To maintain limited power projection capability.

5. To ensure freedom of navigation and security of Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs).

6. Monitor extra regional navies.

Along with these six roles and missions, Indian Naval strategy seems to be guided by the recurrent themes of a "zone of peace" (presumably the entire Indian Ocean), non-alignment, military self-reliance, and the ascent to great power status. These themes can be disseminated from a myriad of sources ranging from Indian op-ed pieces to strategic surveys by the RAND corporation.[163]

The lack of any immediate naval threat has prompted Indian naval planners and strategists to develop what can best be described as a grand strategy of sea denial. This strategy furnishes the Navy with an essential role in the strategic defense of India. Air, surface, and subsurface units would have to work jointly to secure key choke points leading into the Indian Ocean from the Straits of Malacca, Hormuz, and Bab el-Mandeb to prevent an enemy from entering within striking distance of the homeland.[164] This strategy would elevate the importance of the Navy as compared with the other two

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[163] George K. Tanham, "Indian Strategic Thought, An Interpretive Essay" prepared for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy by RAND R-4207-USDP.

[164] G. Jacobs, "Submarine Fleets in Asia", Navy International January and February 1992: 6.

services, thus securing a bigger portion of the overall defense budget for the Indian admiralty. However, defense by denial loses some of its allure when one considers that India has begun an almost irreversible process of full integration with the world economy. Expanding its Navy based on an autarkic defense by denial strategy seems inconsistent with India's economic aspirations (i.e. cheap oil/gas from the Mideast and unimpeded transoceanic trade).

The concept of sea denial also appears to have been a principal justification for India's large submarine force. Long range diesel and nuclear submarines have been a high priority for the Indian Navy. It was widely believed that an indigenously produced nuclear submarine would not only support the sea denial mission but also bolster India's overall status in the international community.

The ability to deter a potential enemy also contributed to the modernization and expansion of surface, subsurface, and naval aviation assets. If an enemy force happened to penetrate the Indian Ocean, one Indian flag officer concluded that the Navy needed the ability "to give a bloody nose to any maritime power seeking to violate India's territorial integrity or attempting to cut India down to size."[165]

Many South Asian states were wary of India's ambiguous naval build up. Neither the Indian government nor the admiralty ever formalized a comprehensive grand maritime

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[165] Roy, Proceedings 74.

strategy based on the notions of sea denial and deterrence. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, and the members of ASEAN did not view Indian naval expansion as defensive in nature. The Indian government's lack of concern for its neighbor's worries strained relations in the region. India threatened its littoral neighbors through its shear size and looming presence.

Today the Indian government, led by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, is continuing with its successful economic reform policies. In an effort to stimulate trade and improve relations with its neighbors, India has decreased defense spending and delayed its naval modernization program.[166] Productive joint naval exercises and personnel exchanges with Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia have eased some of ASEAN's concerns about Indian military intentions.[167]

Major economic changes in India will mean a rethinking of India's vague naval strategy. As India's trans-oceanic trade and commerce increases and defense budgets shrink, more cost effective means of security will be needed. An Indian Ocean collective security arrangement has been suggested in the past.

Recently warships from the United States, Australia, and other South and Southeast Asian states (with the exception of

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[166] This proved to be a convenient policy for India given the fiscal constraints of government expenditure.

[167] Michael Richardson, "Rapprochement between ASEAN and India," Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter April-May 1994: 13.

Pakistan) have conducted joint naval exercises with India. India's willingness to operate with other navies in the Indian Ocean is a change from its autarkic practices of the past. This cooperative shift symbolizes a new direction for India's pursuit of global power.

G. IS CHINA A THREAT?

Many journalists and scholars inside and outside India have identified China as a potential naval threat. Economic and military ties with non-democratic Myanmar (formerly Burma), the continued occupation of Tibet, and India's 1962 defeat by the PLA (People's Liberation Army) lend credence to China's legacy as an adversary.

Reports have indicated that the Chinese Navy has assisted in the construction of several naval facilities in Myanmar. China has openly transferred millions of dollars worth of arms and ammunition to the Myanmarese military junta. The naval facilities in Myanmar's Coco Islands abut the vulnerable Indian Andaman island chain. As Chinese ties with Myanmar continue to develop, rumors about the PLAN (People's Liberation Army--Navy) acquiring an ex-Soviet aircraft carrier caused alarm bells to sound in New Delhi.

Indian suspicions of the PLAN's intentions are likely to be fueled by the recent circulation of a controversial Chinese book entitled Can China Win the Next War, which identified

"the greatest potential threat" as India.[168] The book, presumably penned by a high ranking PLAN official, concludes that although there is little possibility of another war erupting between China and India tensions and antagonisms will persist, specifically over the issue of Tibet. The book also claims that China's primary naval concerns continue to be exercising its power in the South China Sea and enforcing its claim to the Spratly Islands.

Southeast Asia is also another region where China and India could potentially clash. Historically Southeast Asia has come under the cultural influence of Hindu/Buddhist and Confucian thought. Today trans-oceanic trade is the life line of Southeast Asia's booming economies. Fierce economic competition in the area could lead to a maritime confrontation between the two Asian giants.

While identifying the Chinese as a potential threat could justify further Indian naval expansion and modernization, it would most assuredly invoke a classic security dilemma with an enemy projected to have the world's largest economy by the turn of century (based on present rates of growth). Thus, formally identifying China as India's primary adversary could become a self-fulfilling prophecy which would be disastrous for India in the long run.

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[168] For a review of Can China Win the Next War see Ross H. Munro, "Eavesdropping on the Chinese Military: Where It Expects War -- Where It Doesn't," Orbis vol.38, no.3, Summer 1994.

H. THE NAVY'S SYMBOLISM AND SIGNIFICANCE IN INDIA'S QUEST FOR GREAT POWER STATUS

India wants to be a great and influential global power but has never come up with a blueprint on how to achieve it. The enigmatic expansion of the Indian Navy is symbolic of India's quest for great power status. British colonization, blue water superpower rivalries, the war/creation of Bangladesh, and Nixon's sortie of the *Enterprise* battle group into the Bay of Bengal drove home the strategic and tactical importance of a powerful maritime force to officials in New Delhi.

Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing throughout the 1980s the Indian Navy grew at a startling rate thanks to generous military sales arrangements with the Soviet Union. Like the detonation of its first nuclear device in 1974 and its leadership of the non-aligned movement, the growth of the Indian Navy was viewed as another necessary component for India's development into a true great power.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent stagnation of the already flat Indian economy prevented the Navy from developing into a force capable of true hemispheric power projection. The modern Indian Navy is probably best characterized as a "green water" fleet. Here "green water" translates to being able to provide more than mere coastal defense but mustering far less power projection capability than a true blue water fleet.

In the twenty-first century the modernization of the Indian Navy is likely to continue but at a slower pace than in recent years. The renovation of the Indian fleet will be hinged on the prosperity of the reforming Indian economy as acquisition of European and American technologically advanced systems and equipment are costly. Therefore, India is likely to extend the service life of its aging VSTOL carriers as expensive upgrades to its squadrons of Sea Harriers have already been planned. Replacements for these antiquated carriers (*Viraat* and *Vikrant*) are unlikely to enter service before the turn of the century. Indian naval planners and logisticians will think twice before investing dwindling resources in the remaining bargain basement weapon systems and platforms of the former Soviet Union.

The readiness and competency of the Indian Navy has also been questioned due to its poor material condition and a general lack of training. Various sources assert that the Indian fleet is plagued with major problems stemming from inadequate funding, insufficient stocks of advanced munitions, and unreliable supply lines for spare parts. At the height of India's naval expansion one prominent Indian strategic analyst concluded that:

> In reality . . .it could be as long as two decades before the Indian Navy truly could be considered an important actor on the stage of the world's oceans. . . A second-hand aircraft

> carrier and an outmoded nuclear submarine do not make a blue-water navy.[169]

Although the Indian Navy is currently incapable of defeating a U.S., Western European, or Japanese fleet of comparable size, it remains South Asia's most dominant indigenous maritime force. India's Navy remains a solid indicator of India's great power aspirations. New Delhi seems to have come to the realization that it must be an established regional seapower before trying to become a global one.

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[169] Ravi Rikhye, "The Real Indian Navy," Proceedings March 1990: 77-78.

VIII. THE INDIAN ECONOMY: UNSHACKLING THE ELEPHANT

> **To be a Great Power--by definition, a state capable of holding its own against any other nation--demands a flourishing economic base.**[170]
>
> Paul Kennedy

The Indian economy has to serve as the *mode de force* if India is to fulfill its "tryst with destiny" and become a true global power in the twenty-first century. From 1947 until 1991 Indian bureaucrats tightly controlled every aspect of the economy. The centrally run Indian economy was committed to a socialist path where import substitution, subsidized heavy industries, government directed production targets, highly restrictive trade barriers, and other autarkic practices retarded overall growth and reduced productivity.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union caused a financial crisis for the Indian government. By 1991 India was on the verge of economic collapse. External and internal pressures forced Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to initiate major structural changes in the Indian economy.[171]

After three consecutive years of free market, capitalist reforms the Indian economy appears to have righted itself and continues to expand. While many economists and investors predict that India will be the next Asian Tiger, an equal

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[170] Kennedy 539.

[171] Shubhashis Gangopadhyay, "The Indian Awakening," SAIS Review Winter-Spring 1994: 137.

number are pessimistic about the future of India's economic growth. What follows is an objective look at both the positive and negative aspects of the Indian economy.

A. THE POSITIVES

During their first two years in office, Prime Minister Rao and the Cambridge educated economist turned Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh introduced a number of economic reforms that were heralded in both the international and Indian business communities. Rao and Singh devalued the rupee and allowed it to be made partially convertible; abolished most industrial licenses; encouraged foreign investment; reduced import tariffs; opened capital markets; decreased budget deficits; and attempted to raise India's foreign exchange reserves.[172]

In only two years Prime Minister Rao had initiated a monumental shift in the direction of the Indian economy by unleashing the forces of comparative advantage and the free market. His focused and deliberate policy of economic reform created an optimistic climate for foreign investment in India. Even once disinterested U.S. companies became "bullish about India, a country with a well-educated and skilled pool of

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[172] Charles H. Percy, "South Asia's Take-Off," Foreign Affairs winter 1992-93, vol.71, no.5: 170.

labour, a British based legal and accounting system, and an English-speaking business and political community."[173]

In addition to these favorable business attributes India's consumer/middle class has been estimated to number 300 million people.[174] The sheer size and potential for growth of this emerging market earned India the title as "Asia's new investment jewel" in a recent addition of U.S. News and World Report.[175]

B. THE NEGATIVES

While India may be "Asia's new investment jewel" it is certainly not without risks. Bureaucratic red tape, poor infrastructure, communal strife, and many other obstacles to modernity exist in India today.[176] The deceleration of the reform process is a testament to India's cumbersome bureaucracy. Many of India's much needed economic reforms have gotten stuck because of the individual state governments'

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[173] Patrick Harverson, "The Americans are Coming," Financial Times 30 March 1994, special segment on investment in India: v.

[174] "India, Towards a Liberalised Economy," Far Eastern Economic Review 13 January 1994: 38.

[175] Jack Egan, "Asia's new investment jewel," U.S. News and World Report 22 August 1994: 72.

[176] Stefan Wagstyl, "The obstacles to modernity," Financial Times, 30 September 1993: I.

tendency to spend on the urgent rather than the important.[177]

A case in point is the huge amount of potential investment capital lost through state electric subsidies to farmers. State electricity boards are losing an estimated 50 billion rupees a year because they charge Indian farmers only .35 rupees per unit of electricity when it costs the state, on average, 2.5 rupees to produce the same unit. (In three of India's southern states, electricity is free for all farmers.)[178] Voters in these rural districts, which make up 70% of the population, tend to elect candidates that maintain these subsidies. This inefficient practice also prevents the much needed expansion of India's power grid, which is essential for industrial and commercial development.

The problems of government subsidies and special interests are minor in comparison to India's ethnic and communal troubles. The rise of the BJP, the incident at Ayodhya in 1992, and the communal rioting that followed gave investors just a glimpse of the tip of the iceberg of domestic tension that remains prevalent throughout South Asia today. Fears of escalating communal violence could easily transform India's emerging markets into financial sinkholes.

Government stability and control are vital if the reform process is to continue. If the pace of economic reform drops

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[177] "Where India's reforms get stuck," The Economist 22 January 1994: 33.

[178] "Where India's Reforms get stuck" 33.

off, precious foreign investment dollars, francs, marks, and yen will seek out the safer, more profitable emerging Asian markets in China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. Without continued foreign investment India's economic engine and great power aspirations will be stuck in neutral.

C. THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

As the previous paragraphs have described, India's economic future hinges on many unpredictable variables. Despite all these uncertainties, however, economic forecasts for the twenty-first century indicate that India will be a major global powerhouse.

For example, a RAND corporation study conducted in 1989 projected that by the year 2010 India's GNP (gross national product) would be over 1.3 trillion dollars (based on 1986 U.S. dollars), thus, making it the world's seventh largest economy overall (see Appendix G).[179] This study, completed two years before India initiated its economic reforms, reached this conclusion using a conservative growth rate of approximately four percent. Other more recent sources, such as the United Nations Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, estimate that India's GDP (gross domestic

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[179] "Long-Term Economic and Military Trends, 1950-2010," (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1989) prepared for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, RAND/N-2757-USDP: 4.

product) rate of growth will be even higher, averaging 5.4 percent from 1993 through 1995.[180]

These statistics depict what has been described as the coming boom of the developing world. According to The Economist, over the next twenty five years the world will witness the greatest shift in economic might since the late nineteenth century.[181] India is one of the developing countries which stands to gain from this boom.

Based on the World Bank's findings, The Economist lists India as the world's sixth largest economy in 1992, and projects it to ascend to number four, behind only China, the United States, and Japan by the year 2020 (see Appendix G).[182]

Even with all its inefficiencies and self imposed restraints India remains one of the world's top ten economies. If India carries the current economic reform process to its logical conclusion it could grow at the rates experienced by its successful East Asian neighbors. According to the World Bank, in order for this to occur India must intensify its "efforts to strengthen public finances, improve

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[180] Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 1993 (New York: United Nations, 1993) 17.

[181] "War of the worlds," The Economist (A Survey of the Global Economy) 1 October 1994: 1.

[182] "War of the Worlds," 2.

infrastructure, and enable private investment to flow into key areas of the economy."[183]

Although the economic reform process launched by the Rao government appears to have slowed down, it has not died. The momentum of its early successes seems to be enough to carry it through the morass of Indian domestic politics. While some potential investors flinched following the wave of communal violence in the wake of the Ayodhya incident, Prime Minister Rao and Finance Minister Singh remain optimistic about India's economic potential.

Will the Indian economy take off? Will the reform process get bogged down? Time will only tell. All indicators, however, point to continued growth and expansion, which puts India on the threshold of achieving great power status.

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[183] "India: Recent Economic Developments and Prospects," report no. 12940-IN, (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1994) i.

IX. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The principal aim of this thesis is to illustrate why India should be an integral part of U.S. strategic thinking in the twenty-first century. Chapters II through V analyze India's modern history, keying on the salient domestic, regional, and international events that promoted or inhibited India's great power aspirations. Chapters VI through VIII provide a more detailed account of three key elements (Kashmir, the Indian Navy, and the economy) that will effect India's ascent to great power status.

Based on the analysis and data of this thesis, it is this author's belief that the United States should recognize India as an established regional power with the potential to become a great power during the twenty-first century. This being the case, the United States, therefore, should reassess and adjust its foreign policy priorities to reflect this reality.

As Mr. Selig Harrison noted in 1992:

> Indian great power ambitions are rooted in a self-image as one of the world's oldest and largest civilizations, entitled to global status second to none and to a regional sphere of influence centered in, but not necessarily restricted to, South Asia and the western Indian Ocean and its island states.[184]

Throughout the forty plus years of the Cold War India was largely ignored by U.S. strategists and government officials. Even now as the United States re-tools its Eurocentric grand

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[184] Harrison 99.

strategy to accommodate the expanding economic importance of Asia, India is still being overlooked as a potential great power.

India achieved regional dominance following the Third Indo-Pakistani War in 1971. India's military power projection capabilities greatly increased over the next two decades as was demonstrated by the significant expansion of the Indian Navy. The collapse of the Soviet Union and New Delhi's ensuing financial crisis forced a restructuring of the Indian economy. If the current economic reform process is carried out to its logical end, India will have the economic base necessary for true great power status during the first half of the twenty-first century.

In summary, six general conclusions can be deduced from the evidence provided in this thesis:

1. India has and will maintain intrinsic great power aspirations.

2. For the time being, India will remain a peripheral concern for U.S. foreign policy. India continues to be considered half as important as China, receiving minimal attention in U.S. strategic circles eventhough it is an established regional power and a potential great power.

3. India's economic reforms will continue but New Delhi's successes will be overshadowed by the rapid growth of other, more dynamic Asian economies (i.e. China, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea).

4. The Indian Navy will continue to be the Indian Ocean's dominant indigenous maritime power well into the foreseeable future. Its formidable power projection capabilities are likely to grow in proportion to the Indian economy (i.e. the percentage of India's defense spending will remain relatively constant).

5. The issue of Kashmir will continue to be a political albatross for New Delhi in the twenty-first century. Tensions between India and Pakistan over this disputed territory will hamper economic cooperation and growth throughout South Asia.

6. India's central government and democratic institutions will continue to be tested by communal violence and ethno-religious conflicts but will survive.

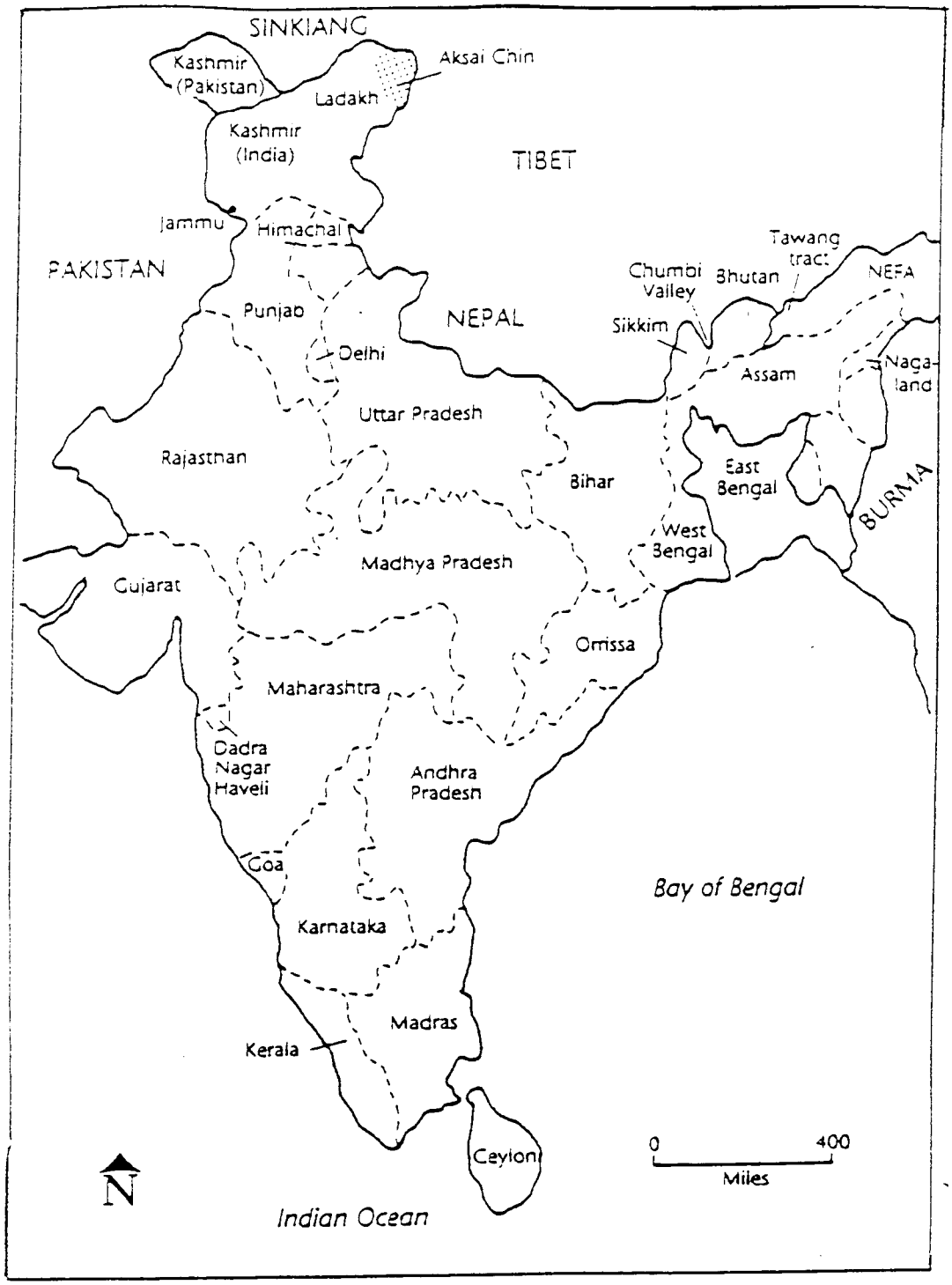
India is an established regional power in South Asia with the potential to become a great power during the first half of the twenty-first century. Although common social, political, and economic objectives should make the United States and India natural partners in the post-Cold War world, the obstinate, evangelical drift of each country's foreign policy on certain global issues, such as the counterproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), continues to cause mutual dissatisfaction between the world's two largest democracies.

Sooner or later the United States will have to acknowledge the growing international status of India. A highly visible, pragmatic, and co-operative U.S. approach toward India today would be the most cost effective means to pursue the current U.S. national interests -- regional stability, an expansion of economic trade, and the reduction and elimination of WMD -- in South Asia tomorrow.

In addition to the current U.S. national interests with regard to South Asia, a healthy, enduring relationship with India could also be useful as a continental and maritime Asian counter-balance against a potentially belligerent Russia, China, or Japan. While neither Russia, China, or Japan are

likely to pursue a military conquest of Asia, Murphy's law dictates that the United States at least consider the strategic possibilities for the twenty-first century's worst case scenarios.

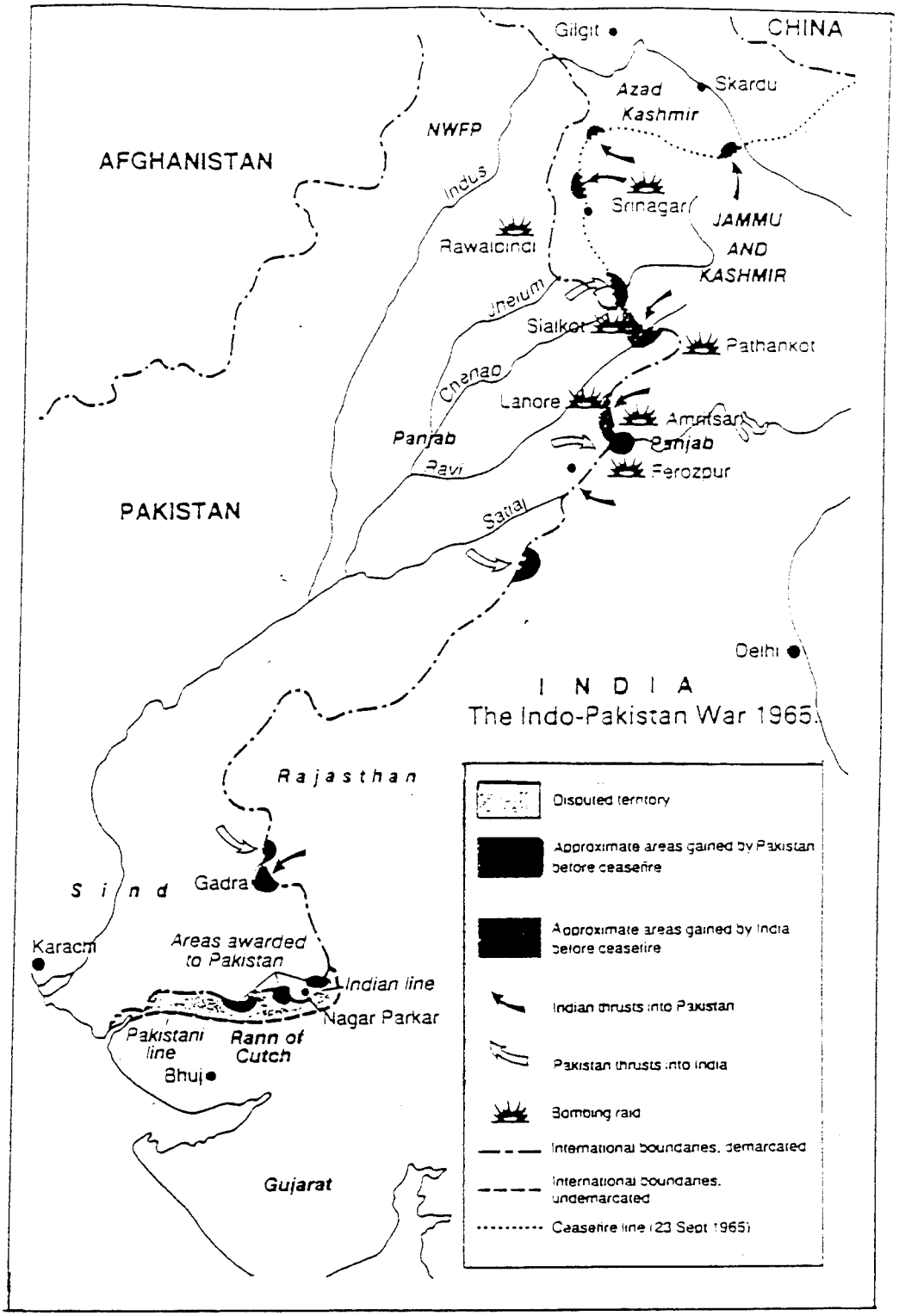
APPENDIX A. DISPUTED BORDERS BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA



Map 1. AKSAI CHIN, TAWANG TRACT, AND INDIA IN 1961-1962.

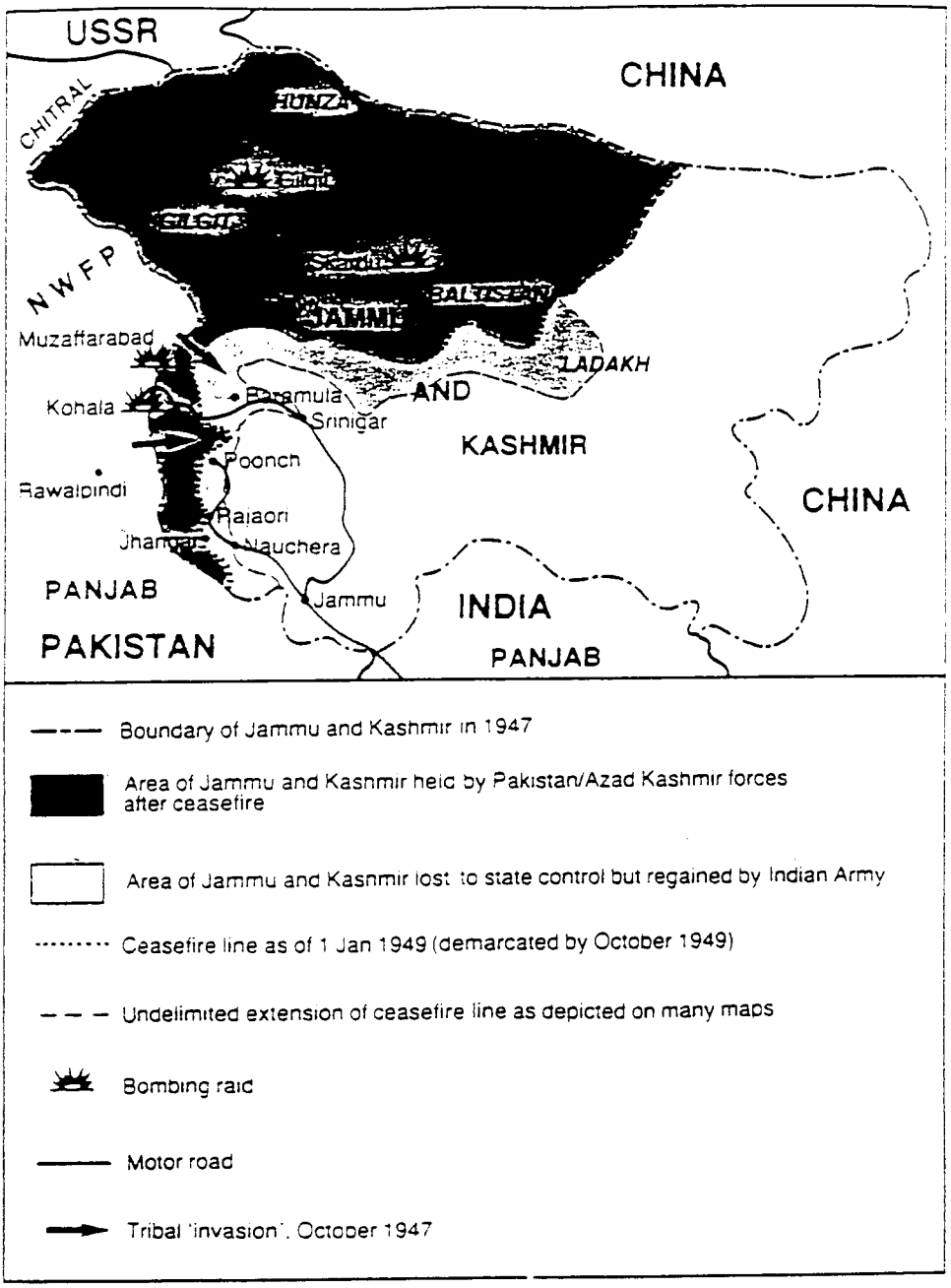
source: Steven A. Hoffman, India and the China Crisis.

APPENDIX B. THE RANN OF KUTCH



source: Francis Robinson, ed., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India.

The Indo-Pakistan War 1948.



source: Francis Robinson, ed., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India.

APPENDIX D. KEY EVENTS IN INDIA'S NAVAL DEVELOPMENT

NO HISTORY OF POWERFUL ARYAN/HINDU NAVIES: India failed to appreciate the strategic importance of naval power; indigenous rulers concentrated on continental warfare only.

1498 VASCO DA GAMA AND FLEET OF PORTUGUESE MEN OF WAR LAND at Calicut, Western India. There was no indigenous sea going force to oppose them.

1608 BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY ESTABLISHES A FOOTHOLD on Indian subcontinent. The British Crown later assumes control and establishes India as the hub of its overseas holdings.

1932 FIRST INDIAN OFFICER COMMISSIONED IN ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.

1947 INDEPENDENT INDIA INHERITS VESTIGES OF ROYAL INDIAN NAVY, BUT FORCED TO SPLIT ASSETS WITH PAKISTAN. Both Navies are managed and run by the British Admiralty.

1957 INDIAN NAVY ACQUIRES *HMS HERCULES*. After four years of modernization and training India's first aircraft carrier commissioned ***INS VIKRANT***.

1962 SINO-INDIAN WAR: India humiliated by Red Chinese forces in border conflict. This forced modernization of India's military forces, but the Navy was given the lowest priority.

1965 INDO-PAK WAR OVER KASHMIR: Indian Navy caught unprepared; Pak units raid several Indian ports. Following the conflict the Indian Navy received a larger share of the overall defense budget, but still significantly less than her sister services.

1971 INDO-PAK WAR OVER BANGLADESH: Indian Navy successfully blockades East Pakistan while Naval Air and surface assets hit targets in West Pakistan. Indian sea control over Pakistan key factor in quick Indian victory.

1971 NIXON SENDS *USS ENTERPRISE* BATTLE GROUP TO BAY OF BENGAL: U.S. policy tilts towards Pakistan, while lessons of sea power and sea control reenforced.

1986 INDIAN NAVY ACQUIRES *HMS HERMES* AND COMMISSIONS IT *INS VIRAAT*: India now has its second aircraft carrier, the former flagship of the British during the war for the Faulklands Islands.

1987 INDIAN NAVY ACQUIRES 2 WEST GERMAN TYPE 209 DIESEL SUBS.

1988 **INDIAN NAVY LEASES SOVIET CHARLIE CLASS SSN**, renamed ***INS CHAKRA***. Sub returned to Soviets in 1991.

1990 ***INS ANDAMAN*, A SOVIET BUILT PETYA CLASS FRIGATE, FLOODED AND SANK** off the eastern coast of India, demonstrating that India's Soviet built fleet was aging and in need of repair and or replacement.

1991 **U.S. LED ALLIED COALITION DEFEATS IRAQ**; sea control in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf proved vital to allied effort.

1992 **INDIAN NAVY COMMISSIONS FIRST INDIGENOUSLY BUILT DIESEL SUB, *INS SHALKI*.**

1992-1994 **INDIAN NAVY CONDUCTS JOINT EXERCISES WITH OTHER NAVIES.**

APPENDIX E. INDIAN NAVAL ASSETS

SHIP TYPE	ACTIVE (RESERVE)	BUILDING (PROJECTED)
submarines	14(3)	1
aircraft carriers (light attack)	2	(2)
Destroyers	5	3(1)
Frigates	15	3
Corvettes	18(1)	8(11)
Patrol ships	7	3
Fast Attack Craft (missile)	4(4)	0
Fast Attack Craft (patrol/torpedo)	12	1
Landing ships	10	(1)
LCUs	7	0
Minesweepers	12	0
Minesweepers (coastal)	10	0
Minehunters	0	(6)
Survey ships	10	0
Training Ships	1	(1)
Sub tenders	1	0
Diving support ships	1	2
Replenishment tankers	2	1
Support tankers	4	0
Water carriers	3	0
Tugs	15	0
TOTALS		
Submarines	14(3)	1
Surface combatants	61(5)	17(12)
aircraft carriers	2	(2)
amphibs	17	(1)
Mine warfare vessels	22	(6)
Auxiliaries	11	(3)
miscellaneous	26	(1)
	153(8)	**18**(25)

source: Richard Sharpe, ed., Jane's Fighting Ships 1993-1994.

APPENDIX F. INDIAN NAVAL AIR ASSETS

AIRCRAFT TYPE	AIRCRAFT MAKE/MODEL	NUMBER
Fixed Wing Attack	Sea Harrier	23
ASW/SAR helicopters	Westland Sea King	27
" " "	Helix	18
" " "	Hormone	5
" " "	Aerospatiale Alouette	9
" " "	Advanced Light Helicopter	*
Training helicopters	Bell 300	4
Maritime Patrol	Dornier 228	36
" "	May Il-38	6
" "	Pilatus Britten-Norman Maritime Defender	18
" "	Tupolev Bear F	10
" "	Fokker Friendship	2
" "	Sepecat/Hal Jaguar International	12
TOTALS		
Fixed Wing Aircraft		**107**
helicopters		**63**

*(Indian version of Aerospatiale Alouette. Production expected in 1994.)

sources: Asia-Pacific Defense Review 1994 Reference Edition and Richard Sharpe, ed., Jane's Fighting Ships 1993-1994.

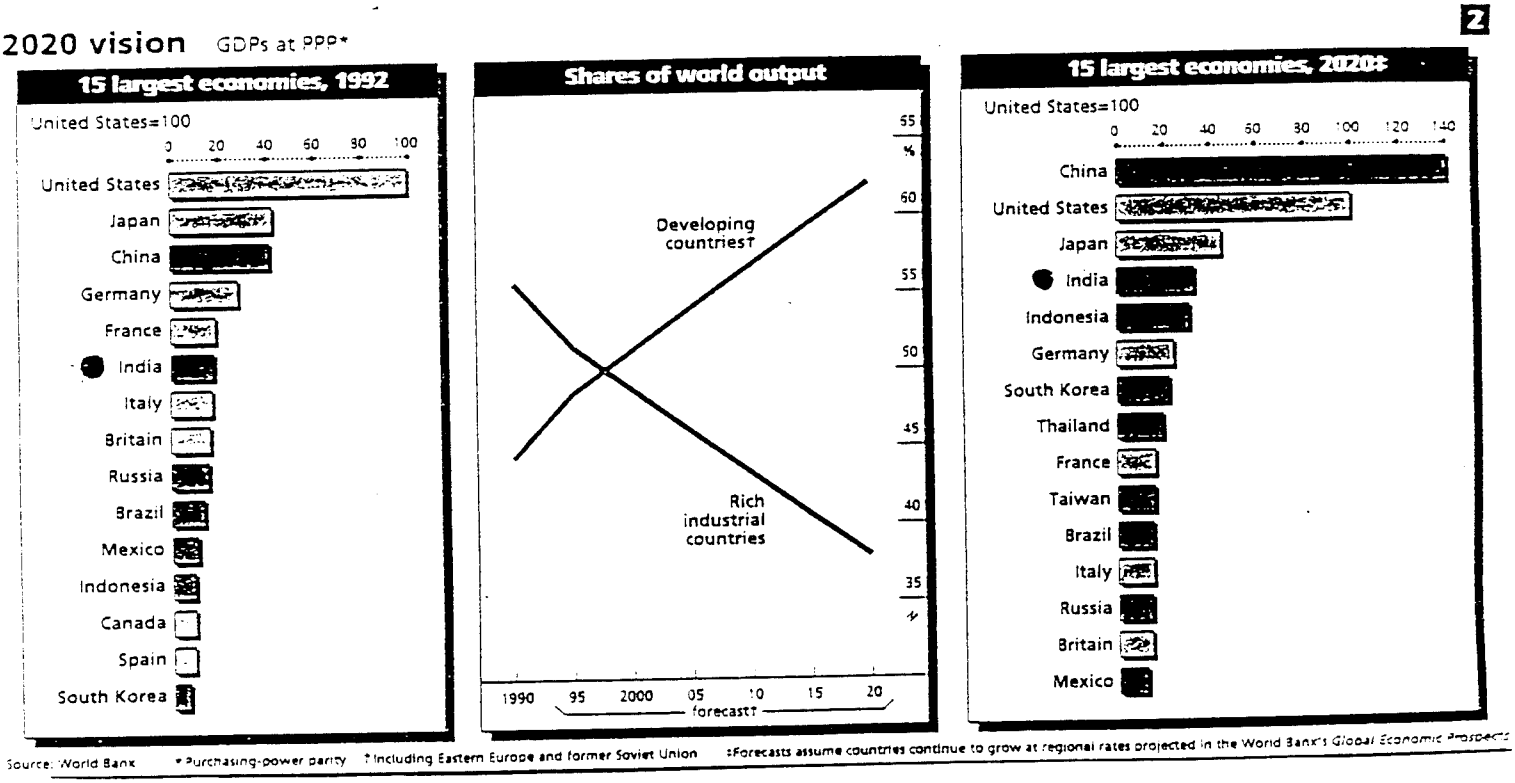
APPENDIX G. FORECASTS OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY

Table 1

GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCTS OF SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1950–2010
(In billions of 1986 U.S. dollars)[a]

Nation	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
United States	1378	1907	2767	3649	4682	6072	7859
Soviet Union	492	855	1411	1935	2088	2455	2873
Japan	189[b]	336	936	1476	2127	2856	3714
China[c]	114	232	417	793	1520	2395	3791
West Germany	172	402	622	815	1009	1244	1525
United Kingdom	251.	349	463	560	670	807	949
France	172	282	486	695	843	1109	1410
India	152	202	294	408	598	897	1330
South Korea[c]	18	27	67	147	274	455	709
Taiwan	5	11	25	57	103	180	317
Brazil	34	65	117	272	353	571	939
Argentina	38	51	78	106	107	119	133
Turkey[c]	32	59	104	171	256	367	501
Mexico	58	104	203	378	444	548	679
Egypt	16	31	49	98	132	158	190

[a]Converted from local currencies using purchasing-power parities of 1980.
[b]Japanese GNP estimate for 1953.
[c]Gross domestic product.



sources: The Rand Corporation (table 1) and The Economist (table 2).

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