

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S PAKISTAN POLICY
BEFORE AND AFTER THE SOVIET INVASION OF
AFGHANISTAN

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

Marium Soomro

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

OCTOBER 2020

MARIUM SOOMRO

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BILKENT UNIVERSITY 2020

*To my family
Daddy, Ana, Sahar, Michelle, Aqib, Zainab and Umer*

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ABSTRACT

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The United States and Pakistan's bilateral relationship has seen complex periods of converging and diverging interests that have been shaped by security concerns. The first two years of the Carter administration's relations with Pakistan saw a divergence of interests primarily due to the United States' pursuit of its nuclear non-proliferation foreign policy. This study uses archival material to analyze the diplomatic and political discourse which unfolded in Washington D.C. and Islamabad during the enforcement of this policy. The study underlines that policymakers are at times divorced from the experiences of diplomats on ground and highlights the complexity behind state craft, the art of diplomacy and the geopolitical and the geostrategic contours of the United States and Pakistan's bilateral relationship.

The Carter administration's Pakistan policy vis-à-vis nuclear non-proliferation was only side stepped after a number of external factors in the form of regional events took place. These included, the Iranian revolution, the siege of

Mecca, the rise in politicized Islam, the impact these events had on the domestic public opinions of both nations and last but not least, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The multiple security implications of all these events led President Carter to build the foundation for the alliance with Pakistan which would succeed in driving the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan.

Key words: Nuclear Non-proliferation, Soviet Invasion, The Government of Pakistan, The United States of America

ÖZET

AFGANİSTAN'IN SOVYETLER TARAFINDAN İŞGALİ ÖNCESİ VE SONRASI CARTER YÖNETİMİNİN PAKİSTAN POLİTİKALARI

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A.B.D. ve Pakistan'ın ikili ilişkileri birbirlerine yaklaşıp daha sonra uzaklaşan fakat temel olarak güvenlik kaygılarıyla şekillenen karmaşık dönemlerden geçmiştir. Carter yönetiminin ilk iki yılında Pakistan'la olan ilişkiler temel olarak A.B.D'nin nükleer silahların yaygınlaşmasını önlemeyi amaçlayan dış politikası yüzünden çıkarların farklılaşmasıyla sonuçlanan birbirinden uzaklaşmaya sahne olmuştur. Bu tez, Washington ve İslamabad'da bu minvalde gelişen dış politikaların uygulanması sonucu oluşan diplomatik ve siyasi söylemleri arşiv kaynaklarına dayanarak tahlil etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez, politika üreticilerinin bazı zamanlarda olay yerinde bulunan diplomatlardan farklı düşündüğünün altını çizip devlet yönetiminin ardındaki karmaşıklık,

diplomasi sanatı ve A.B.D.- Pakistan ilişkilerinin jeopolitik-jeostratejik temel hatlarını vurgular.

Carter yönetiminin Pakistan politikasında önemli bir yer işgal eden nükleer yaygınlaşmayı önleme planı ancak bölgede oluşan harici birkaç olayın sonucu olarak bir kenara bırakılmıştır. Bu gelişmeler sırasıyla: İran devrimi, Mekke'nin kuşatılması, siyasal İslam'ın yükselişi ve yukarıda bahsi edilen olayların iki ülkenin kamuoyu görüşlerine etkisi ve en önemlisi Sovyetlerin Afganistan'ı işgalidir. Bütün bu olayların güvenlik alanındaki çeşitli sonuçları Başkan Carter'ı Pakistan'la müttefikliğin temellerini inşa etmeye yöneltmiş ve bu da Sovyetleri Afganistan'dan dışarı atmaya yetmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Nükleer Silahların Yaygınlaşması, Sovyet İşgali, Pakistan Hükümeti, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Objectives

The United States and Pakistan have had a long and often complex bilateral relationship since the emergence of Pakistan as an independent state in 1947, when the United States became one of the first nations to establish diplomatic relations with Pakistan. In the subsequent years, a combination of factors ranging from the United States political and security interests in the Cold War geopolitical and geostrategic milieu in Southwest Asia; to Pakistan's own regional threat perceptions pertaining to its national security, helped transform this bilateral relationship into a partnership. Despite the change of regional and global events rising to the surface in the following decades, the specific aforementioned undercurrents shaping the relations remained constant – with the two countries enjoying periods of close alliance when their mutual interests converged, followed by junctures of challenging bilateral relations when their interests diverged. Therefore, there has always been a waning and waxing of interests in the United States and Pakistan bilateral relationship which appears to have continued to the present time.

During the Carter presidency (1977-1981), in regards to the US bilateral relations with Pakistan, the first two years were spent in a juncture of the waning of American interests in Pakistan. This was primarily due to the new foreign policy objective of nuclear non-proliferation. However, in light of the Soviet invasion into Afghanistan, the waxing of American interests with Pakistan resumed. The undercurrents of geopolitics and geostrategy brought the two nations at an intersection for an alliance, in other words, external events, like regional changes outside of the bilateral framework shaped the relationship. Often the Carter administration, is overlooked when it comes to the U.S. and Pakistan alliance during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. However, it is important to highlight that the Carter administration set the foundation for the partnership between the United States and Pakistan which, according to some historians, (via help of some other nations) not only drove the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan, but brought the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union.¹

This study will examine the United States and Pakistan bilateral relationship under the timeline of the Carter administration leading up to the Soviet invasion. The primary focus will be on the Carter administration's foreign policy objective concerns vis-à-vis Pakistan. It will specifically draw attention to the United States' foreign policy objective regarding nuclear non-proliferation in Pakistan and the negotiations which unfolded

¹ Bruce Riedel. *What We Won, America's Secret War in Afghanistan 1979-1989* (Brookings Institution Press, 2014) ix.

among diplomats regarding the policy on both sides. Moreover, an analysis of these bilateral talks and both capitals' assessment will highlight and answer the question on how this policy transpired, or changed in light of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan thereby changing the overall bilateral relations of the United States and Pakistan from a state of controversy to one of acquiescence. This study will address this by answering the question what were the preceding factors which hindered and advanced the U.S. – Pakistan alliance in light of the Soviet invasion? To answer this, the study will underline other regional events in the Muslim world neighboring Pakistan i.e. the Iranian revolution, as a result of which the U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relations, witnessed a converging of interests giving birth to a period of alliance. The developing events in the region and the eventual Soviet invasion posed a threat to both the United States' and Pakistan' interests, despite the fact that they had different implications for each nation. The study will recount the storyline of how these concerns emerged for both the United States and Pakistan leading to their eventual alliance during a period of contention regarding the non-proliferation policy.

The invasion of Afghanistan and its reversal was necessary for different reasons for each country. For the United States it meant the temporary shelving of the nuclear non-proliferation objective vis-à-vis Pakistan. With the ongoing Cold War, a Soviet occupied Afghanistan amidst the regional dissent was more detrimental to U.S. interests than any preceding election campaign promise i.e. non-proliferation policy. Moreover, this study will introduce the archival material that provides evidence that Pakistan's nuclear program had already advanced ahead of the regional conflicts which would transpire.

This will then foreshadow albeit in hindsight, how this period transpired the state of nuclear non-proliferation vis-a-vis U.S. - Pakistan as a matter of protection and safeguards, not prevention – although this approach would not be implemented until after the collapse of the Soviet Union when the non-proliferation policy would be taken off the backburner bringing forward a juncture of U.S.- Pakistan bilateral contention once more.

Furthermore, the archival material presented will reveal that the Carter administration upheld its non-proliferation policy vis-à-vis Pakistan for as long as it was sustainable and was the only primary concern regarding Pakistan, until it undermined the greater objective of the rising Soviet threat in the waging of the Cold War. For Pakistan, the implications of Soviet incursion in Afghanistan were detrimental to its very existence as a nation and thereby creating a situation of any means by necessary to defeat the threat.

The study will also briefly touch upon the misleading popular dichotomy of U.S. administrations preference for military regimes as counterparts and how this was factored into the Carter's administration with Zia's regime, especially in light of the invasion of the Soviet Union.

1.2 Historiography

The current historiography on the subject of United States – Pakistan bilateral relations addresses specific U.S. administrations vis-à-vis Pakistan, i.e. the histories of the Carter administration. The studies on the subject are not limited to its bilateral framework, but are also found in studies on regional and global concerns pertaining to it. For instance, this includes the histories of the Afghan insurgencies vis-à-vis U.S. and Pakistan partnership; and the histories of South Asian geopolitics vis-à-vis the U.S.

There are key debates regarding the bilateral relationship which are at times found in context of global and regional events which have added to the subject of the bilateral relationship's framework. For instance, the United States Cold War with the U.S.S.R. (1947 – 1991) and debates of contention regarding the motivation behind Pakistan aligning itself with the U.S., including taking positions with the U.S. in multilateral platforms whilst, also being part of CENTO and SEATO, and during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

The debates in the current scholarship explore the basic premise of the relationship; Why did these two nations choose to be allies? What were their motivations? Was it a question of the emergence of mutual interests? For instance, for shared democratic principles and values on both fronts. Or strictly for national interests over international interests? For example, geopolitical positions i.e. the containment policy from the U.S. point of view; as well as geopolitical considerations i.e. the regional

instability with India and Afghanistan for Pakistan, leading to their need for legitimization from a world power in this case the United States, as a new developing nation, coupled with benefits of foreign assistance? Foreign assistance itself has been debated under the norms of client state relations. The literature also addresses foreign assistance as being the issue of contention in the bilateral relations of U.S. – Pakistan. These are the questions and debates several scholars have tried to address on both sides albeit there is a lack of scholarship on the Pakistani side. In fact, there have only been a handful of studies written from the Pakistani perspective. This is perhaps in part because of a nonexistent declassification process in the government resulting in an inadequate archival material available for study.

Since the topic of U.S. – Pakistan relations has been studied under many subjects relating to it, as mentioned above (Cold War, South Asian geopolitics, Afghan insurgencies), the current literature pertaining to that is very vast. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, only a selection of the current literature pertaining the main debates on U.S. – Pakistan relations under the Carter administration will be explored in an effort to give an adequate summation of the bilateral relations under the Carter administration, to support where this study fits in.

The questions on the basic premise of the relationship and their motivations are explored in a rare Pakistani study titled “Pakistan’s Foreign Policy, A Reappraisal,” by a Pakistani diplomat, Ambassador Shahid M. Amin who worked for nearly thirty-nine years at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Amin’s study traces the successes

and failures of Pakistan's Foreign Policy and tries to give an understanding of factors in play in policy-making in Islamabad. In the context of this thesis speaking on the U.S. – Pakistan relations during the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, Ambassador Amin describes the period as a “convergence of interests between the U.S. and Pakistan.” According to him it was undoubtedly an alliance based on mutuality of interests. His stance on this is generated in contrast to a view he describes as cynical in some circles in Islamabad, one that is of the view that Pakistan has been subservient to U.S. policy, others even believing that Pakistan's own foreign policy is created in Washington. Ambassador Amin refutes these narratives and in turn gives a detailed response supported with examples of historical events between both countries which negate these statements. Furthermore, he is also of the view that Pakistan's foreign policy is created in context of its security interests given its geographical position in the world. This perspective on Pakistan's foreign policy deriving from the nation's motivations for protecting its sovereignty, integrity, and territorial independence -- is the same position this study will explore throughout. Another point where this study draws parallel to Ambassador Amin is on the point that, “apart from India, until 1991, the former Soviet Union and, in a lesser way, Afghanistan as well, posed a potential threat” to Pakistan. The study reveals the exchanges between Pakistani diplomats and leadership with their counterparts in Washington, relaying the same sentiments and conclusions on the threat the Soviet Union as well as Afghanistan posed on Pakistan. Ambassador Amin is also aligned with this thesis on Pakistan's geo-strategic importance being at the fore during major regional developments, i.e. Iranian revolution. “Since its Islamic Revolution in 1979, there had been a serious deterioration in Iran's relations with the U.S. Pakistan thus became the

main conduit for the flow of arms to the Afghan resistance and a front-line state against the perceived Soviet expansionism.”² He also touches upon another factor this study will briefly address, oil. The U.S. – Pakistan military alliance was in part due to U.S. reliance on oil imports from the region, therefore adding to self-interests – not humanitarian interests or principals or protecting the principals of democracy for other nations.

As a policy practitioner and a policy academician, Professor Daniel Markey is also a good authority on the subject of U.S. – Pakistan relations. Professor Markey in his book, “No Exist from Pakistan, American’s Tortured Relationship with Islamabad” took a similar approach on the bilateral relations of both countries with one another. Writing on the subject of the motivations for American intervention in Afghanistan, Professor Markey’s conclusion is that the U.S. did so solely for the threat the Soviets posed in controlling the Gulf via first Afghanistan, then Pakistan and its existing friend India. Therefore, American interests were self-interests, not at all based on upholding, protecting or safeguarding democratic principles or values for Afghanistan. Ironically, this is an answer some give now for U.S. motives in Afghanistan today which are a consequent result of an imprudent U.S. withdrawal of the region after the war with the Soviets ended in 1989.

Most of the literature on the bilateral relationship of the U.S. and Pakistan affirms that the relationship has been mutually beneficial. However, there is contention on which

² Shahid M. Amin, *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy a Reappraisal* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 87.

country in certain junctures benefited more or less. For instance, one of the prevalent opinions or perceptions in U.S. circles is that Pakistan has benefited immensely in terms of assistance programs. Whereas the United States in return has not been given a lucrative quid pro quo. On the other hand, in Pakistan, the assistance given by the United States does not equate to the benefits the United States has reaped by putting Pakistan in vulnerable positions e.g. the U2 incident with the U.S.S.R. Therefore, the foreign assistance given to Pakistan has been under microscope. As for the studies mentioned here, each of them whilst discussing Pakistan's contention with the U.S., draw it back to the lack of or cut off of foreign assistance.

Another subject in which the United States and Pakistan relations has been written about is in the context of South Asian geopolitics. The discussion considers Pakistan's wariness from the United States' role or in their perspective the lack thereof during Indo-Pak relations of animosity and war (1947, 1965, 1971); and the cutoff of assistance during all of these events leading to the souring of relations. Similarly, to Ambassador Amin, Ambassador Hussain Haqqani also makes the arguments for geopolitical considerations but unlike Ambassador Amin, Haqqani addresses the Indo-Pak issues in depth by dedicating the very first chapter of his book "Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstandings, Magnificent Delusions," to the topic of South Asian geopolitics. Haqqani writes about Pakistan's challenges with India being the prime motivation for its partnership with the U.S. against the Soviets in Afghanistan. This is an extension to the debate on motivations of "geopolitical considerations" for alliance as

well.³ In addition, he also holds the view that the United States motivation for going into Afghanistan was to “avenge the Vietnam War” by defeating the Soviets and its alliance with Pakistan was “because of geopolitical considerations.”⁴ Furthermore, as for Pakistan’s motivation for fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan, Ambassador Haqqani says it was “a *jihad* to be used as the launching pad for asymmetric warfare that would increase its clout against India.”⁵ While Ambassador Haqqani is not alone in holding these popular views, especially the latter regarding Pakistan, according to the insight this thesis will provide, these are not the primary motivations, if at all for both nations. During the Carter administration, there was no mention in any of the cables on “avenging” Vietnam. On the contrary, there certainly were considerations amongst the policy-makers and advisors of the President of not going into another war because of what happened in Vietnam.

Moreover, as for “clout against India” being Pakistan’s primary motivation via “asymmetric warfare” in other words, the guerilla warfare the *mujahideen* would fight – this is a distorted view of Pakistan’s animosity toward India. This view is giving the Indo-Pak rivalry too much credit for the war in Afghanistan and buying into the narrative of Pakistan’s obsession with its’ adverse neighbor. Pakistan was indeed concerned with India but it was not fighting one war to motivate another. Pakistan was fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan to defend its own territorial integrity from Soviet aggression. The cables in the thesis will show that Pakistan shared its concerns with the United States in

³ Hussain Haqqani. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding* (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group, 2013), 3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

1978 as the Soviet backed government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, PDPA assumed control of Kabul. Pakistan's primary concern was its own national security interest of survival.

Professor Rabia Akhtar in her PhD dissertation titled, "The Counter Narrative: U.S. Non-Proliferation Policy Towards Pakistan from Ford to Clinton" in 2015 also touches upon the U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relations in the context of South Asian geopolitics. Akhtar attributes India as "the only motive – Pakistan secretly hoped that an alliance with the U.S. would provide it security against."⁶ Akhtar continues her argument that, "When the U.S. did not rescue Pakistan as it had hoped for during its war with India...Pakistan felt betrayed. From that period onwards, Pakistan's list of grievances against the U.S. developed into a narrative of betrayal."⁷ She credits this to happening in the Cold War and also to the period when "Pakistan developed and tested its nuclear weapons – duly exploited by Pakistani leaders as a tool for populist politics."⁸ This brings forward the next subject under the current historiography of the Carter administration's relations with Pakistan, the issue concerning the U.S. policy on non-proliferation.

Dr. Akhtar's study unfolds U.S. non-proliferation from the Ford administration up until the Clinton administration. On the Carter administration she describes U.S. - Pakistan relations at a "critical"⁹ point, stating that this was the period in the relations when Pakistan found itself betrayed because of sanctions due to non-proliferation.

⁶ Rabia Akhtar, *The Counter-Narrative: U.S. Non-Proliferation Policy Towards Pakistan From Ford to Clinton* Kansas State University, Dissertation, 2015, abstract.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

“Pakistan’s abandonment narrative expanded to include its criticism of U.S. non-proliferation policy as selectively targeting Pakistan for nuclear proliferation in South Asia.”¹⁰ Akhtar traces Pakistan’s accusation of being selectively targeted to two developments which happened during Carter’s administration. The first being, “West Germany supplied full nuclear fuel cycle to Brazil, a non-NPT state and the deal was not opposed by the United States unlike the Franco-Pak deal.”¹¹ The second being, “Japan was provided a two-year exemption from a reprocessing ban by the U.S. even though Carter was facing domestic opposition to his policy against domestic reprocessing of plutonium.”¹² This study will present further details of these feelings being raised by the Pakistanis to the Americans in official talks. That being said, this study concurs with Dr. Akhtar’s findings, however Dr. Akhtar’s study does not address that in Washington there were discussions and efforts amongst policymakers on the importance of relations with Pakistan and how sanctions would promote feelings of discrimination, abandonment and worse, fuel Pakistani efforts for their nuclear program – counteractive with what the U.S. wanted. This study will reveal discussions leading to a more holistic understanding of policymaking. It will note the debate amongst policymakers as well as the U.S. Ambassador in Pakistan, Ambassadors Byroade and Hummel and their efforts to make Washington cognizant of keeping relations with Pakistan content. This is important because the current studies present a perception that the United States made zero effort to accommodate Pakistan and avoid feelings of betrayal and/or abandonment. It is therefore important to fill that knowledge gap in the present literature.

¹⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹¹ Ibid., 136.

¹² Ibid., 136.

Much like Dr. Akhtar's dissertation, "The Limits of Power: Jimmy Carter's Nuclear Agenda in Pakistan" by Ben Martin Hobbs written in 2014 and published in the *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, makes a similar conclusion that Carter's policy on non-proliferation vis-à-vis Pakistan "ultimately failed." Hobbs argues that Pakistan's nuclear program covertly succeeded because of the Carter administration's "failure to address Pakistan's security concerns with conventional military weapons." In addition to this, "congressional non-proliferation legislation cut off U.S. military and economic aid to Pakistan at key moments in diplomatic negotiations."¹³ Hobbs concludes his study crediting Carter with leaving behind "the lofty morality of the campaign trail," "abandoned in all but rhetoric" and "making way for a return to 'business as usual, politics as usual and diplomacy as usual.'"¹⁴ However, it is important to note that at times domestic politics cannot control the narrative of international politics, Carter's campaign promises such as non-proliferation may have won him the election. Nonetheless, global and regional concerns, such as the Iranian revolution and the invasion in Afghanistan, forced reprioritization of American interests. This study in some ways can provide a counter to Hobbs' conclusions in the same way as it does to address the gap in Dr. Akhtar's by providing efforts of evidence on the contrary regarding details of said diplomatic negotiations in which U.S. policymakers were concerned with providing Pakistan an adequate assistance package and moreover, be also holding discussion to working a way around Congress's requirements. It reveals the complexity

¹³ Ben Martin Hobbs. 2014. "The Limits of Power: Jimmy Carter's Nuclear Agenda in Pakistan" *Australasian Journal of American Studies*. Vol. 33, No. 1, Special Issue: America in the 1970s (July 2014). 18-33.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/44706135.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae7c5157602147a46e5d0e18606c9055e>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

of policy and decision making which is an art that must be highlighted in scholarship in order to understand the complex politics of bilateral relations.

The earliest written academic piece had been accredited to Ambassador Shirin R. Tahir-Kheli, who studied U.S. non-proliferation policy vis-a-vis Pakistan. In 1979, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tahir-Kheli was working in the State Department's scholar diplomat program and as an associate professor at the U.S. Army War College where her study "*U.S. and Pakistan: The Evolution of an Influence Relationship*" was published. This work led her to work in the White House in the National Security Council under President Carter's successor, President Raegan on the very topic of her book – United States relations with Pakistan and the region. Since then she has served in several capacities as an academician in institutions like SAIS at Johns Hopkins and is a policy expert at the Council of Foreign Relations and Foreign Policy Institute. She has worked in the United States Department of State as the first man or woman, a Muslim to serve as American Ambassador and has had many stints with the National Security Council under three U.S. Presidents.¹⁵ Ambassador Tahir-Kheli summarizes the crux of her 1982 study on U.S. – Pakistan relations, in her own words as "focused on two issues where there had been an assumption of American influence over Pakistani policy: the Pakistani nuclear weapons program and arms sales from the U.S.A to Pakistan. The study concluded that in neither case did the long history of relations indicate any influence in Pakistan."¹⁶ Ambassador Tahir-Kheli's conclusion is in

¹⁵ Tahir-Kheli, Shirin R.: Files, 1984-1989 Biographical Note. 2019. Raegan Library. <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/archives/textual/smf/tahirkhe.pdf>.

¹⁶ Tahir-Kheli, Shirin, *Before the Age of Prejudice, A Muslim Woman's National Security Work with Three American Presidents, A Memoire* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) 79.

agreement with the findings of this study as well; as the recently declassified cables from the Carter administration in 1977 until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reveal that the United States in no way influenced or hindered Pakistan's objectives of nuclear proliferation despite several persuasive attempts by American bureaucrats and leadership. The Government of Pakistan was adamant in its bilateral meetings and correspondence to their American counterparts on Pakistan's unrelenting stance of a non-military nuclear program purportedly meant for energy purposes for the development of Pakistan. The thesis will reveal the conversations in the bilateral talks and the governments' positions in detail in a later chapter strengthening Ambassador Tahir-Kheli's own conclusion from 1982. For example, when Pakistan raised security concern to the United States over the Soviet backed government's takeover in Kabul in 1978, the United States became more determined to uphold its nuclear non-proliferation objective policy under the belief that if Soviet influence was strengthening in the region then it was all the more important for Pakistan to discontinue its proliferation efforts. The alternative, according to U.S. policymakers, especially if the U.S.S.R. became privy to the advancement of Pakistan's nuclear proliferation attempts, may lead to more Soviet intervention causing instability in a complex region. Nevertheless, Pakistan continued to build its nuclear program even after it lost its main reprocessing plant deal with the Government of France – which was also canceled under U.S. pressure, another revelation this thesis will provide vis-à-vis the latest declassified diplomatic cables. Moreover, taking into consideration the discourse of Tahir-Kheli's study, another point of argument which Ambassador Tahir-Kheli's study did not directly address but can be made is on the debate regarding client state

relationships and their dependency on assistance. In this case, Pakistan, although aware of its status as a client state, did not succumb to U.S. pressure on its nuclear program.

Another study on the subject of the non-proliferation agenda regarding U.S. and Pakistan relations was done by journalists Adrian Levy & Catherine Scott-Clark in 2007. Their study addresses how Pakistan was able to succeed in developing its nuclear program despite U.S. officials having knowledge of it. Levy and Clark present a bold outlook on the U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relations and say that State leadership both in the U.S. and Pakistan, as well as scientists concerned with the development of the nuclear bomb in Pakistan, are reportedly guilty of “deception.” In other words, their claims of being allies are on the contrary.¹⁷ Moreover, according to Levy and Clark, the “U.S. administrations, Republican and Democrat, as well as the governments in Britain and other European countries, had allowed Pakistan to acquire highly restricted nuclear technology.”¹⁸ Moreover, they also accuse “the U.S. Congress” of succumbing to political pressure. Clark and Levy’s study traces the entire development of the nuclear bomb under Pakistan’s scientist Abdul Qadir Khan. Furthermore, they also questioned U.S. foreign policy on Pakistan and question “why anyone would want to place the survival of a military regime in Pakistan above the long-term safety of the world.” Levy and Clark’s main argument goes against the heart of this thesis. That being, U.S. foreign policy had to change in Pakistan in light of the Soviet invasion due to a plethora of problems which included, the Iranian revolution, the siege on Mecca, the new brewing

¹⁷ CSIS. “Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons.” *Center for Strategic Studies and International Studies*. 2007. <https://www.csis.org/events/deception-pakistan-united-states-and-secret-trade-nuclear-weapons>.

¹⁸ Adrian Levy & Catherine Scott-Clark, *Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Walker & Company, 2007) 19.

orthodox ideologies in the Muslim region, the U.S. containment policy, the spread of communism, control over the Gulf, offsetting the U.S. position as a super power in the world.. Levy and Clark's main argument does not take into consideration why U.S. foreign policy is complex and considered on multiple factors. Policies must change as the time requires it to. As this thesis will argue, the non-proliferation policy was being upheld for as long as it could until all of the aforementioned events amalgamated and forced U.S. foreign policy to adapt. So, it was not planned deception of any sort, rather a well thought out move considering all of the aforementioned developments. Moreover, as this study will also make an attempt to give the perspective of Pakistan on the non-proliferation issue, they would argue to Levy and Clark that the U.S. was in fact discriminating Pakistan on the non-proliferation agenda as they let other nations continue with their nuclear programs.

Another area through which the U.S. and Pakistan's bilateral relations have been studied thus far, has been via different institutional leaderships, i.e. civilian democracies and military regimes in Pakistan. There has been a debate on the impact on Pakistan's internal politics between the civil institutions and military institutions and their leadership and how their time in office was in comparison with their counterparts in the United States. This paper will divulge President Carter and General Zia-uh-Haq's motives in approach and consideration. There is a predominant notion that military regimes in Pakistan are more susceptible to good relations with the United States. President Carter's histories and for the majority of his presidency his counterpart in Pakistan was General Zia-uh-Haq. Bruce Riedel, currently a senior fellow and director of the Brookings Intelligence Project also had a career spanning thirty years at the Central Intelligence

Agency until 2006. In, *What We Won, America's Secret War in Afghanistan 1979-1989*, Riedel gives an in-depth analysis of how the Soviet 40th Red Army was defeated in Afghanistan.¹⁹ According to Riedel, “the single most important figure” was General Zia-uh-Haq. He credits him with being “more important” than Carter or Raegan and as “the most significant strategist thinker.”²⁰ Riedel praises detailed renditions of Zia’s wit and skill not just during the Carter and Raegan administration but prior to that as well. This thesis will also draw attention to Zia’s strategical thinking. In a later chapter, the cables will reveal that upon learning of the Soviet Red Army’s invasion in Afghanistan, when the United States reached out to publicly extend its support to Pakistan – Zia told them via his Foreign Minister Agha Shahi, to hold off a few days so that Pakistan can assess and measure the Muslim countries’ like Iran’s reactions and support. Even though meanwhile he had been courting the United States to support Pakistan from the imminent Soviet threats since the PDPA took power in Kabul and to reaffirm the 1959 bilateral agreement publicly – this time Zia awaited the opportunity for a pact with the Muslim countries of the region to rise against the Soviets. Furthermore, Riedel also credits Zia with choosing to go to war with a superpower, another point this thesis will draw as well. Riedel credits President Carter with the assembling and establishment of the nature of its alliance with Pakistan which is underrated and more attention is always put on the Raegan years in the war which built on Carter’s foundation. This study concurs with this conclusion.

¹⁹ Bruce Riedel. *What We Won, America's Secret War in Afghanistan 1979-1989*. (Brookings Institution Press, 2014), Jacket Cover.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp xii.

Taking into account the aforementioned concerns regarding U.S. – Pakistan relations under the Carter administration, the research for this study also concurs with the above-mentioned that there has thus far not been a detection of an upward trajectory in good bilateral relations – rather it is one that is met with cycles of asperities.

It is this study's aim to add to the current historiography using all the subjects regarding U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relations under the timeline of the Carter administration. To do this it will aim to give a detailed narration of the decision-making process in policy-making, the art of diplomacy and its negotiations, by giving evidence of individual officials and their stances; and moreover, narrate the repercussions which were considered on the external events unfolding simultaneously as U.S. – Pakistan relations became strained due to Carter's policy on non-proliferation.

1.3 Methodology and Resources

This study builds on the archival documents of the Office of the Historian at the State Department of the United States. However, it will not be limited to it. The volumes that the research is derived from includes, *The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1977-1980, Volume XIX South Asia – the Pakistan file*, as well as documents declassified under the *Afghanistan* and *India* file, as well as other relevant files under FRUS. The new archival sources will provide insight unknown before its release in August 2019.

By doing so, the research looks into the U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relations vis-à-vis these documents which include but are not limited to the diplomatic cables, telegrams and correspondence in the years leading up to the Soviets invading Afghanistan, and assess what the diplomats on grounds considered imperative policy strategy at the time. It was imperative for both nations to consider the geopolitical events unfolding at the time, i.e. the Iranian Revolution and the siege on Mecca, leading to new ideologies for the U.S. to reconsider and re-strategize policy in the region, specifically with Pakistan. This meant taking into consideration Pakistan’s geostrategic location to address the developing concerns which held national as well as global implications for the United States. With the invasion of Afghanistan, the possible loss of control over the region to Communism threatened the U.S. position in the region and the world. Therefore, the volumes of the State Department allow for an understanding of what the diplomats and policy-makers were thinking out loud. In regards to Pakistan, the research concludes Pakistan too was taking into consideration its geopolitical situation in the South Asian subcontinent and its own geostrategic location within the region whilst dealing with its bilateral relations with the United States. As a client state, Pakistan needed to preserve good relations with the U.S. However, they continued to affirm their national interests, i.e. Pakistan’s nuclear program.

The second set of primary sources is derived from the *Central Intelligence Agency’s Library under the Freedom of Information Act*, as well as the *National Security Archives* which contains files released in 2010 on the “Carter Administration’s

Unsuccessful Efforts to Roll Back Islamabad's Secret Nuclear Program.”²¹ Some of these archival sources are also found in Dr. Akhtar's dissertation but again they are limited in number and therefore touch base briefly on the developments in comparison to the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series which threads together the missing correspondence from the National Security Archives and allowed this study to make an analysis based on several hundreds of other archived documents from the concerned time period.

Similarly, the third primary source of this research is the archived material in *Congressional Hearings* concerning Pakistan from the 95th Congress (1977-1978) and the 96th Congress (1979-1980) under the Senate hearings on the *Committee on Foreign Relations*, as well as the *Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and Non-proliferation*, which has jurisdiction in eleven areas recognized by the committee's mandate. Some of them pertaining to Pakistan are found on the grounds of the committee's mandate to discuss legislative measures taken, i.e. the Symington Amendment under the Foreign Assistance Act; as well as overall political relations between U.S. and the concerned state (Pakistan) etc. The hearings provide details of the discussions ongoing in the legislative branch regarding the U.S. concerns with Pakistan.

The fourth primary source important for this study are oral histories, from the *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library*, the *Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense*, the

²¹ William Burr. "The United States and Pakistan's Quest for the Bomb." *The National Security Archive*. The George Washington University, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No 333. Posted: December 21, 2010. <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm>.

University of Virginia's *Miller Center Presidential Oral History*. The key people from the Carter administration including President Carter's oral histories have been valuable. In addition, the interview with Ambassador Arthur W. Hummel for the *Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project Information Series*, has provided first-hand knowledge of the Ambassador's career and his insight on life as a diplomat in Pakistan, which have been beneficial for the study to understand his assessments to Washington. Moreover, the oral history of the Special Assistant to President Carter for National Security Affairs from (1977-1981) Zbigniew Brzezinski and his staff member Thomas Perry Thornton has been used.²² Thornton also wrote accounts of his time in the Carter administration, one important piece which this study has gained knowledge from is his work published in 1982 titled, "Between the Stools: U.S. Policy towards Pakistan during the Carter Administration." In which he recounts the relations with Pakistan.

Finally, in order for this study to be as holistic and objective as possible, it was important to have sources from the perspective of the Government of Pakistan. The primary sources that will be used to assess the relations from the Government of Pakistan's perspective objectively, will include publications in the *Pakistan Horizon Journal* in which State leadership including diplomats and scholars from the concerned period of 1977-1981 wrote timely pieces. Secondly, short interviews were conducted for the purpose of this study alone with retired Ambassadors who will remain anonymous.

²² Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Oral History Interview with Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski," Department of Defense Office of Prepublication and Security Review. September 22, 2017. <https://history.defense.gov/Historical-Sources/Oral-History-Transcript-3/>.

These Pakistani diplomats who were key actors in the U.S. — Pakistan bilateral relations during the early, mid and late 1970s have added to the understanding of the ongoings in policy-making and decision making in the Government of Pakistan at all levels of bureaucracy. The third source this study uses are archived Pakistani newspaper articles such as The Dawn Newspaper.

The Government of Pakistan does not allow for the declassification of materials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Presidential and Prime Minister's office; therefore, it leaves academicians with a gap in research. That being said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does contribute to the Government's top secret "Green Book" which contains details of the country's bilateral relations with every nation and Pakistan's position and concerns regarding the unfolding global events. This study recognizes the need for a declassification process of the Green Book.

This study adds to the literature because it is based on the combination of all the aforementioned materials including two new valuable sources, firstly, the insight from Pakistani diplomats who were at the time working on the situation unfolding in Afghanistan in the late 1970s, secondly the new documents containing details from direct bilateral communications in the *Foreign Relations of the United States Series*. By using the communique and understanding from the intelligence, to the diplomatic level, to the policy-making level, and to the State level. Although the post-Soviet invasion relations between the U.S. and Pakistan continued to strengthen and perhaps reach its peak well after President Carter's time in office – the study will try to add to the knowledge gap by

assessing all of the aforementioned to deliver the foundations and the conditions of the beginning of the U.S. and Pakistan alliance that unfolded as a result of the Soviet invasion.

The study will restrict the story to narrow the group of actors by highlighting the discourse amongst diplomats, policymakers, the White House and their counterparts in Islamabad because they are the driving elements of policy. Notably, this thesis focuses on the U.S. geopolitical strategy of containment created in the late 1940s and early 1950s due to apprehension from the Soviet Union's expansionist nature. The policy involved building military alliances including countries on the periphery of the communist bloc, e.g. Pakistan. By the end of the Second World War, most of Eastern Europe was under Soviet control, and every country the Soviets occupied they installed communist regimes. Moreover, Asia was also predominantly becoming Communist as Mongolia, North Korea and then China joined. Keeping this broadening of communism in mind, once the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan occurred, Pakistan's geo-strategic location made it an important U.S. ally during the Cold War.

All of the preceding chapters are divided into parts to weave together a substantive understanding of all the specific events which were factored into policy and the overall decision-making process on ground by U.S. diplomats and officials in their missions in Pakistan. Moreover, how their concerns were taken in Washington D.C. is crucial in understanding the context of U.S. Foreign Policy vis-à-vis Pakistan during the Carter administration. Today, the U.S. and Pakistan still share an important relationship

post 9/11 and the situation in Afghanistan till date, researching the precursors to this with their alliance in 1979 with newly available archival documents will help give a clearer understanding of all the developing events at the time and bridge gaps if any in the overall historical study of the bilateral ties.

CHAPTER II

U.S. – PAKISTAN RELATIONS BEFORE SOVIET INVASION 1977-1978

2.1 Brief Overview of U.S. – Pakistan Relations

To analyze the impact of the Soviet political and military forays into Afghanistan over the Carter Administration's policy vis-à-vis Pakistan from 1977 to 1981, it is important to understand the backdrop of the United States and Pakistan's relations, consisting of an emergence of geo-political and geo-strategic security pacts, events, and concerns.

The emergence of Pakistan and India as independent states from erstwhile Imperial British India in 1947 roughly coincided with the advent of the idea of the containment policy in the United States against the perceived threat of Soviet communism in the post Second World War order. The decline of British power, not in the least because of the loss of the "jewel in the crown"²³ of the British Empire, also opened up the prospects for the United States to step in the vacuum left by Imperial Britain, thereby allowing the U.S. to become an inheritor to the erstwhile British spheres of influence including the South Asian subcontinent. It was natural for the U.S. to look at South Asia, with two of the most

²³ Winston Churchill's famous book titled: "*India: Defending the Jewel in the Crown*" written in 1931 has led to many experts referring to the subcontinent as "the jewel in the crown" because of the abundant surplus of resources the Empire used to get from the rich continent.

populous emergent nations, as a geo-politically important region in terms of the new global mantle accreted by the U.S. in the post Second World War era.

The U.S. approach towards the region was spearheaded by offering much needed support to both India and Pakistan, in the form of assistance packages, linked to development, humanitarian assistance, as well as military assistance.

At the same time, the Soviet Union was also looking at the region with more or less the same reasons but from the opposite side of the geo-political and ideological aisle as compared to the United States. Despite upending the social order of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, more or less, inherited its predecessor's geo-political imperatives that prompted the Russian Empire to challenge the British in Central Asia and Afghanistan nearly a century before in what came to be known as the "Great Game."²⁴ The Soviet Union, moreover, bordered the region and considered it as its own backyard.

While both India and Pakistan as nascent nations direly needed external support to develop their economies, infrastructure and military capabilities, choosing a side in an increasingly zero-sum competition between the two major super powers was not an easy decision to make. The subsequent decisions taken by the leadership of the two countries to approach this question of alliance with the super powers defined their position in an emerging bipolar world and had ramifications for years to come. India developed close relations with the Soviet Union. Meanwhile Pakistan came under the U.S. sphere of

²⁴ Rudyard Kipling termed the Russian Empire's ambitions in the Central Asian region as "The Great Game" in his novel titled *Kim*. Macmillan and Co. 1901.

influence. Even though initially there was an apparent compliance between the Soviet Union and India; and the United States and Pakistan, this study will reveal, during the Carter administration, policy on Pakistan i.e. the objective of nuclear non-proliferation or any discussion related to especially military would always be looked at through the prism of India.

There is little disagreement amongst academic scholarship on the subject that it was primarily Pakistan's desire to counter the perceived existentialist threat from the much larger and populous India that prompted it to seek an external balancer in the region.²⁵ How the specific decision to join one of the two global camps, remains a matter of discussion and debate.

It is generally accepted that Pakistan's leadership showed a clear inclination to join the U.S. camp soon after the creation of Pakistan. However, the decision appeared more complex for the Pakistani leadership than is often assumed, argues the veteran Pakistani diplomat, Ambassador Shahid. M. Amin in his book, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Reprisal." According to him, Pakistan started with an "open mind" on the question of joining either of the two blocs, with the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan, declaring three days after the creation of the country "that Pakistan would take no sides in the conflict of ideologies between nations."²⁶ Two developments in 1949, i.e. acceptance

²⁵ Haqqani, Hussain, *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*, (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group, 2013), 1.

²⁶ Shahad M Amin, "The Foreign Policy of Liaquat Ali Khan," DAWN.COM, October 17, 2010, <https://www.dawn.com/news/881096/the-foreign-policy-of-liaquat-ali-khan>.

of invitation by Prime Minister Nehru of India to visit the U.S. and Soviet reaction to India's decision to stay inside the British Commonwealth, in fact, apparently afforded Pakistan an opportunity to reach out to the Soviet Union, and Pakistan ended up receiving an invitation to visit Moscow. However, the visit never materialized and Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan instead ended up visiting the U.S. in May 1950 – a decision that has been debated by historians and politicians alike in the country for decades for casting the dye with respect to relations with the Soviets.²⁷ Ambassador Amin dismisses this simplistic interpretation of events as a “myth” arguing that there appeared no apparent strains in the Soviet- Pakistan relations until 1953, citing the Soviet Union's voting record on the issue of Jammu & Kashmir in the UN Security Council.²⁸

Nevertheless, Pakistan's political elite, in general showed an inclination towards the United States. For example, Prince Agha Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismaili community and a prominent figure in the Muslim League that lead the movement for the establishment of Pakistan, while addressing an event held at Pakistan Institute of International Affairs on February 8, 1950 said the following:

The enmity of England and Germany brought about in the 20th century a new world, in which the birth of a truly independent Muslim state, with all the advantages that can give a nation trust in her own destiny, was made possible by the efforts of the Quaid-i-Azam [Muhammad Ali Jinnah] and the support of the Muslim population of India. That mighty infant is the Pakistan of today. As a member of the Commonwealth, which I for one, hope in her own interest she will remain, she belongs to a confederation that is not limited to what was once known as the British Empire, but includes inevitably that most powerful

²⁷ Amin, M. Shahid. *Pakistan's Foreign Policy a Reappraisal*. (Oxford University Press, 2000), 41.

²⁸ Jammu & Kashmir is the disputed territory between India and Pakistan on which the two countries have gone to war in 1948 and 1965. The issue of Kashmir remains unsolved.

²⁸ Amin, M. Shahid, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy a Reappraisal*, (Oxford University Press, 2000) 42.

nation in the world, the United States of America, and behind her, sooner or later, the rest of the new world. The days of foreign intervention and interference are gone.²⁹

Statements like these are not rare in the early days of Pakistan, hinting at the liberal inclination of most of its Western educated political elite that saw greater ideological conformity and freedom in the West rather than in the Soviet bloc. The conservative religious circles too, at least in those days, viewed a-religious Soviet Union with obvious disdain. This in turn generated a creation from the Pakistani Left, in particular in the form of intellectual works produced by the vibrant *Progressive Writers Movement (Anjuman Taraqqi Pasand Musannifin)*.

Progressive Pakistani writer Saadat Hassan Manto wrote a series of essays in the 1950s called “Letters to Uncle Sam,” which foreshadowed Pakistan’s drift towards the United States. Historian Ayesha Jalal, said Manto very aptly “anticipated where Pakistan would go.” One of Manto’s Uncle Sam letters dated 1954 reads, the US,

will definitely make a military aid pact with Pakistan because you are really worried about the integrity of this largest Islamic sultanate of the world and why not, as our mullahs are the best antidote to Russia’s communism. If the military aid starts flowing, you should begin by arming the mullahs.³⁰

By 1953, Pakistan’s orientation towards the U.S. was beyond doubt, as evident from Pakistan’s position in 1953 during the Korean War when Pakistan condemned North

²⁹ His Royal Highness the Prince Aga Khan, “The Future of Muslim States in the Background of History.” *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1950): 3-8. www.jstor.org/stable/41392444

³⁰ Manzoor, Sarfraz. “Saadat Hasan Manto: He Anticipated Where Pakistan Would Go.” *The Guardian*. September 11, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/jun/11/saadat-hasan-manto-short-stories-partition-pakistan>.

Korean aggression and fully supported the United Nations to the “fullest,” and in this regard also cosponsored a UN resolution which sanctioned US military into Korea.³¹ Later, during the Suez crisis Pakistani policy found itself once more in the Western corner – despite domestic disapproval. Moreover, Pakistan also co-sponsored a United Nations General Assembly Resolution against the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 (which India abstained from).^{32 33}

In 1954, the United States and Pakistan signed their first ever security agreement in the form of the Mutual Defense Agreement Plan. The agreement addressed the United States’ concern of Soviet expansionism; and for Pakistan, it was an implicit bulwark against India. With this agreement, the United States “was to make available equipment, materials, services or other assistance with such terms and conditions as may be agreed.” Pakistan agreed to use the U.S. supplied weapons “exclusively to maintain its internal security, its legitimate self-defense or to permit it to participate in the defense of the area, or in the United Nations’ collective security arrangements measures.”³⁴

³¹ Larson, Jeffery Wade. *United States – Pakistan Relations, 1947-1954: The Conditions and Causes for Military Alliance* (The University of British Columbia, 1994) 40, 41.

³² During the Suez crisis Pakistan found itself in contrast to the Indian position of supporting Egyptian nationalization of the Canal. Pakistan on the other hand, on August 1, 1956 made a statement that implied its opposition of its nationalization. (Ahmad, Naveed. “The Non-Aligned Movement and Pakistan.” *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1979): 79-91.)

³³ Ahmad, Naveed. “The Non-Aligned Movement and Pakistan.” *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1979): 79-91

³⁴ Muhammad Zafrulla Khan and John K. Emmerson. “United States-Pakistan Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement (May 19, 1954)”, *Middle East Journal*, (Summer, 1954) Vol. 8, No. 3., 338-340.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4322618.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A67a3f65c4a73be97e278b71154d46434>

The manner in which the two sides interpreted this agreement, and justified it before their domestic audiences, in fact became a familiar pattern of the subsequent U.S-Pakistan relationship with both sides interpreting such understanding from their own peculiar perspective and interests, giving rise to a succession of what Teresita and Howard Schaffer describe in the metaphors of “*marriages and divorces*” in the relations between the two countries.³⁵ For example, during 1965 and 1971 when Pakistan and India went to war, Pakistan was disappointed in the presumed lack of support by the United States. Thus, public opinion in Pakistan on the U.S.’s commitment in its alliance to Pakistan shifted to suspicion and distrust.

On the other hand, the United States’ interpreted its policy on Pakistan regarding the Indo-Pak war of 1971 differently. President Nixon held a press conference on August 4, 1971 in which he highlighted “foreign and domestic matters.” The President said the United States would “continue our economic assistance to West Pakistan” in order to “deal with the problem of hunger in East Pakistan.”³⁶ At this time, while Pakistan’s priority was to seek U.S. military assistance, Washington was much more focused on addressing the unfolding humanitarian crisis.

Other than the 1954 Bilateral, two organizations also linked the United States and Pakistan together in an alliance. Pakistan was a signatory to two U.S. defense commitments

³⁵ Howard B. Schaffer and Teresita C. Schaffer, *How Pakistan Negotiates with the United States: Riding the Roller Coaster*. (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2011).

³⁶ Transcript of the President’s News Conference on Foreign and Domestic Matters. The New York Times, August 5, 1971. 16. <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/08/05/archives/transcript-of-the-presidents-news-conference-on-foreign-and.html?searchResultPosition=15>.

when it became a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, SEATO (September 1954 – June 1977) and the Central Treaty Organization, CENTO originally known as the Baghdad Pact (February 1955- March 1979), two defensive organizations formulated by the United States whose main purpose in the post-world-war and Cold War period was to prevent communist invasions in the regions of the member states. During the Carter Presidency, the Pakistani officials in Islamabad made no error in reminding the U.S. of these previous partnerships.³⁷

Pakistan was firmly placed in the U.S. domain during General Ayub Khan's rule (1958-1969) for all practical purposes, allowing the United States to utilize Pakistan's geo-strategic location against the Soviet Union in not so subtle a way. Given its geographical location to the Soviet Union, Pakistan was a prime location for the United States to conduct clandestine surveillance operations over the U.S.S.R., which is why President Eisenhower's administration in 1958 established an intelligence base in Pakistan's city of Peshawar from which U2 spy planes would conduct aerial reconnaissance missions over the Soviet Union. This led to the famous U2 spy-plane incident in 1960 when the Soviets Union shot one down, growing immense media attention in the United States and in Pakistan. Upon discovering the U2 operations, Khrushchev threatened to "bomb Peshawar off the map."³⁸

³⁷ "The Baghdad Pact (1955) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)", U.S. Department of State Archive. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/98683.htm>

³⁸ Shameem Akhtar, "Pakistan and the Great Powers", *Pakistan in a Changing World*, Masuma Hasan (Ed.), *Pakistan Institute of International Affairs* (Karachi, 1978), 174.

Five years later in 1965 when war between India and Pakistan unfolded, Pakistan felt betrayed and abandoned by the United States when it imposed an embargo on (India and) Pakistan. The sense of betrayal was extremely strong because of another event as well. Earlier in 1962 when China and India had trouble on their shared border, the United States had sent adequate defensive material to India. Given the 1959 Bilateral and Pakistan's status in both SEATO and CENTO – and India's leadership role within NAM, Pakistan felt deluded by the United States in this juncture as well, this narrative led into the 1970's during the Carter administration.

The 1970s, witnessed nearly a decade of bitter divorce between the two countries, due to reasons such as, the Pakistani sentiments of lack of support from the U.S. during the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971, the U.S.' inclination toward Iran as the more significant oil wealthy ally, and the U.S.' contention with Pakistan over its quest for a nuclear program. Nonetheless, sentiments would be put aside and the 1959 bilateral agreement would once again be dug out of the graveyard of history and revived after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, giving credence to the notion of “transactional partnership”³⁹ brought about by waxing interests of geostrategic and geopolitical nature, rather than any deep-rooted relationship between the two countries.

1971 further constitutes as an important year in welcoming a positive development between United States and Pakistan relations. In 1971 detente between the United States and the Peoples Republic of China in which the Government of Pakistan

³⁹ Stephen Cohen. *The Future of Pakistan*. (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2007), 217.

proved to be a very important ally – whom without perhaps détente may not have happened.

Pakistan had a strong bilateral relationship with its bordering neighbor People's Republic of China, PRC at the time. The ongoing Cold War influenced the foreign policy of President Nixon. At the time, the differences increased between the PRC and the Soviet Union and this paved way for Nixon's top diplomat Henry Kissinger's proposal. Kissinger was of the view that it was in the best interest of the United States to officially establish diplomatic relations with the PRC. Given Pakistan's strong diplomatic ties with the PRC, the Pakistanis acted as intermediaries. So, in 1971, Pakistani diplomats helped in establishing official U.S. – Sino relations by acting as intermediaries. Pakistan aided Secretary of State Henry Kissinger with a secret trip to China which resulted in success. An example of how strong the Chinese felt about their relationship with Pakistan is from when Henry Kissinger made this secret trip there, the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-Lai made no mistake in informing Kissinger that if Pakistan and India were to get into war over the Bengal region of East Pakistan then, "Beijing would launch military intervention against India on behalf of Islamabad."⁴⁰ Suddenly the Washington – Beijing – Islamabad axis became strong. The Chinese sentiments on this may have been a persuasive factor for the United States to aid Pakistan in the 1971 war to the extent it could. The following year President Nixon became the first American President to visit China. The Pakistanis indubitably took credit for the successful brokerage of this relationship. The United States

⁴⁰ Mohanty, Arun. "Toasting Legacy of 1971 Indo- Soviet Friendship Treaty,) Russia Beyond. August 9, 2011. https://www.rbth.com/articles/2011/08/09/toasting_legacy_of_1971_indo-soviet_friendship_treaty_12842.

also, continued to value Pakistan's opinion and analysis of issues when it came to China in the years even into the Carter presidency.

With the unfolding of these events, the Soviet Union and India signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in 1971. The Treaty came into effect in the aforementioned backdrop of two major events in Asia. It was in the strategic interest of both India and the U.S.S.R. to sign the Treaty. The Treaty contained significant ramifications. For example, Article VIII stated both countries "shall not enter into or participate in any military alliance directed against the other party."⁴¹ Article VIII further stated both countries "abstain from any aggression against the other Party and to prevent the use of its territory for the commission of any act which might inflict military damage on the other High contracting Party."⁴² Furthermore, Article IX of the Treaty made all implications and intentions toward the United States and Pakistan in this case even more clear by stating, both countries shall "abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engaged in armed conflict with the other Party. In the event of either Party being subjected to and attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security of their countries."⁴³

After the signing of this Treaty in 1971, a Memorandum signed August 9, 1971 from Acting Secretary of State Irwin to President Nixon on the subject of this Treaty reads,

⁴¹ "Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation," Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, August 09, 1971. <https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/5139/Treaty+of+>

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

“it reinforces the increasing closeness of view between the Indians and the Soviets...it reflects a Soviet recognition of the preeminence of its interests in India and India’s recognition of the geo-political necessity of close relations with Moscow.”⁴⁴ A New York Times article published, August 15, 1971 reported, “Russians, in a clever and dramatic and diplomatic coup, have deepened their influence on the subcontinent at the expense of the United States and Communist China.” It also called India’s position on Non-Alignment “a farce,” giving credence to the notion of the Indian – Russian alliance.⁴⁵ Secretary John Irwin also forewarned President Nixon that this Treaty would motivate Indian covert activities in East Pakistan at the time. The mentioned New York Times article also highlighted the same on the Treaty increasing India’s “boldness” to assist “the Bengali guerrillas.”⁴⁶

It should also be noted that later in 1971 during the Indo-Pak war on East Pakistan, Soviet aide went directly to Delhi as predicted. In light of the ramifications of this Treaty and to prevent India from any feelings of hostility, the United States treaded carefully whilst supporting Pakistan with incentive packages, especially in defense build-up. This proved to be an important concern during the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. This study will reveal through the diplomatic cables how U.S. Foreign Policy in Pakistan was in concert with India. The Carter administration was leaning toward the

⁴⁴ Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), South Asia Crisis, (1971), Volume XI, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v11/d116>

*Hereafter FRUS.

⁴⁵ The World, “Score One Diplomatic Coup for the Russians.” The New York Times. August 15, 1971. <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/08/15/archives/score-one-diplomatic-coup-for-the-russians-india.html?searchResultPosition=10>

⁴⁶Ibid.

Indian government. For example, the cables will reveal, each time Pakistan would ask for an increase in arms supply or assistance, Washington's policymakers would first consider the ramifications it may cost the U.S. relations with India which would be detrimental to the entire region – including Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Indian-Soviet alliance also supports the Pakistanis' concerns regarding the threat the Soviet encroachment and activities posed to Pakistan's security.

In 1974, Pakistan left SEATO on the basis that the organization failed to uphold its clause to come to Pakistan's defense. In 1979, Pakistan left CENTO after the Iranian revolution and the organization officially disbanded the same year. There is indignation within the Pakistani bureaucracy that their joining both alliances was ineffective for Pakistan. This bolstered resentment for the reason that since Pakistan was a party to these defense organizations (SEATO and CENTO), it was therefore identifying itself as a "Western ally against the Communist bloc."⁴⁷ It was not until 1979 when Pakistan was permitted to officially become a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, this development and how it may have factored into the U.S. — Pakistan bilateral relations in 1979 will be revisited later in the study.

Pakistan's quest for nuclear capability was a result of its military defeat in 1971 by India, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh as well as India's nuclear test in 1974. According to Pakistan's security calculus it was left with no choice but to seek nuclear

⁴⁷ Ahmad, Naveed. "The Non-Aligned Movement and Pakistan." *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1979): 79-91.

parity with India. During the Carter administration, Pakistan's nuclear program would be the primary diverging factor of interests between both nations. This study will further examine this divergence.

Historically, it is apt to note that a change in leadership in Pakistan, specifically from a civilian led government in power to a military regime, have brought periods of improved U.S. – Pakistan relations. This conclusion is drawn today because in order for the United States to advance its national security interests in Pakistan, it is presumed that only the military regime can have a stable and strong government in Islamabad, which from the view of many experts like Ambassador Hussain Haqqani says is “delusional.”⁴⁸ Amongst the factors that explain why civilian led governments are weaker in Pakistan, the primary one is perhaps because they have historically never been allowed to complete a full term. All presidencies take time to implement their objectives. With that said, the only civilian led government in Pakistan who would come to complete a full term for the first time during the Asif Ali Zardari Presidency from 2008 – 2013. This would be after over three decades from the time period of the Carter Presidency.

However, there have been prime examples in history when successful military regimes in Pakistan coincided with good bilateral relations. Good relations do not necessarily limit to its literal form. Meaning, military regimes are easier for the United States to negotiate with because they primarily look at Pakistan's national interests from the prism of their own security threat from India. Therefore, military regimes have always

⁴⁸ Hussain Haqqani. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*. (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group, 2013) Title.

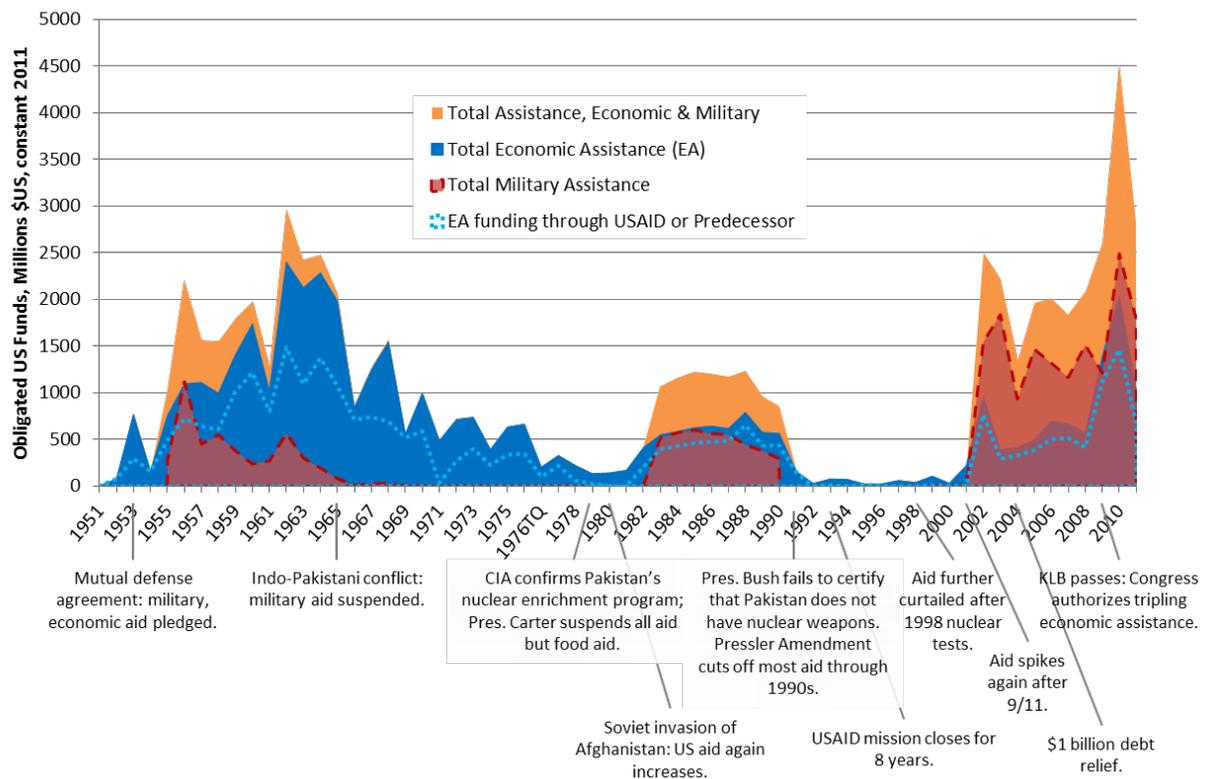
done quid pro quos for the build-up of Pakistani defense structures. For example, prior to the martial law administration of Zia-uh-Haq in 1977, in the late 1950's there was a similar coup d'état in Pakistan. Namely, during the time of General Ayub Khan in Pakistan (1958-1969) when both countries exchanged results which benefited one another. For instance, after many years of unsuccessful negotiations with the civil leadership in Pakistan, it was after General Ayub Khan's successful coup d'état in Pakistan when the United States immediately successfully negotiated a ten-year lease from 1959-1969 for the United States Air Force to set up the communications surveillance base where the U2 flights operated from.

As the U.S.—Pakistan alliance grew more prominent, it became evident Pakistan was aligning itself with one of the super power blocs, leaving it transparent to the second super power of the world, its own neighbor, the Soviet Union. When the military in charge leveraged for themselves defense assistance over sales for the U.S. base in Peshawar – it should have become evident that military regimes negotiate deals to meet their primary goal of defense development. This study will reveal how General Zia-ul-Haq over and over again tried to legitimize his own rule to the American diplomats and leadership by blaming the democratically elected civilian leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for Soviet preference. In addition, Zia would come to elongate his rule past failed assurances of holding democratic elections, pushing his own agenda for defense development despite U.S. efforts for smaller assistance packages amidst nuclear proliferation tensions -- proving that military leaders are not always amicably great for good U.S. – Pakistan relations.

By 1977 at the start time of the Carter Administration, Pakistan's geographic location was not as significant anymore given the United States' strengthening of relations with other countries in the Southwest region. Pakistan's geographic location was now overshadowed by Iran and Saudi Arabia; Two of the three nations from which the United States enjoyed its exports of oil from. Even though Pakistan's analysis on China was valued, the new fact remained that détente between the U.S. and China was in place.

Enforcement of the nuclear non-proliferation policy vis-à-vis Pakistan was the main area of concern for the Carter administration before the Soviet invasion. On this subject, the conversations in the cables from the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan in correspondence with Washington will reveal the downward trajectory in U.S. – Pak relations in this late 1970's time period. The correspondence will also then reveal an immediate turn-around of this policy during the Soviet Invasion. Bringing forward the geo-strategic position of Pakistan once again at the forefront of their bilateral relations.

Another facet of U.S. – Pakistan relations are assistance packages. The United States has been providing Pakistan with assistance packages for both economic development and defense development since 1947. The graph provided by the Center for Global Development, provides a clear image of the deterioration of aid in the mid 1970's when the CIA confirmed Pakistan's activities of nuclear proliferation. President Jimmy Carter suspended all aid packages to Pakistan in 1977 except for food aid. However, in 1979 we see a peak in the graph as the Soviet Union invades Afghanistan and U.S. assistance once again increased.



Caption: History of U.S. Obligations to Pakistan

Ref: <https://www.cgdev.org/page/aid-pakistan-numbers> Source: US Overseas Loans and Grants: Obligations and Loan Authorizations (aka the Greenbook). For the years 2002–2011 we have added data on Coalition Support Funds spending to the military assistance category; while CSF is not technically foreign assistance, it has constituted the bulk of military assistance to Pakistan during the post-9/11 period. Source for CSF amounts is "Direct Overt U.S. Aid Appropriations and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan," prepared for the Congressional Research Service by K. Alan Kronstadt.

The Foreign Assistance Act is a United States Act of Congress which authorized international security assistance programs to promote the United States' foreign policy and security.⁴⁹ The Act consisted of programs in areas of development and security e.g. in Pakistan's case assistance programs for military and economic development. "The Symington Amendment Act of 1976 amended the former and prohibits most U.S. assistance to any country found trafficking in nuclear enrichment equipment or

⁴⁹ Legislation on Foreign Relations Through 2002. *Committee on International Relations Committee on Foreign Relations*. Vol I- A of Volumes I-A and I-B, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003). <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/faa.pdf>.

technology outside of international safeguards.”⁵⁰ For example, in 1979 Pakistan was found in violation of the Symington amendment because it continued its efforts of attaining parts for its reprocessing plant. The second amendment act called the Glenn Amendment 1977, prohibited the United States from lending “foreign assistance to any non-nuclear-weapon state that among other things – detonates a nuclear explosive device.”⁵¹

This study will reveal how in the years prior to and during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Islamabad utilized the U.S.’s concern with the Soviet Union coupled with its own geo-strategic position and geopolitical security concerns vis-à-vis Afghanistan and India, to leverage more assistance, mainly defensive as Soviet involvement increased and influence in neighboring Afghanistan increased. This was because it was in the best interest of Pakistan’s security concerns to receive assistance, given the country’s developing nation status coupled with its limited resources, especially in comparison to some of its neighbors.⁵² The Soviet Union was in alliance with Pakistan’s belligerent neighbor India since the Cold War had started and in previous Indo-Pak wars assisted India militarily.⁵³ That being said, the situation was alarming for Pakistan to have its other hostile neighboring nation Afghanistan also under Soviet influence, it was therefore vital for Pakistan to put itself in a position to attain assistance from the United States so

⁵⁰ Hatahway, M Robert. “Confrontation and Retreat: The U.S. Congress and South Asian Nuclear Tests” *Arms Control Association*. <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-01/confrontation-retreat-us-congress-south-asian-nuclear-tests-key-legislation>

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Hussain Haqqani. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*. (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group, 2013), 2,3, 10, 63 and 73.

⁵³ Hussain Haqqani. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*. (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group, 2013), 77.

that it may be able to address the growing antagonistic climate in its region. Furthermore, the study will reveal via the conversations in Islamabad and the communication to and from Washington, how both nations from the onset were cognizant of the mutually beneficial relationship. In addition, the cables will reveal how Washington was keen to keep Pakistan's assistance packages rolling despite the findings of indicators of a developing nuclear program because it was of the view that a proper assistance package would persuade Islamabad to halt its nuclear ambitions or slow them down, but eventually this would result in Washington shelving or side-stepping the nuclear non-proliferation objectives and fuel more assistance to Pakistan in light of the Soviet invasion.

From 1947 to 1977 the U.S. – Pakistan relations were defined by the U.S. quest to seek an effective ally in the Soviet bloc's periphery, a criterion that Pakistan fulfilled (other than Iran briefly between 1977-1978 under the role of the Shah). Meanwhile, Pakistan 1947 onwards being newly independent and highly motivated to build strong defensive structures, especially more so under General Zia's regime, given its troublesome borders with India and Afghanistan, was also keen on good bilateral relations with the super power they have turned to, to ensure their own security concerns are met.

2.2 Upholding New Policy Objectives: The Nuclear Question

After President Richard Nixon's infamous resignation in 1974, the United States witnessed a Vice President taking over the executive office of the President in such a

manner for the first time. President Gerald Ford's presidency, especially his foreign policy was inherited from his predecessor for the most part and his term outlasted that of Nixon's. The 1976 election was a chance for the citizens of the United States to start anew. Jimmy Carter as a candidate ran his campaign on new and appealing policies. Some of his promises on foreign policy were, the upholding of human rights, nuclear non-proliferation and downscaling the global arms supply, especially in regards to America's role as an actor in arms supply thus far.⁵⁴ Each of these new foreign policy objectives factored into the United States' bilateral relations with both non-state and State actors. Once President Carter came to office it was vital for him to ensure his promises during his campaign related to (foreign) policies would be upheld, even if that meant diverging on these interests with ally countries.

The United States and Pakistan relations under the Carter administration for the most part, diverged on these interests significantly. Specifically, the foreign policy objective pertaining to nuclear non-proliferation. The primary matter of contention between the two countries was this policy. Pakistan's nuclear program efforts were well known by the White House and State Department officials by the time of Carter's assumption into office⁵⁵.

The nuclear question soon became the central focus of the U.S. - Pakistan bilateral relationship, with the potential to undermine the vital assistance packages to Pakistan.

⁵⁴ Strong, A. Robert. "Jimmy Carter: Foreign Affairs." *Miller Center*, <https://millercenter.org/president/carter/foreign-affairs>

These facets of bilateral relationship, from Pakistan's perspective, were at the very core of the bilateral relationship and a loss of which would be detrimental to Pakistan's interests.

Once the Soviet Union increased activity in Afghanistan and their eventual invasion of the country, the U.S. objective on non-proliferation in context of Pakistan took a back seat in order to deal with the more immediate problems in the region that required Pakistan's assistance.

In this regard, it is important to address the historical chronology of nuclear proliferation efforts by Pakistan along with examining the contents of the discourse or dialogue, policy reviews, bilateral talks, and confidential diplomatic telegrams that went to and from Pakistan to Washington in order to fully evolve a picture of how the U.S. engaged with the new Pakistani military leadership vs. its engagements with the civilian government; how the centerpiece of non-proliferation under Carter's foreign policy outlook was reviewed and reversed in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and how was American assistance in terms of development and defense packages leveraged on both sides.

Before looking at the cables, it is important to place them in regards to the U.S. policy concerns as well as the regional situation in which these concerns would unfold. At the start of the Carter Presidency, Afghanistan hardly figured on the priority list of the Administration. Afghanistan was a non-aligned country whose problems only pertained to its physical neighbor, Pakistan.

In Pakistan, President Carter's counterpart was the first freely elected Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto 1973 – 1977. Prior to becoming Prime Minister Bhutto was Pakistan's President from 1971- 1973. Later he was ousted in a coup d'état by General Zia-uh-Haq. General Zia's regime stayed in power for the following ten years. It may be noted that General Zia's rule for the most part, coincided with the Soviet stay in Afghanistan.

The nuclear question for Pakistan came into play in 1974 when India launched its first successful nuclear test, named "Smiling Buddha." Given the India-Pakistan history - Pakistan too, a newly carved and independent was a smaller State in terms of area, numbers and resources – all factors for its insecurity with its rival neighbor. It wasn't long before the Pakistanis geared up for their own nuclear program. Thus, the Government of Pakistan made an agreement with the Republic of France to attain a nuclear reprocessing plant. For obvious reasons, this was of grave concern to the United States as this was in direct contention with President Carter's own nuclear non-proliferation policy. Post-World War II, nuclear non-proliferation became a global concern and thus was not just at the forefront of priorities in the United States alone. Despite this however, some countries continued to make deals for selling parts, plants etc. in the name of energy or other economic benefits - not ever specifically for nuclear proliferation/weapons capabilities purposes.

So, when Pakistan's public attempts toward acquiring nuclear technology were initiated, any attempts to thwart it were deemed as discriminatory and unfair from the

Government of Pakistan's perspective. Pakistan's leading English daily the Dawn newspaper, thus noted:

Many of the Western Powers appear to get alarmed only when the risk of nuclear proliferation ostensibly comes from Pakistan or one of the independent-minded Muslim countries. The same apprehensions do not apply to Israel and South Africa or even India all of whose nuclear programs seem to enjoy tacit Western sympathy and approval.⁵⁶

This indeed, put a strain on the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Nevertheless, the prevention of proliferation was a major concern to the U.S. and so it continued to put pressure on the Government of Pakistan to put a halt to all actions or efforts that may lead towards proliferations, i.e. the reprocessing plant agreement with France.

In light of mounting U.S. pressure, Pakistan staunchly maintained that its nuclear reprocessing plant agreement with France was not for nuclear weapons capability purposes, rather for "peaceful uses"⁵⁷ e.g. meeting its energy and economic needs.^{58,59} The Government of Pakistan also assured the United States that it was open to an international team to inspect its facilities for any violations or signs of nuclear proliferation in the country. This however, was insufficient to assuage the United States' concerns regarding preventing any and all attempts toward nuclear proliferation.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Richter, William L., and W. Eric Gustafson. "Pakistan 1979: Back to Square One." *Asian Survey* 20, no. 2 (1980): 5 of 188-96. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2644022?seq=7#metadata_info_tab_contents.

⁵⁷ Editorial Note. FRUS. (1977-1980) Document 293. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d293>.

⁵⁸ Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter. FRUS. (1977). Document 267. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d267>.

⁵⁹ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977), Document 256. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d256>.

⁶⁰Memorandum from the Secretary of State Vance to President Carter. FRUS. (1977), Document 275. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d275>.

Carter's Presidency started with optimistic hopes that the United States could persuade the Government of Pakistan to overturn its agreement with the Republic of France on the reprocessing plant. This confidence was drawn up from the relationship American diplomats at the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan developed with the then democratically elected Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. There was a strong inclination within the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan that with the proper persuasion Bhutto could agree with the United States. In February of 1977 U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Henry A. Byroade wrote in a telegram to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's successor, Secretary Cyrus R. Vance stating his opinion that he believed Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto could be persuaded to stop the Government of Pakistan's efforts of nuclear proliferation given a tangible and of course appealing package.⁶¹

Ambassador Byroade described Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto as a leader with "good sense and sound political judgement." In particular, he emphasized his successful role in foreign policy and noted that is what makes him indispensable. However, Ambassador Byroade also noted that although Bhutto is also accredited with developing Pakistan's institutions, "but they serve to bolster the PM's power ...and reduce the power of potential rivals." Ambassador Byroade sensed an inherent fragility in Bhutto's institutional edifice – a prediction that came true a few months later in the form of political chaos in the country in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections held on March 7, 1977.

⁶¹ Letter from Secretary of State Vance to Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto. FRUS. (1977) Document 231. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d231>.

Ambassador Byroade in a telegram to Washington changed his assessment of convincing Bhutto on forgoing the reprocessing plant completely. Due to the domestic internal upheaval outpouring all over the country, Ambassador Byroade's assessment was that Bhutto – now under immense pressure to legitimize his hold over the government, whose primary concern was to harmonize the atmosphere in his country was in no position to terminate the reprocessing plant agreement. The reason for this being, if Bhutto succumbed to American interests amidst the domestic chaos, the public would at once turn against him. Keeping that in mind, the Ambassador suggested Washington should wait at least one more month before negotiating the reprocessing plant issue with Pakistan again, given Bhutto's hands were full with domestic affairs so this was not the time to put external pressure on the country. In the meanwhile, by April, perhaps the situation in Pakistan would change for Bhutto. Moreover, Ambassador Byroade suggested the State Department in the meanwhile, talk to France on delaying transfer of the equipment of the reprocessing plant to Pakistan.

On the other side, Pakistan's perspective on its reprocessing plant deal was defensive and turned into a matter of national pride. The Pakistanis had been reiterating they had obtained IAEA approval for its reprocessing plant deal since 1976. This was announced by Prime Minister Bhutto at a press conference in Ottawa in February 1976.⁶² The IAEA Board of Governors had based their decision on Pakistan's dire energy requirements. Moreover, adding to their defense, in the trilateral agreement with France

⁶² Ahmed, Samina. "Franco-Pakistan Relations-II: The Issue of the Nuclear Reprocessing Plant" *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 31. No. 1 (First Quarter, 1978). 36, 37 of 35-70.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/41393344.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A3f9fec15e1e90886b5883a23c5c75a42>.

and the IAEA, “Pakistan had agreed to stringent safeguards by France on the deal as well as international inspections and checks” by the IAEA.⁶³ The Pakistanis also observed that the U.S. opposition to Pakistan’s reprocessing plant agreement with France was from the onset as a tool of “domestic politics” since the Presidential election campaigns between Ford and Carter.⁶⁴ Furthermore in 1976, the Director for US Arms Control Development Authority Dr. Fred Ikle, told the US Foreign Relations Committee that Pakistan did not have any “economic justification” for the expenses of such a plant and that instead of its peaceful claims the country’s “real interest” was “to match India’s nuclear capacity.” In response the Prime Minister Bhutto made a strong statement he, “stressed that Pakistan, as a sovereign country, would not allow any individual or state to dictate it.”⁶⁵ For Pakistan, this trajectory of the reprocessing plant deal became a matter of national pride, giving into any such external pressure would indeed lead to trouble for Bhutto domestically as noted by Ambassador Byroade.

By April 1977, as Ambassador Byroade had predicted, Prime Minister Bhutto was ready to enter the negotiating table once more in regards to the reprocessing plant issue. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance wrote a Memo to President Carter urging immediate action on Bhutto’s offer to come to a resolution. He pressed however that it would be necessary to offer Bhutto a package that could help him convince the Pakistani public and all parties therein that the cancellation of the reprocessing plant was not taking away anything from Pakistan but rather the new agreement with the U.S. would offer

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 38.

immediate benefits which Pakistan required. On this note, Secretary of State Christopher laid out a tentative package for President Carter to consider and approve to get Bhutto to agree. The tentative package considered, *Arms and Economic and Energy Items*. He also advised bringing essential members of Congress on board beforehand with a briefing of what they would bring to the Pakistanis. Lastly, he noted a “key element” - being the necessity in ensuring that India does not see any of this as a threat to herself by guaranteeing “regional stability.”⁶⁶ Therefore, U.S. Foreign Policy in Pakistan was at the time being looked at through the prism of India as well, to ensure India would not feel the need to lean more on another power, specifically, the Soviet Union.

On May 31, 1977, Secretary of State Vance met with Foreign Minister Aziz Ahmed. The nuclear question still remained at the forefront of the relations half a year into Carter’s presidency. On this front, the Foreign Minister spent three quarters of an hour reiterating a list of disappointments the Pakistanis felt in context of the recent wars with India (in 1965 and 1971) and from Islamabad’s perspective, the lack of support from the U.S. His main point was to highlight the “sacrifices” Pakistan made to support American interests in the previous three decades, perhaps a nod to its efforts in siding with the U.S. since the Cold War started. Furthermore, in defense of Pakistan’s position on the reprocessing plant issue, the Foreign Minister asked why the United States waited three years after the project with France had started to voice its objection?⁶⁷ After scoping the list of grievances, the Pakistani Foreign Minister also touched upon India. He

⁶⁶ Memorandum from Acting Secretary of State Christopher to President Carter. FRUS. (1977). Document 240. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d240>.

⁶⁷ Message from Secretary of State Vance to President Carter. FRUS. (1977). Document 250. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d250>.

said India all this while has had the support of the Soviet Union in terms of arms supply, as it did in the wars of 1965 and 1971.⁶⁸ Bringing up the Indian alliance with the Soviet Union was an attempt to underline, reiterate and remind the U.S. of Pakistan's alliance in support of its Cold War from the 1950's.

A few days later in early June 1977, in an address to the National Assembly of Pakistan, Prime Minister Bhutto gave a strong speech reaffirming to his country that the cancellation of the reprocessing plant was non-negotiable. At the same time, Bhutto said he did not want to "damage" the bilateral relations with the U.S. He also commended the U.S. Secretary of State for "looking forward to the future." The Prime Minister reiterated that Pakistan was not going to use the reprocessing plant for nuclear weapons purposes, on the contrary only for peaceful purposes. He went on to repeat the grievances the Foreign Minister mentioned to the Secretary in his meeting but at length.⁶⁹

Bhutto, notably a strong and motivational speaker, was not just talking to his Parliament but to the Pakistani public altogether. He emphasized how important it was not to be an "imperial stooge"⁷⁰ — someone who succumbs to external pressure from stronger countries. The Government of Pakistan was either A) convinced that the U.S. would not deliver a package satisfactory enough in lieu of the reprocessing deal or, B) wishfully thinking this approach would make the United States Government step aside

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977), Document 251. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d251>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

completely on the reprocessing plant by engaging the public opinion of Pakistan on the matter.

Moreover, Bhutto was not the only one making such statements. The Chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) Munir Ahmed made strong statements defending Pakistan's "nuclear program at national as well as international forums."⁷¹ At one such occasion at an institution in Pakistan he said, "...unless we in Pakistan also acquire the necessary technologies, we cannot become truly independent." An excerpt from a statement he made reported by the Morning News in Karachi mentioned, "our future will be uncertain if we do not resort to nuclear technology."⁷² These types of firm statements made the resolve for a reprocessing plant stronger throughout Pakistan.

The Bhutto that Ambassador Byroade was dealing with now was a hundred and eighty degrees from what he had assessed in terms of flexibility on the nuclear issue. Although Bhutto kept steadfast on Pakistan's peaceful intentions with the plant, it was not ever going to be enough for the United States Government to turn away from its foreign policy on nuclear non-proliferation. The Carter administration had to answer to its own constituents as well. Pakistan was not in a place for such persuasion. The U.S. Embassy telegraphed back to Washington on Bhutto's address and stressed how he and the

⁷¹ Ahmed, Samina. "Franco-Pakistan Relations-II: The Issue of the Nuclear Reprocessing Plant" *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 31. No. 1 (First Quarter, 1978). 66 of 35-70.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/41393344.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A3f9fec15e1e90886b5883a23c5c75a42>

⁷² Ibid.

Foreign Minister had misquoted and misrepresented “confidential” bilateral dialogue to gain “domestic political advantage” by rallying public support behind Bhutto.⁷³

Public discourse meanwhile was also being shifted in the United States on the Pakistan front. The Carter administration was making moves to ensure it was upholding its foreign policy of lowering arms and weapons supply even to its long time Cold War ally Pakistan. A New York Times article from June 1977 by Bernard Weinraub referred to Pakistan’s nuclear state ambitions as an “anathema to Washington.”⁷⁴ The article was written in reference to President Carter’s policy on restriction of sale of weapons and arms in this case the administration was barring the sale of 110 A-7 attack planes to Pakistan. On this, the new policy would only export such arms on an “exceptional” basis when U.S. national security interests were aligned to them. There was also a nod to the American view of foreign policy on Pakistan from the prism of India – Washington not wanting to indicate a disruption in the balance of power of the South Asian region.⁷⁵ Meaning, Washington did not want to upscale Pakistan’s defensive capabilities in comparison to India’s inciting more competition between the two nations and alienating India further into the Soviet sphere.

On July 5, 1977, the U.S. Ambassador’s predictions proved right and Pakistan’s then Chief of Army Staff General Zia-uh-Haq carried out Operation Fair Play, code name

⁷³ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977), Document 251. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d251>.

⁷⁴ Bernard Weinraub Special. “U.S. Withholds Sale of Jets to Pakistan.” *The New York Times*. June 3, 1977. <https://www.nytimes.com/1977/06/03/archives/us-withholds-sale-of-jets-to-pakistan-action-is-linked-to-india.html?searchResultPosition=7>.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

for the coup d'état that ousted Bhutto from power and brought down Bhutto's "glass house."⁷⁶ This essentially meant that the U.S. would now be dealing with a new interlocutor on the sensitive issue of Pakistan's nuclear program.

On July 10, 1977, a week into General Zia-uh-Haq's military coup against the democratically elected government of Bhutto, Ambassador Byroade met with General Zia-uh-Haq on the nuclear question. It was advised by the Ambassador to either delay or cancel the reprocessing plant agreement. General Zia's response to this was that he was running an "interim temporary government." Furthermore, he said that until the elections, which he promised would happen in October 1977 — he was unable to take any decisions on his predecessor's policies unilaterally. In retrospect, Zia telling the Ambassador no decision could be made until a government elected by the people was in place — was nothing more than a tactic to delay the nuclear subject by a few months because Zia knew too well that the United States would indeed not interject to democratic free public elections.

During this same meeting, the acting or de facto Minister of Foreign Affairs, Secretary General Agha Shahi made an intervention in which he reiterated in three points the Government of Pakistan's position on the subject of the reprocessing plant.

(a) Pakistan's professed intention to use the reprocessing only for peaceful energy purposes was assured by the safeguards agreed to and by Pakistan's inability to withstand

⁷⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977). Document 230. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d230>.

the external pressures and costs that would follow any diversion of plutonium for explosive purposes;

(b) the US position against Pakistan's reprocessing facility (especially the Symington Amendment) was fundamentally discriminatory, in that no penalties have been applied to reprocessing facilities in India, South Africa and Israel; and

(c) the US had failed to come to grips with the security requirements of countries like Pakistan which were faced with potential nuclear threats from hostile neighbors.⁷⁷

General Zia's regime seemed to be continuing the conversation on the nuclear reprocessing plant right where it was left off with Bhutto. Except now his primary excuse to delay the conversation further was that he was running a temporary government and that Pakistan's foreign policy concerns and relations with its allies remained the same as before. Zia knew that cancellation of this plant would result in a "PR Disaster" for him domestically.⁷⁸ Especially since his takeover of the government was being justified as a means to address the domestic political chaos Bhutto purportedly put the country into – which required a clean-up by the military. According to Zia, his aim was to simply stabilize Pakistan before the upcoming elections later in October 1977. The telegrams sent from the U.S. Embassy to Washington at the time revealed that the diplomats had no reason not to believe Zia's claims.⁷⁹

Since the Government of Pakistan was intransigent on both altering its agreement on the reprocessing plant with the Government of France and its stance regarding peaceful use of the nuclear technology— the United States then turned to covertly

⁷⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977), Document 256. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d256>.

⁷⁸ Editorial Note. FRUS. (1977-1980), Document 293. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d293>.

⁷⁹ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1977), Document 256. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d256>.

negotiate with the Government of France to either alter the reprocessing agreement or completely cancel it.

In this regard, in October of 1977 the French Foreign Minister De Guiringaud met with the U.S. Secretary of State in New York to discuss the Pakistani reprocessing plant deal. Foreign Minister De Guiringaud recalled his meeting with Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi earlier in September in which Shahi clearly stated that General Zia's government did not and would not want to amend the proposal made with France, with a caveat of peaceful intentions. Foreign Minister De Guiringaud expressed his concern because the amount of plutonium being used made it clear the verbal intention noted by the Pakistanis could not be for just economic purposes. Furthermore, De Guiringaud used the word "foolish" in describing the agreement signed between France and Pakistan – more importantly, perhaps in an attempt to display France's benevolent role in the agreement, the Foreign Minister noted that while the negotiations of a reprocessing plant with Pakistan were taking place, at that time there was no indication or concern of nuclear proliferation in the South Asian region.⁸⁰ To further affirm France's inclination to the United States concerns regarding the matter, he reassured the Secretary "that France would make no moves without getting in touch with the U.S. He strongly requested that this conversation be most closely held. The Secretary assured him that it would be."⁸¹ Both the United States and France did not want their own citizens, Pakistan or any other nation to know about their talks. The U.S. was concerned it would be spun out of context

⁸⁰ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France. FRUS. (1977), Document 266. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d266>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

that they were exerting pressure on France to end a bilateral deal with another nation. Likewise, France would not want its own citizens to come to a conclusion that it was succumbing to pressure by the United States. Similarly, for obvious diplomatic concerns, it was important to ensure Pakistan would not feel either of its allies covertly planned to sabotage a legal deal.

During the meeting, the French Foreign Minister also acknowledged and encouraged the U.S.'s hold over Pakistan in terms of influence and mentioned the U.S.' ongoing economic and military assistance programs in Pakistan. By doing so, the French insisted the U.S. was in a better position to convince Islamabad by exerting pressure by leveraging the assistance programs it provides Pakistan with.⁸²

Foreign Minister De Guiringaud also recalled his conversation with his counterpart in Iran, Foreign Minister Khalatbary who told him that Iran had concerns of the Soviet Union and India meddling in Pakistan to dismember it.⁸³ The Soviet concern here is key because at the time no one from the United States was concerned that the Soviets would in fact use Afghanistan to infiltrate into Pakistan dismembering it – even though the Soviets were at the time allied with India.

2.3 The Saur Revolution

Just six months after the meeting between the French Foreign Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State in New York when De Guiringaud mentioned Iran's concerns of

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

potential Soviet Union meddling in Pakistan -- in April of 1978 this potential Soviet threat became evident with the Saur Revolution (also called the April Revolution) from April 27-28, 1978 in Afghanistan.

The Soviet backed coup by the PDPA, should have changed the United States approach and foreign policy toward the region. Moreover, the United States should have drawn the concrete conclusion that Afghanistan was no longer acting as an insignificant periphery state. For Pakistan however, the threat was foreboding.

In the immediate context, for Pakistan, the approximately 1400 long mile border it shared with Afghanistan now had implications for the territorial integrity of Pakistan if not defended. Up until this event took place, Pakistan had been repeatedly telling the United States of its increasing fear of Soviet influence and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan vis-à-vis correspondence and engagements of the Pakistani political leaders with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.⁸⁴ Unlike for the United States, Afghanistan neighboring Pakistan had always been a major national security concern. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, Afghanistan was the only Member State at the United Nations which cast its vote against Pakistan's admission to the United Nations, due to its non-acceptance of the international border between the two countries, known as the Durand line. While the matter remained settled during the British time after its tacit acceptance by the Amir of Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman Khan, after the independence of

⁸⁴ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978). Document 276. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d276>.

Pakistan, Afghanistan reignited the issue. This for Pakistan had always remained a huge concern, now exacerbated by the Soviet intervention.

When the Saur Revolution took place, the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad was in direct contact with the Government of Pakistan. A day after the military coup in Afghanistan, on April 28, 1978 Ambassador Arthur Hummel communicated to Washington that while he was sharing crucial intelligence information linked to the events in Afghanistan, he was taking caution in oversharing the information. Especially because some of it was only based on speculations and assessments. The Ambassador did not want an overreaction on part of the Pakistanis, especially with information from the U.S. Embassy. Ambassador Hummel also drew on his knowledge of Pakistan's influence on its Afghanistan border with its Pashtun population across the Durand Line. Hummel explained he did not want to further instigate the situation by having the Government of Pakistan influence the Pakistani Pashtuns to help their fellow Pashtuns across the Durand line in guerrilla warfare against the PDPA.⁸⁵ This assessment of Ambassador Hummel on the Pakistani capability to influence and encourage the Pashtun tribes to defend their fellow tribesmen across the border against Soviet backed aggression was profound in foreshadowing or in itself a telling moment for the events which unfolded the following year with the invasion of the Soviet Union into Afghanistan and the resistance that would be used to fight against it. This piece of information from Ambassador Hummel was key to building the covert operation between the U.S. and Pakistan's intelligence agencies in

⁸⁵ Ibid.

driving out the Soviets. This covert alliance would soon come to be known as Operation Cyclone.⁸⁶

In the same telegram Ambassador Hummel also noted that the Pakistanis may heed advice or counselling from the Shah of Iran – if he agreed to intervene. Iran at the time was a key U.S. ally in the region and also a bordering neighbor of Pakistan so the Government of Pakistan would take the Shah's reaction into serious consideration before taking any steps which would affect the region's stability.

However, at the same time, General Zia the new dictator was too concerned about his domestic and international image as the leader of the nation to pay primary heed to any external concerns. For example, when the Shah of Iran requested the United States support for Iran and Pakistan, former Vice President Rockefeller underwent a trip to the region. He was in Pakistan from April 24-26 and Zia's primary concern was expressing his grievances with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Zia put blame on him for all of the problems Pakistan was facing at the time domestically. Furthermore, to gain further sympathy or backing of the U.S., he said he could present physical proof that last June Bhutto was going to work with the Soviet Union and that this was one of the motivations behind the coup d'état. However, on this note, Ambassador Hummel telegraphed back to

⁸⁶ Operation Cyclone: Before the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, in the summer of 1979 on July 3 President Carter signed a covert operation created by the CIA who would in cohort with the Pakistani intelligence agency, the ISI arm, aid and train the mujahideen, or better known at that time as the freedom fighters, the resistance to the Soviet backed government in Kabul. This operation was also funded by Saudi Arabia. The operation would go on for the following decade. The CIA and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided the ISI with the means to train, arm, the mujahideen to fight the Soviets; as well as provide materials of propaganda as well as medical supplies etc. to ensure successful Soviet exit from the region. See ref: The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978-1980. FRUS. Milestones 1977-1980. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/soviet-invasion-afghanistan>.

Washington saying, “As I told Rockefeller, we know Bhutto had received offers of Soviet cooperation directly from the Soviet Ambassador here in Islamabad, but we doubt (a) that Bhutto was seriously considering a Soviet option or (b) that this was proximate cause of Zia’s coup.”⁸⁷ Therefore, it cannot be a coincidence that this was the moment Zia decided to share with the delegation from the United States that the upcoming elections which were supposed to happen in October of last year were now going to further get pushed until April 1979.

In April 1979 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged. Zia knew that delaying democratic elections was not going to put him in a favorable position with the United States. His attempts to present Bhutto forward as the pro-Soviet culprit did not work either. Working with this military regime, was not getting Washington the results it got from previous Generals like Ayub Khan. It should be noted that military dictators also have an agenda of their own, that being to justify and legitimize their coups and their leadership. General Zia had perhaps been doing this.

On April 30, 1978, Radio Afghanistan made an announcement stating that Nur Mohammed Taraki, the leader of the pro-Soviet Communist People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan’s Khalq branch was officially named the President as well as the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.⁸⁸ After this progression in Afghanistan’s domestic political affairs, on May 1, 1978, Ambassador Hummel requested

⁸⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978). Document 277. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d277>.

⁸⁸ Editorial Note. FRUS. South Asia (1977-1980) Volume XIX, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d278>.

President Carter to send a letter to General Zia-uh-Haq to reassure Pakistan about the United States interest in the security and stability of Pakistan, the region it was in and the role Pakistan could play to help maintain that as they were concerned of the developments in Kabul. A pro-Soviet Afghanistan regime would cause major instability in Pakistan's Afghan bordering Pashtun area and the concerns over Soviet intentions to secure the warm port of the Indian Ocean was becoming more and more achievable. The Ambassador's assessment of the situation unfolding next door in Kabul connected shared or mutual United States and Pakistan's security concerns.⁸⁹ This convergence of (security) interests was the first step away from the divergence the relations had been going through amidst Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. However, policymakers failed to see the urgency and importance in this merging of interests at this juncture. This is also an example of the gap between policymakers in capitals and diplomats' experiences and assessment from on ground. In hindsight, Ambassador Byroade's initial assessment in 1977 of the developing situations and where they may lead, was on the mark. Ambassador Byroade's tenure came to an end in April of 1977, having served as the US Ambassador to Pakistan for almost four years. His successor, Ambassador Arthur Hummel started his ambassadorial in June 1977 and would remain until the end of the Carter administration. He too like his predecessor would come to play a pivotal role in the bilateral relations of both countries.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Arthur W. Hummel Jr. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_W._Hummel_Jr.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_W._Hummel_Jr.

The National Security Council Staff member Thomas Thornton was against the request and idea posed by Ambassador Hummel for a correspondence between the two heads of State. Thornton called it “vacuous” and instead recommended to the National Security Affairs Assistant to the President Zbigniew Brzezinski that Ambassador Hummel may deliver an oral message instead to Zia on behalf of President Carter – which was approved by Brzezinski.⁹¹ Thomas Thornton’s objection was taken into account and the decision by Washington was made, they did not send a physical letter and instead directed Ambassador Hummel “to inform General Zia the President has asked you to personally convey his interest in the possible implications of developments in Kabul and that he would welcome General Zia’s personal assessment.”⁹² By doing it this way – Washington did not want to give Islamabad false hope or raise any unrealistic expectations with respect to what kind of U.S. support they may get. If the Presidents had corresponded directly it would have indeed altered Pakistan’s expectations. Perhaps if there was no deadlock on the nuclear non-proliferation issue, Washington would have made a different decision at the time. Considering the concerns regarding the Pakistani—French agreement on the reprocessing plant and the U.S.’s policy and efforts to put a halt to nuclear proliferation – it was important to keep the U.S. concerns intact and invulnerable. At this point in time, the Saur Revolution and the Communist PDPA’s takeover of Kabul did not seem to alert authorities in Washington as much as perhaps it should have in hindsight.

⁹¹ Editorial Note. FRUS. South Asia (1977-1980) Volume XIX, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d278>.

⁹² Telegram 4351 from Islamabad, May 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780188–0740 <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm>.

Meanwhile, the Pakistanis had something else completely in mind, a step even further from a heads-of-state letter, a heads-of-state meeting because to them the gravitas of the development was evident. To Pakistan, the communist takeover in Kabul was viewed as ominous. They believed the PDPA ruling from Kabul had strategic global implications and, therefore, was not to be looked at as an ordinary change of government.

At the Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi's request, Ambassador Hummel informed the State Department that Shahi was urging a "face-to-face" meeting between President Carter and General Zia. Shahi said, "The historic events which have taken place in Afghanistan now make it 'imperative' for there to be renewed consideration of the possibility of a meeting between General Zia and President Carter."⁹³ As a member of the Central Treaty Organization, CENTO, an organization made to thwart off communist incursions and foster peace – Pakistan was looking toward the United States to fulfill its obligation under the military alliance. The organization was the predecessor to the Baghdad Pact, an agreement including the United States and Pakistan in 1959 which acquired the United States' commitment to "the preservation of the independence and integrity of Pakistan and to taking appropriate action, including the use of armed forces, as may be mutually agreed upon ... in order to assist the Government of Pakistan at its request."

Ambassador Hummel was the only person amongst concerned U.S. officials on this who seemed to agree with the urgency that the Pakistanis felt on the matter and

⁹³ Telegram 4351 from Islamabad, May 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780188-0740 <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm>.

therefore, voiced his concern that it was important for Washington to heed Islamabad's request with diligence. Furthermore, he reminded the State Department of a similar request made during a situation in 1965 when President Lyndon B. Johnson refused to meet for an urgent heads-of-state meeting request from the Pakistanis.⁹⁴ In fact, Ambassador Hummel also pointed out that at that time too, the leader of the State of Pakistan was also a military ruler. The correlation of which, from his point of view, may have been to draw from his understanding of military regimes' in Pakistan and their assessments of events, in particular, events with dire security consequences for the region. The United States had always valued and took into consideration the assessment of the Pakistani leadership in regards to events in the region, be they Afghanistan or even China. The consequences of refusing the meeting in 1965 was the subsequent deterioration of stability for the entire subcontinent of South Asia (in reference to the 1965 war).⁹⁵

In response to Ambassador Hummel's verbal communique from President Carter, General Zia drafted a letter dated May 9, 1978. He immediately started off by getting into his assessment of the situation unfolding in Afghanistan as the President had asked him. General Zia referred to the event as one of "historic proportions" with a "fundamental nature which will have profound impact on the balance of power" in the region.⁹⁶ In order

⁹⁴ In 1965 India and Pakistan went to war over the status of the disputed territory of Kashmir for the second time, the first was in 1947/48 and the third in 1999. The war ended with ceasefire formed by the United Nations in Resolution 211. See Ref: The India-Pakistan War of 1965. FRUS. Milestones: 1961-1968. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/india-pakistan-war>.

⁹⁵ Telegram 4351 from Islamabad, May 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780188-0740) <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d278>.

⁹⁶ Letter from Pakistani General Zia to President Carter. FRUS. 1978. Afghanistan File Volume, Document 16. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v12/d16>.

to understand his detailed letter in its simplest terms, Zia's point was that the crux of these events is that the Soviet Union was supporting the Communist government in power at the moment in Afghanistan from every aspect possible. An excerpt of his exact words on the situation may give a clearer understanding on the overall assessment of the Pakistanis.

We know that the Afghan barrier has been breached and our country lies directly in the path of the flood which rolled out of Czarist Russia in the last century and is now flowing in full force toward the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. It is the nature of the response to this situation which is the subject of controversy among our friends and allies. This is unfortunate because time is running out. Nothing will stop the Soviet Union from pursuing its expansionist policies if events encourage it to believe that smaller countries are expendable in the overall context of America's global strategy.⁹⁷

Zia closed his letter by once more requesting a "personal exchange of views" to elaborate the new developments in Kabul and its potential subsequent consequences.⁹⁸

In response to General Zia's letter, one month later on June 9, 1978, President Carter wrote back sharing his concerns about the new government in Afghanistan and agreeing that Soviet domination was a serious point of concern from the United States perspective for not only the region but the whole world. President Carter specifically noted his concern on their statements of the Durand line which for Pakistan had been a major concern since its independence in 1947 and on this, President Carter assured Zia that he too was taking similar steps in approaching the Afghan government

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

constructively.⁹⁹ As for Zia's request to meet in person, President Carter noted that for the time being they should wait for further developments in Afghanistan and continue contact via their Ambassadors and direct correspondence. He also asked Zia to continue to share his assessments on the occurring developments in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁰

After Zia's letter, bilateral talks were held between the Secretary of State with Foreign Minister Agha Shahi on May 25, 1978. They discussed the issues concerned with the developments in Kabul. Shahi spoke of a revival of the "Delhi-Moscow-Kabul" axis¹⁰¹, a nod to the political spectrum at which their interests intersected – leaving Pakistan's integrity and security vulnerable. Therefore, Shahi pressed for immediate support from its ally the United States. Moreover, the Foreign Minister also reminded that Pakistan was a member of CENTO and stated that if Pakistan does not get the required support, the Soviet Union will continue its expansionist efforts – leaving Pakistan to be forced to strategize some form of an appeasement policy – noting however, that Pakistan has not yet considered such an option but that it may have to be taken into account without U.S. support.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Letter from President Carter to Pakistani Chief Martial Law Administrator Zia. FRUS. (1978), Document 286. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d286>.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Bangladesh to the Department of State and the Embassy of Japan. FRUS. (1977), Document 28. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d28>.

¹⁰² Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan. FRUS. (1978), Document 281. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d281>.

2.4 Trilateral Diplomacy

After the aforementioned discussions concerning Pakistan's appeal to the United States regarding the Soviet-backed take over in Kabul, the United States' primary concern of nuclear non-proliferation still remained. The Carter administration's policy of non-proliferation remained the top policy because at this point the Soviets were not physically invading a country, region or the oil Gulf, so US interests were not in harm's way. At this point the Soviet backed government in Kabul was only an issue for the Pakistanis. The US strategy at this point was to address the Pakistanis' security concerns regarding the Soviet development by first and foremost halting Pakistan's nuclear program which otherwise would in the U.S. perspective only exacerbate security concerns in the region. Therefore, with the U.S.'s failed efforts to dissuade Pakistan, the only best way forward for the U.S. was to convince France to completely cancel its contractual agreement with Pakistan on the reprocessing plant. Diplomacy with France on the matter now seemed the only viable solution to the proliferation problem in Pakistan. On May 15, 1978 a telegram was cabled to both the U.S. Embassy in Tehran as well as the U.S. Embassy in France, the instructions given to both were to persuade their host countries on the U.S. solution of France canceling the Pakistani agreement. In this regard, the embassies in Tehran and France were given instructions in context of Pakistan and its reprocessing plant issue. Keeping in mind, this was becoming a bigger concern because of the recent developments in Kabul and therefore it was important the reprocessing issue be resolved in a timely manner before Soviet aggression were to progress in the subcontinent – as was being forewarned by the Pakistanis. The Embassy in Tehran was instructed to ask the Shah to get in talks with French President Giscard and convey his

concerns for regional instability if Pakistan procures the reprocessing plant in its entirety. Likewise, the Embassy in France was instructed to ensure to avoid the arising of any feelings that may portray the US as pressuring France by bringing Iran into the loop.¹⁰³

On May 26, 1978 President Carter and his French counterpart President Giscard held a bilateral meeting, a working dinner in fact at the White House on the issue of the Pakistan reprocessing plant. The French President confirmed that France would not contribute to nuclear proliferation in Pakistan and was willing to work with the United States to ensure that if and when the deal with Pakistan gets canceled, both countries should help Pakistan sustain order and “help save face”¹⁰⁴ by providing some kind of economic and military assistance program. On this note, President Carter said the United States’ help would be limited because of pressure in Congress, especially the Glenn Amendment.¹⁰⁵

Following this meeting, on May 29, 1978 U.S. officials were meeting with their appropriate French counterparts. It was decided that the Government of France had confirmed to the United States that French President Giscard would announce his decision within the week by June 6th or possibly June 15th on the contract with Pakistan regarding the reprocessing plant. It was noted from the U.S. delegation that the developments in Afghanistan in respect to the Communist takeover required a decision to

¹⁰³ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassies in Iran and France. FRUS. (1978), Document 280. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d280>.

¹⁰⁴ Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 282. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d282>.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

be made as soon as possible. Furthermore, Americans also noted that Iran was also going to play its role in working with Pakistan through diplomatic channels to dissuade Pakistan on its nuclear program and further persuade by offering to finance part of an assistance package for Pakistan as well. If the decision in France will be to cancel its deal with Pakistan then the Americans urged France to ensure that this was indeed a Government of France decision and by no means to be projected as a decision succumbed under any pressure from the United States.¹⁰⁶

In reference to Foreign Minister Agha Shahi's remarks on Pakistan's "threat" to create an appeasement policy for the Soviets if things keep escalating the way they have been in Afghanistan –the State Department, including Ambassador Hummel and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Harold H. Saunders in a memo dated June 1, 1978, debriefed that for the time being the United States should take the Soviet tilt as a bluff. Ambassador Hummel also made note of the cohesiveness of Pakistanis and that the Soviets would not be likely to "split" Pakistan, rather, they may be able to "woo" the Pakistanis breaking them away from their Chinese connection and instead revive the Soviet idea of an Asian collective Security Pact.¹⁰⁷

Just one week after this telegram, the "bluff" seemed otherwise. Ambassador Hummel cabled another assessment to the State Department on June 7, 1978. The telegram had three major concerns regarding the previous meeting of the Pakistani

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Memorandum for the Record. FRUS. (1978). Document 283.
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d283>.

Foreign Minister Agha Shahi with Secretary Vance and most importantly, bilateral meetings between Moscow and Islamabad for increased Pakistan – Soviet cooperation which may lead to more meetings in Moscow and Islamabad at the Foreign Minister level. Ambassador Hummel’s assessment was that Pakistan was taking these steps as a means of eliminating Afghan pressures the new Soviet backed government may put on Pakistan. He also suggested that Pakistan’s behavior toward the Soviets may be limited because of Pakistan’s allies, the Peoples Republic of China, Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [including the United States]. Therefore, his recommendation was that the U.S. offer Pakistan a new package with assurances which required the French to reach out to Pakistan as soon as possible regarding the termination of the reprocessing plant. Only then, could the U.S. move forward with a package that would stop any further Soviet – Pakistan relations from progressing.¹⁰⁸

Assistant Secretary Saunders and Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Yaqub Khan met in Washington on June 16, 1978 for bilateral talks. Ambassador Khan was of the view that the United States – Pakistan relations were at their lowest point. Secretary Saunders pointed out the reason behind this was the nuclear program and once that issue is resolved then their relationship too will get better. Ambassador Khan also mentioned there was bitterness in Islamabad over United States interference and campaigning for Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He reaffirmed that it was an internal matter in the hands of the judicial process. After Zia’s Operation Fair Play – the coup d’état in which he had ousted Bhutto’s government - Bhutto was put into jail on

¹⁰⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 285. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d285>.

allegations of murder charges of his political opponent. On this, despite the efforts of many world leaders urging Zia to show executive clemency to Bhutto – Zia always deferred it to his judicial branch's due process being the final verdict. Secretary Saunders responded to Ambassador Yaqub Khan's allegations on U.S. interference in Pakistan's domestic affairs by firstly pointing to the ongoing domestic violence in Pakistan - that this was not a jab at the official judicial process ongoing in Pakistan but rather just a caution of what executing Bhutto might mean to the world. Besides, the United States Government does not control its citizens freedoms of right to expression or the freedoms of the press and of its other branches of government who were all entitled to their own opinions.¹⁰⁹

2.5 U.S. Assistance Package for Pakistan

As for the question relating to what would be an appealing aid package the United States could offer to Pakistan, there was a plethora of deliberations. The concerned people in Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan sent cables back and forth based on their analyses. The United States was aware that the Government of Pakistan was under immense pressure to assure stability, security and maintain its sovereignty from any possible aggression. With two borders facing hostile neighbors, one of which had already successfully launched a nuclear test and had already gone to three wars with¹¹⁰ -- was of grave concern to Pakistan. Maintaining equilibrium in its defense structure was a priority for Pakistan since its creation. So, in order for them to end a reprocessing plant

¹⁰⁹ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan. FRUS. (1978), Document 287. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d287>.

¹¹⁰ Pakistan went to war with India in 1947-48 and 1965 over the disputed territory of Kashmir and again in 1971 over the creation of Bangladesh.

deal with France that would allow Pakistan to level their defensive capabilities with India -- the American package had to be very, very appealing. Be that as it may, the Pakistanis never admitted the reprocessing plant was to level the scale with India in a nuclear capacity – instead the Pakistanis made it a matter of national pride and ending the deal would enrage the public.

On the American front, proof of Washington's understanding of Pakistan's position and need for assistance can be found in a cable dated March 21, 1978 -- before the Saur Revolution even took place. Ambassador Hummel wrote to Washington with his concerns over Pakistan losing its aid package from the United States. He urged the State Department to communicate to Congress that Pakistan was not in violation of the Glenn Amendment and therefore the aid to Pakistan should continue.¹¹¹

In this regard, Pakistan had previously requested the United States for the issuance of the 110 A-7 military aircraft which could perhaps be a part of the package. On July 7, 1978 President Carter agreed to the recommendations made by Secretary of State Vance on offering the Pakistanis the sale of F-5E's instead of A-7's which the Pakistanis would have preferred for their superiority. The President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Brzezinski however said a specific number of aircrafts should not be mentioned as it may not appeal to the Pakistanis with their growing and very real concern of Afghanistan. The F-5E's, it was mentioned, would also not be of concern to India as it would only balance out Pakistan and India's military capabilities since at the

¹¹¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 273. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d273>.

time Pakistan in terms of military capability was inferior to India. This package would therefore be a justified sale and go with American policy in arms trade to South Asia too. As a result, America's Pakistan policy was being determined vis-à-vis India.¹¹²

Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Newsom visited Pakistan from July 15-16, 1978. During his meeting with Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sardar Shahnawaz at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad, the Foreign Secretary described Pakistan as "both threatened and friendless."¹¹³ The Foreign Secretary went on to warn Under-Secretary Newsom of the ongoing Soviet threat and their "Ancient Russian Dream" of expansionism toward a warm port – in reference to the Indian Ocean. Newsom on the other hand said not to look at the new Afghan government negatively until they prove otherwise. At the moment the Afghans had maintained a non-aligned position. The Under-Secretary's assessment came upon landing in Islamabad after visiting Kabul where he met with Afghan President Taraki and his Foreign Minister Amin who according to Newsom were still settling.

Afterward, Secretary Newsom met with Pakistani Minister of Finance, Planning and Coordination Ghulam Ishaq, who was also the "senior most" official in Zia's cabinet. They discussed the reprocessing plant issue and Newsom said the U.S. flexibility on the issue was "virtually non-existent." In response to this comment, Ishaq said that Pakistan

¹¹² Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter. FRUS. (1978), Document 292. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d292>.

¹¹³ Editorial Note. FRUS. (1977-1980), Document 293. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d293>.

had agreed to meet all international safeguard guarantees and monitoring to ensure the plant was only being used for peaceful means.

Furthermore, when the Secretary spoke to Foreign Minister Agha Shahi, whilst discussing the reprocessing plant, Shahi said the U.S. offer for assistance with a defense aid package was not adequate enough for Pakistan to build its defense in line with the present-day requirements of Pakistan given the developments in the region.

Finally, during the Under-Secretary's last meeting, he met with Zia for seventy-five minutes. They discussed the dip in U.S. – Pakistan relations due to the reprocessing plant. Zia also said Pakistan had no choice seemingly now but to withdraw from CENTO. Despite Newsom's warning that this move would indicate to the Soviets that the Pakistanis are looking away from the West, Zia said this must be done but reassured Newsom that it would not harm the United States' position on the Soviet Union. General Zia went on to tell Newsom that thanks to Bhutto the cancelation of the reprocessing plant was basically impossible because public opinion was so strong on going through with it. If Pakistan ever even agreed to the cancellation of it, the Pakistani people would not be able to come to terms with why an electricity generating plant which was so crucial in developing Pakistan was traded off for some defense equipment. Any other explanation or attempts to get power generation plants as the Shah of Iran was going to do, would not solve the reaction of the Pakistani people.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

The Pakistanis looked at the U.S.'s handling of the reprocessing plant issue as one that is discriminatory and the pressure it was exerting to cancel it as a U.S. ultimatum for support in a situation that for the Pakistanis was progressing next door. In a time when Pakistan was facing challenges in the region, instead of having the full weight and support of the United States Government -- as they had been pleading for -- to help protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty from any possible Soviet - Afghan incursion – the Pakistanis may have felt they were being cornered to choose between long-term economic development and immediate security concerns.

On July 26, 1978 Under-Secretary Newsom and Ambassador Yaqub Khan held a bilateral lunch, the subject of which was the reprocessing plant. By now the Pakistanis were fully aware that France was about to terminate the reprocessing agreement. However, the Government of Pakistan was unsure what its reactions would be thereafter, apart from a written communique to President Giscard. Moreover, Ambassador Khan said that the US suggestion of Pakistan signing an official communique or having a public announcement stating that it would never engage or conduct any activities toward nuclear reprocessing was “rubbing Pakistan’s nose in the dirt.” Moreover, Khan also expressed that the Government of Pakistan was under the impression that the French were canceling the deal due to U.S. pressure. On both points, the Under-Secretary assured Khan that the U.S. did not envisage any such formal communication from Pakistan. On the latter point, he said that the cancellation was solely a French decision

and the only point the U.S. had communicated to France was its “concern over the reprocessing plant.”¹¹⁵

On the contrary, the cables have confirmed the U.S. had strategized bilaterally with France, as well as through some trilateralism with Iran to urge all parties on the cancellation of the reprocessing plant. It was indeed in the best interest of all concerned nations to refrain from revealing all of the facts – as is the case in diplomacy. On the other hand, the Pakistanis also knew that they would be given support by means of some assistance package that would fulfill their concerning needs of economic (and more importantly for them defense) development in lieu of the reprocessing plant.

Once the cancellation was formal the State Department agreed to consult with Congress to renew and continue sending Pakistan their economic and military assistance. However, when the Under-Secretary updated Chairman of the House International Relations Committee Representative Clement J. Zablocki and Senator John Glenn that the reprocessing plant agreement was going to be terminated so perhaps aid could be resumed – both responded that Congress would still be wary of “Pakistan’s nuclear intentions.”¹¹⁶ Congress furthermore stated that perhaps a formal public safeguards from the Pakistanis would work in order to have the full support of Congress for the resumption of aid to the country. Ambassador Yaqub Khan had already clearly stated how the Pakistanis would feel if they had to formally publicly announce any such

¹¹⁵ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan. FRUS. (1978), Document 295. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d295>.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum from the Acting Secretary of State Christopher to President Carter. FRUS (1978), Document 296. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d296>.

intentions. From the beginning in fact their stance on not cancelling the agreement with France was partially based on how the public in Pakistan would react. In fact, on this note, Foreign Minister Agha Shahi,

stated flatly and repeatedly that no Government of Pakistan could give even a private assurance not to engage in reprocessing and still survive in face of public opinion. He characterized the United States Government's request for private assurance as impinging on sovereignty of Pakistan.¹¹⁷

The U.S. Embassy had fully grasped the point made by Foreign Minister Shahi. In fact, they reported back to Washington that no one in politics or the government in Pakistan would jeopardize themselves by offering any assurances, public or private. Furthermore, the Embassy noted Representative Zablocki and Senator Glenn's concerns requiring assurance for the resumption of aid – however, Ambassador Hummel reiterated that resumption of aid would be better for the United States' objectives. The renewal of an expanded economic and military assistance program may persuade the Government of Pakistan that this approach would be their best option in lieu of a non-nuclear future. He made it clear that if Congress continued to halt assistance programs to Pakistan, then they may return on the path to nuclear proliferation.¹¹⁸

In late August of 1978 the reprocessing plant agreement was finally officially canceled by means of a letter from President Giscard to General Zia. The French Ambassador to Pakistan commented on the letter as, “the most extraordinarily obscure diplomatic communications he has ever encountered.” However, despite their initial

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 297. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d297>.

objections, General Zia decided to hold a press conference to inform the nation of Pakistan on the cancellation of the reprocessing plant agreement with France and according to Ambassador Hummel's reporting, he executed his speech in a way that ensured the continuance of friendly diplomatic relations with not only France but the United States as well. Immediately thereafter, Under-Secretary Newsom informed Chairman Zablocki and got his approval on taking to Congress the consideration of resumption of aid.¹¹⁹ In October of 1978 the United States resumed assistance to Pakistan.

After almost two years, the United States Government accomplished its objective of halting nuclear proliferation in Pakistan vis-à-vis their reprocessing plant agreement with France. President Carter delivered what he ran his Presidential campaign on by having his administration successfully cancel the reprocessing agreement between France and Pakistan after strenuous, long lasting diplomatic negotiations and efforts. While Pakistan remained a U.S. ally from the onset in the 1950's at the start of the Cold War, at this time in point the reprocessing plant had been the main factor behind the dwindling of the bilateral ties. For Pakistan too, the alliance with the U.S. was of vital importance, especially since its assistance programs were crucial to the country's development, both in terms of economic and military assistance. If Pakistan's true intentions for a nuclear program were not for nuclear weapons but rather nuclear energy for economic prosperity etc. as they claimed, then the reprocessing plant agreement with France would allow the developing nation to receive the energy and economic prosperity it so desperately required. This point was considered with much consideration by the United States and is

¹¹⁹ Memorandum of Conversation. FRUS. (1978), Document 299.
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d299>.

reflected in its deliberations within circles of U.S. officials themselves. The White House, State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad worked to consider a package for Pakistan which would ensure its military and economic needs were met.¹²⁰

The Pakistanis on their end knew that with the termination of the reprocessing deal, it was important to keep their alliance with both the United States and France on good terms. This was echoed in Zia's press conference and duly noted and appreciated by the U.S. Embassy's cable back to Washington. With an end to U.S. concerns regarding the reprocessing plant agreement between Pakistan and France, the United States and Pakistan alliance could have at this point in time taken forward steps to strengthen its alliance. However, the United States was still weary of Pakistan's cessation of acquiring nuclear reprocessing by other means. In October, Acting Secretary of State Christopher in a memo to President Carter wrote the U.S. would continue monitoring Pakistan in this regard. Moreover, the consultations with Congress to resume economic and military assistance to Pakistan had finally been completed as well and Congress was convinced in light of the United States' national security interests, assistance be resumed to Pakistan in order to hinder Pakistan from future (perhaps discreet) attempts toward acquiring any (nuclear) technology or for assistance it required against any further aggression from the Soviet backed government in Afghanistan.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1979), Document 325. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d325>.

¹²¹ Memorandum from Acting Secretary of State Christopher to President Carter. FRUS. (1979), Document 305. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d305>.

Finally, the over two year-long quagmire of the reprocessing plant vis-à-vis France came to an end and assistance to Pakistan commenced.

CHAPTER III

THE DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS

3.1 Invoking the Symington Amendment

Despite all these efforts the United States went through to end the French deal with Pakistan, just four months after, the U.S. received intelligence that Pakistan would have nuclear capability anyway within the next five years and that leading up to this, at some point, the U.S. would have to cut off assistance.¹²²

In March of 1979 new intelligence further confirmed that Pakistan was in clear violation now of the Symington Amendment – “which prohibits delivering or receiving economic assistance and military aid unless the President certifies that Pakistan has not obtained any nuclear-enriched material.”¹²³ The Symington Amendment did go into effect in April 1979 until the United States Congress would waive it officially in 1981 on the basis of national security concerns. At the time of invocation, the United States put forth its best efforts to ensure minimum publicity on the matter in order to preserve the bilateral relations and stop them from souring because the last thing Pakistan would want was further publicity of deteriorating relations with the U.S.

¹²² Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee. FRUS. (1978), Document 315 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d315>.

¹²³ Pakistan’s Sanction Waivers: A Summary. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. October 29, 2001. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2001/10/29/pakistan-s-sanction-waivers-summary-pub-10778>.

Furthermore, the United States was also cognizant that its two policy concerns regarding Pakistan on nuclear non-proliferation and the overall security in the Southwest Asia region could not be upheld simultaneously. And so, the policy objective of nuclear non-proliferation was completely shelved by the time of the Soviet invasion. Regional stability was of far greater concern and consequence.

This study assesses that due to the Iranian revolution and the siege of Mecca and the new orthodox religious ideologies which were disseminating in the region during 1979 prior to the Soviet invasion factored into the US shelving the policy on nuclear non-proliferation for Pakistan as its “geostrategic value” increased.¹²⁴ This was the best way forward because the United States would need to ally with Pakistan as the Soviets invaded Afghanistan soon thereafter. This was also a strong belief of President Carter’s National Security Advisor Brzezinski who advised him that arming the mujahideen fighters was the best way to drive out the Soviets and in order to do this, “we must both reassure Pakistan and encourage it to help the rebels. This will require a review of our policy on Pakistan, more guarantees to it, more arms aid, and alas, a decision that our security policy toward Pakistan cannot be dictated by our non-proliferation policy.”¹²⁵

Before delving into those events, it is important to get a quick understanding of the lengthy debate amongst policy-makers in Washington which gives insight to how

¹²⁴ Walton L. Brown. “Presidential Leadership and U.S. Non-proliferation Policy,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. (Summer, 1994) Vol. 24, No 3, 566 of 563-575. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27551284.pdf>.

¹²⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, “Memorandum for the President, Reflections on Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan,” (Washington DC: Cold War International History Project) Released by Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson Center.

such a process unfolded before any final decision was made. Today officials in Pakistan still hold the Symington Amendment of 1979 against the United States as a wedge in the bilateral relations and it is important to note it was not a decision that came easily and on the contrary some in Washington worked hard to try to work around it. During a Policy Review Committee meeting on Pakistan, the meeting's discussion minutes reveal that the policy-makers tried their best to "stretch" matters on the technicalities legally. The Executive office of the President of the United States was required to inform Congress of Pakistan's activities on nuclear proliferation. The policy-makers discussed if the Symington Amendment's language could be amended further or if Congress could hold off with a moratorium on the implementation of the Symington Amendment. All efforts and avenues were discussed and eventually they decided that they would "simply brief on the facts, not on any finding. Similar to the verification issue where the CIA briefs on the facts, but leaves determinations to others." The policy-makers also questioned the importance of the U.S. upholding the nuclear non-proliferation objective in Pakistan if other allies were not as "committed" to it as well because this would only result in further "alienating" Pakistan from the United States.

Moreover, it should be noted that the entire subject was also discussed through the lens of India and how the Indian government would or would not react if the U.S. did or did not put the Symington Amendment into effect. During the policy-makers meeting when the Under-Secretary for Political Affairs, David Newsom posed the question of Pakistan's importance to the US, Lucy Benson the Under-Secretary for Security Assistance, Science & Technology said she agreed "that Pakistan is important."

However, Spurgeon M. Keeny Jr. the Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in turn posed the question, “Do we also not think that our non-proliferation objectives, and our relations with India are important? These should also affect our judgements.”¹²⁶ It should be noted that all three of the aforementioned participants in the Policy Review Committee on Pakistan were officials from the State side of the Committee and therefore this leads to the conclusion that a difference in opinion was within State itself and was not coming from Intelligence or another area who might have different perspectives from their own expertise. Factoring India’s importance vis-à-vis Pakistan was evident. Be that it may, this unveils a clear tilt of the United States toward India at this juncture in the Carter administration, clear corroboration to Pakistan’s objections to U.S. discrimination and preference of India despite the prevalent U.S. – Pakistan relations.¹²⁷ It should also be noted that in 1971 during the Indo-Pak war and again in 1974 when India detonated its first nuclear test, Pakistan proposed the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in South Asia known as the NWFZ.¹²⁸

A NWFZ may be defined as an area where the manufacture or acquisition of direct or indirect control over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and of warheads or mines based on nuclear fission or fusion is prohibited. So is the storing of such weapons and the establishment of installations for storage purposes. This means that countries participating in such a zone must not only pledge not to acquire or manufacture nuclear weapons, but also forbid stationing of other countries’ nuclear weapons in the denuclearized zone. Thus, the NWFZ would restrict nuclear weapons territorially and

¹²⁶ Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting, FRUS. (1979), Document 327.
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d327>

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Samina Ahmed. "Pakistan’s Proposal for a Nuclear Weapon-Free-Zone in South Asia," *Pakistan Horizon*. Vol. 32. No. 4. (1979) 92-30.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/41393611?seq=5#metadata_info_tab_contents

prevent the danger of nuclear proliferation and lend a sense of security to the participating countries.¹²⁹

Thus, it must duly be noted that the Government of Pakistan did make efforts in the South Asian region to advocate for nuclear non-proliferation. However, it was not a strong policy objective of the United States during President Nixon's administration or President Ford's at the time.¹³⁰ In contrast to the Carter administration, the Nixon/Ford administrations tried an approach in which the U.S. would dominate the nuclear market, it was believed that by doing so, the U.S. could be the unilateral controller of nuclear technology sales in the market and thus ensuring the control of where such technology went. However, in 1974 when India conducted its nuclear test and the findings traced a Canadian reactor from which the plutonium had come from, their approach to control nuclear proliferation had failed.¹³¹ Moreover, honoring this policy during the previous administrations would also mean that no nuclear weapons power nation could station its weapons in the denuclearized zone – this was disadvantageous to the United States who at the time was concerned with the Soviet Union's (just miles north of the concerned region) capability to detonate weapons of mass destruction. In addition, India had no inclination of signing the NWFZ for stability in its own region either, thus having its own nuclear proliferation program, clear evidence for its ambitions to be a dominating state in the region.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 92.

¹³⁰ Walton L. Brown. "Presidential Leadership and U.S. Non-proliferation Policy," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, (Summer 1994), Vol. 24, No. 3, 564 of 563-575. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27551284.pdf>.

¹³¹ Ibid., 565.

Had the United States backed the NWFZ and instead focused on pressuring India to stop its efforts of nuclear proliferation, the subsequent efforts of Pakistan may not have occurred. However, when Pakistan took the proposal of the NWFZ to the 29th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1974. Despite the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim accepting to table the proposal as an agenda item for the UNGA, with support from the People's Republic of China, several African countries and Latin American countries, India's objection was that the proposal was made without prior consent from regional countries and that the Indian nuclear program was for peaceful purposes e.g. energy. Furthermore, the Permanent Representative of India to the UN also stated India would not agree to international inspection or any other constraints.¹³² The Representative from the United States, Senator Stuart Symington "welcomed" the Pakistani proposal but said, "The initiative should be taken by the states in the region concerned and the creation of the zone should not disturb nuclear security arrangements."¹³³ The U.S. stance was clearly aligned with India's. This entire epoch highlights the background to Pakistan's claims of discrimination in 1979 toward the Carter administration.

At another Policy Review Committee meeting later that month it was also suggested to approach the Soviet Union on Pakistan's activities but Ambassador Hummel immediately drew objection to this suggestion warning that the Soviets would tell the Pakistanis that the U.S. approached them. This is both telling and revealing that some

¹³² Samina Ahmed. "Pakistan's Proposal for a Nuclear Weapon-Free-Zone in South Asia," *Pakistan Horizon*. Vol. 32. No. 4. (1979) 99 of 92-30.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/41393611?seq=5#metadata_info_tab_contents.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 99-100.

members of policymakers did not leave any option unexplored – including its own archnemesis the Soviet Union - when trying to find pressure points to cease Pakistan's nuclear proliferation efforts.

This adds to the indication of how some, not all, but some policymakers in Washington viewed Pakistan's value as an unequal nation, or one that is not worth the trouble of political correctness or courtesy as perhaps the US would expect for itself. Giving further evidence to the feeling of being treated unfairly. The Pakistani feeling of being treated unfairly stems from its insecurity to its much larger neighbor India. The Pakistanis had time and again since the start of the Carter administration, expressed their sentiments in regards to the way they are perceived in comparison to India. For example, when President Carter made a visit to India and not Pakistan, the first of its kind trip where one nation would be visited and the other not, the Pakistanis were concerned whether this would give India an indication of weakened US – Pakistan relations and a shift in US Foreign Policy on South Asia.¹³⁴ Perhaps also lead India to believe itself as the preferred nation of the subcontinent for the US despite India's inclination toward the Soviet Union. If after all this, had the US implemented the consideration to use the Soviet Union to pressurize Pakistan in any way what so ever would leave the Pakistanis feeling more isolated from the US. Nonetheless, this suggestion despite knowledge of the consequences and or complexity it would raise in bilateral relations with Pakistan, also highlights how important non-proliferation objectives were to some of the policymakers in Washington during the Carter administration.

¹³⁴ Telegram from Secretary of State Vance to the Embassy in Pakistan. FRUS. (1977), Document 265. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d265>.

On the notion of turning to the Soviets to pressure Pakistan, Ambassador Hummel was wise to remind that any approach to the Soviets would be foolish. A conclusion therefore can be drawn that policymakers in Washington need the advice and guidance of diplomats dealing with the relations first hand, policy cannot be carried out without the art of diplomacy.

Another supporting example is of another event that transpired on the same day. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad received information regarding a Soviet demarche for the Pakistani President which came in light of allegations of Pakistanis supporting or “connivance” for the Afghan “dissidents.” Zia rejected the allegations and put blame on the millions of refugees which were pouring over the borders. The Pakistani air space was also violated by an Afghan plane to which Zia said “it would be shot down” if it were to happen again.

In this regard, the Pakistani Foreign Minister wanted the U.S. to reaffirm its 1959 bilateral agreement to Pakistan which Ambassador Hummel agreed and recommended the U.S. acknowledge this since by definition the recent aggression by the Communist DRA meant the U.S. must provide Pakistan with security.¹³⁵ Soviet backed Afghan aggression in Pakistan brought Pakistan back to the United States. Therefore, it would have been extremely imprudent for the U.S. to rely on the U.S.S.R. to pressure Pakistan.

¹³⁵ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1979), Document 332. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d332>.

The U.S.S.R. could have tactfully used this U.S. attempt to change Pakistan's relations with the United States altogether and bring Islamabad closer to Moscow.

3.2 The Non-Aligned Movement

In August 1978 the new communist PDPA government in Kabul made a statement on "Pashtunistan Day" which was "aggressive" and "ominous." In the statement the Durand Line border separating Pakistan and Afghanistan was refuted and claimed for Afghanistan the territory within Pakistan's North Western Frontier Province. Thereafter General Zia expressed the gravity of the threat this statement out of Afghanistan posed on the security of Pakistan and called for better relations with the U.S., especially publicly.¹³⁶ Given at that time too the U.S. was still concerned with Pakistan's nuclear proliferation ambitions and therefore was still holding back from providing it with assistance. Later in October 1978, Pakistan's Ambassador in France took a strong position on Pakistan's nuclear ambitions stating that given the situation in Afghanistan and the instability unfolding in Iran, Pakistan should be allowed to have the capability to defend itself given the threats posed all around it.¹³⁷ After this statement Washington expressed its concern over the events unfolding in the region of Pakistan and was of the view that U.S. non-proliferation objectives in the context of these events would propel Pakistani efforts for nuclear capability.¹³⁸ Pakistan's nuclear program continued to be at the forefront as the ebb in the relations with the United States. In a

¹³⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 303. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d303>.

¹³⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 308. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d308>.

¹³⁸ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassies in France and the United Kingdom. FRUS. (1978), Document 310. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d310>.

letter to now President Zia (Zia appointed himself as President in September 1978), “President Carter said he understood Pakistan’s concerns regarding Afghanistan and the Soviet Union and assured the U.S. would safeguard the integrity and independence, free from domination by any outsider power.”¹³⁹

In November 1978 during a meeting between General Zia and Under-Secretary of State Newsom, Pakistan expressed their concerns for regional instability and predicted it would come from Afghanistan. After the communist government takeover in Kabul, General Zia had told the United States that if Pakistan did not receive adequate assistance from the Soviet threat then they may have to quit CENTO which had been the legal reason Pakistan had been excluded from Non-Aligned Movement, NAM. During that same meeting between General Zia and Under-Secretary Newsom, Foreign Minister Agha Shahi had plainly stated that joining NAM may provide the political support needed against the Soviet threat in comparison to CENTO. He also stated that “security is our touchstone” when evaluating relations. The Pakistani delegation also expressed its concerns of the U.S. policy’s reliance on Iran and predicted that as the revolution in Iran continued it would be unwise for the U.S. to rely on it for regional stability. Furthermore, they were of the view that the U.S. should immediately provide Pakistan with the military assistance it needed due to the threat of the communist government in Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister Agha Shahi also said it was Pakistan’s “rightful

¹³⁹Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan. FRUS. (1978), Document 311. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d311>.

expectation of free” military assistance under the guidelines of the 1959 bilateral agreement. The validity of which was reaffirmed by the United States.¹⁴⁰

There was a difference of perspective in policy in Pakistan and the United States and it all came down to one boiling matter – nuclear proliferation. The United States was staunch thus far in the Carter presidency on its nuclear non-proliferation objectives and even toward the end of 1978 into early 1979 was over and again relaying to Pakistan that unless it stops its nuclear program efforts, the U.S. could not come to its assistance as they required – even though the U.S. wanted to protect the sovereignty of its ally and address its security concerns. On the other hand, in Pakistan their stance on nuclear capability was the same from the start of these deliberations in 1977 – and given the context of the new regional instability with communists now next door in Afghanistan and the volatility unfolding in Iran were now more reasons to justify the Pakistani nuclear program, especially given that the U.S. was not fulfilling its obligations under the 1959 bilateral agreement to provide security assistance to its ally in time of security threat, that too from communists. Therefore, Pakistan argued that it was obliged to develop its own nuclear program to project its strength vis-à-vis India, rather than with any intention of ever using such weapons.

In March 1979 when the Shah of Iran’s monarchy was toppled Iran announced its withdrawal from the Central Treaty Organization, CENTO. The very next day on March 12th Pakistan also announced its withdrawal from the organization since it was now futile

¹⁴⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department State. FRUS. (1978), Document 312. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d312>.

without Iran and Turkey. Turkey now a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO was already part of the larger Western alliance and therefore it did not require any protection from CENTO. Pakistan therefore did not want to associate any longer with an organization which from their point of view did not benefit them and instead was isolating them from their neighbors in the region and the Muslim world.

Moreover, with the Soviet backed communist government's presence, the threat they posed daily was become stronger for Pakistan and the U.S.'s refusal to provide adequate security assistance on that front was a show of the lack of interest in its relations with Pakistan. Pakistan's expectations of U.S. support from SEATO and CENTO were never met to their full extent e.g. its wars with India in 1965 and 1971. Therefore, the following year when announcing Pakistan's withdrawal from SEATO, Foreign Minister Agha Shahi said, "the Iranian revolution had changed the political climate in the region" and "besides, U.S. policy was such that preference was given to the non-aligned nations over the allies."¹⁴¹ The United States was also not surprised on Pakistan's withdrawal from CENTO. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad cabled to the U.S. a summary of Pakistan's decision to leave CENTO and also referred to the pact as "virtually useless in Pakistan's confrontations with India" and as an "obstacle for Pakistan's affiliation with the Non-Aligned Movement." However, also stating that for the United States this should be perceived as a clean slate with Pakistan and an "opportunity for evolving a new approach to the region."¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Morning News, Karachi, March 13, 1979.

¹⁴² Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1979), Document 330. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d330>.

After officially withdrawing from SEATO and now CENTO Pakistan was now eligible for membership in the Non-Aligned Movement, NAM and so at the Havana Summit chaired by Fidel Castro in September 1979 -- Pakistan officially became a NAM member.

CHAPTER IV

1979: YEAR OF EVENTS

4.1 Events in Islamic World

1979 was an eventful year in terms of international developments. Well before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan there were major ideological shifts that were politically polarizing in other countries in the region which had implications correlating with the United States' bilateral relation with Pakistan. These events concerned American national security interests and had direct consequences on American lives abroad. Moreover, these events called for a change in the American strategic and overall policy outlook - namely, the Iranian Revolution and the Siege of Mecca, the latter not spoken of often enough in context of the surge it sent into U.S. – Pakistan relations. The events in Mecca directly resulted in what unfolded in Pakistan against the American embassy, instigated by rumors from Iran. Both of these regional events in the Muslim world changed public opinion and grew anti-American sentiments.

1979 was also the year Pakistan officially joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at the Havana Summit. Although this did not hinder the U.S. – Pakistan relations in the long term, there were considerations regarding this development at that time.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Ahmad, Naveed. "The Non-Aligned Movement," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Fourth Quarter, 1979), 79-91. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41393610>.

The media played an important role in highlighting all of these events, in particular it provided a lens into the shifting of public opinion in both nations.¹⁴⁴ In Pakistan, as anti-American sentiments grew, in the United States too skepticism regarding the Pakistani government increased.¹⁴⁵ Public opinion is a vital component and cornerstone of ensuring successful U.S. policies. Throughout the U.S. – Pakistan bilateral relationship, public opinion has been a significant factor. This is true in the context of the days before, leading up to, and during the alliance which was built between the United States and Pakistan during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, especially given the backdrop of these aforementioned events.

Therefore, it is important to note the events which popularized anti-American sentiments not just in Pakistan but throughout the region. These sentiments would go on to reside in some pockets of the public of both the United States and Pakistan, entrenching mutual distrust and suspicions, not only within communities but also in the circles of policymakers, diplomats and officials in both nations.¹⁴⁶ This latent skepticism of one another, which led to the continued questioning of the other's underlying intentions, would become embedded in both Islamabad and Washington D.C. for years to come.

¹⁴⁴ Kaufman T., Michael. "Pakistani Relations with U.S. Declining; Anti-American Sentiment Prevails – Gesture from Washington is Said to be Necessary," *The New York Times*. December 2, 1979. <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/12/02/archives/pakistani-relations-with-us-declining-antiamerican-sentiment.html>.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

4.2 The Iranian Revolution

The change brought upon by the Iranian Revolution concerned neighboring Afghanistan, Pakistan, the U.S.S.R. and the United States of America. The Iranian Revolution is a prime example of regional conflicts setting the stage for alteration of bilateral relations. In this case when the United States lost Iran as its stable ally in the region, it had to pivot onto its neighboring ally, Pakistan, indubitably with help and partnership of Saudi Arabia.

The Iranian Revolution led to the fall of the pro U.S. Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. In January of 1979 the Shah and his family fled to the United States the new Islamic regime of the Ayatollah and his followers took an offense to the U.S. permitting the Shah who they viewed as a culprit, sanctuary. These sentiments are what led to the famous hostage crisis of the American Embassy in Iran in November 1979, which also resulted in the world's second oil crisis of that time.¹⁴⁷ The Iran which was once described by President Carter as “an island of stability in one of the most troubled areas of the world” was now destabilized.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, it can perhaps be concluded that the pre revolution Iran was partially part of what made Pakistan a lesser significant ally in the region during the mid 1970's, given its troubles with nuclear proliferation. Losing Iran as a stable ally the United States had to pivot back toward its neighbor Pakistan. The following excerpt from Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark's book “Deception:

¹⁴⁷Samantha Gross. “What Iran's 1979 Revolution meant for US and Global Oil Markets,” *Brookings*, March 5, 2019. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/03/05/what-irans-1979-revolution-meant-for-us-and-global-oil-markets/>.

¹⁴⁸Suzanne Maloney and Keian Razipour. “The Iranian Revolution – A Timeline of Events,” *Brookings*, January 24, 2019. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/01/24/the-iranian-revolution-a-timeline-of-events/>.

Pakistan, the United States and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons” write on the development:

Pakistan and the US found common cause when, as one of his first acts, Khomeini closed down two US listening stations in northern Iran, knocking out Washington’s most important intelligence collection points for the entire region. Blind and threatened, the US began discussing with Pakistan it taking a more active role in Afghanistan, and Pakistan agreed to become America’s new eyes and ears in the region.¹⁴⁹

As for the U.S.S.R., its’ invasion into Afghanistan weeks after was timely and strategic.

4.3 The Siege of Mecca

Meanwhile, on November 20, 1979 in Mecca, Saudi Arabia the Kaaba in the Grand Mosque was taken hostage by an organization called al-Jamaa al-Salafiya al-Muhtasiba (JSM) which erupted in violence and bloodshed until the siege finally ended two weeks later.¹⁵⁰ While the siege ended, the ideology that it manifested did not. In fact, as Iran had turned into a hardline Islamic State, Saudi Arabia backtracked into one as well. The repercussion fell on American Foreign Policy to reanalyze itself in the new approach to the Muslim world which was gaining anti-American sentiments.

The biggest example of this unfolded in Pakistan as rumors from Iran suggested the Kaaba was under attack by the United States. In reaction, Pakistani university students rallied in front of the American embassy in Islamabad in protest on the alleged

¹⁴⁹ Adrian Levy & Catherine Scott-Clark, *Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Walker & Company, 2007).

¹⁵⁰ “Mecca 1979: The Mosque Siege that Changed the Course of Saudi History,” BBC News. December 27, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-50852379>.

American attack on the holiest site of Islam. The picture of this quite similar to the one that unfolded in front of the American embassy just days before in Iran.

The protest against the U.S. Embassy spun out of control and resulted in the burning of the entire compound, leaving the American embassy officials to bunker in safety inside the vault with low oxygen levels as the Embassy around them went up in flames.¹⁵¹ As the situation escalated in Islamabad, the Department of State issued a telegram to the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting to immediately cease issuing false broadcasts blaming the United States for events in Mecca.

United States officials were fully aware that the situation inflaming in Pakistan was being triggered by the perilous remarks of the Ayatollah.¹⁵² The response of the martial law regime of Pakistan at the time was slow to say the least. It is the duty of the host country to protect the diplomats in their country. Despite attempts by Ambassador Hummel who also sought help of the British Ambassador to contact President Zia, the Pakistani martial law administrator was busy at a rally at Rawalpindi. The attack on the U.S. Embassy resulted in the death of one U.S. marine and two Pakistani staff members. The British Embassy telegraphed Washington an update hours later when the British Ambassador finally got hold of President Zia who “was full of apologies and assurances” and who blamed the attacks on a “tendentious report about troubles in Mecca,” agreeing

¹⁵¹Telegram from the Consulate in Karachi to the Department of State. FRUS. (1979), Document 380. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d380>.

¹⁵² Editorial Note. FRUS. (1977-1980), Document 375. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d375>.

that what was happening in Islamabad was “disgraceful.”¹⁵³ Later in his call with President Carter, Zia assured that he would address his nation and clearly explain what actually unfolded in Mecca. He also put blame on the BBC and Indian Radio for broadcasting “malicious reporting” propagating the protest. Zia also said that “Pakistanis are not fanatics despite their closeness to Islam.” Zia also took responsibility of the failure of the Government of Pakistan to respond timely. Their response time was four hours after the initial attack.¹⁵⁴

Contrary to what journalist Yaroslav Trofimov wrote in his non-fiction *The Siege of Mecca*, Ambassador Hummel in an interview years later in 1989 said the siege of Mecca did directly impact the Embassy in Pakistan at which he was the Head of Mission at the time. Moreover, he said once the truth was uncovered that Mecca was not attacked by the United States or Israel, rather by radicals within Saudi Arabia itself, the Pakistanis were “terribly ashamed of themselves” and soon afterward gave the US Embassy a check of \$24 million USD, the entire cost of rebuilding the American embassy.¹⁵⁵

It is important to note that all three events - the Iranian Revolution, the siege in Mecca and the reaction that erupted on the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad - were all driven by one factor – *faith*. The region’s faith in Islam was being utilized as a tool to bring

¹⁵³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to the Department of State. FRUS (1979), Document 283. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d383>.

¹⁵⁴ Memorandum of Conversation. FRUS. (1979), Document 384. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d384>.

¹⁵⁵ Library of Congress. Interview with Arthur W. Hummel Jr., The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral history Project Information Series. Interviewed by: Dorothy Robins Mowry. July 13, 1989. <https://cdn.loc.gov/service/mss/mfdip/2004/2004hum01/2004hum01.pdf>.

political change. The United States Foreign Policy in the Muslim world would always be looked at through this lens. Pakistan, too was changing under the “caretaker” military government of Zia whose duration should not have been more than 90 days. When he canceled elections yet again in October 1979 he called for a “new political system,” and appointed his version of a *shura* or council “to formulate recommendations about the structure of an Islamic democratic government” which he said “was created in the name of Islam and in Islam there was no provision for Western-type elections.”¹⁵⁶ Zia himself was also busy Islamizing Pakistan and trying to both legally and ideologically appeal to a more conservative version of Islam.

Moreover, the use of faith, in this case Islam as a tool also shaped public opinion in the masses throughout the region. As these events unfolded anti-American sentiments grew strong in the region including Pakistan. An interagency intelligence memo prepared by the CIA in December 1979 describes the tensions faced by the United States as a result of some countries in the Arab and South Asian region executing national interests unilaterally without consultation or consideration of “the great powers.”¹⁵⁷ For example, Pakistan’s headstrong pursuit of nuclear proliferation. Furthermore, “US influence in the area has declined, and manifestations of anti-American feelings have increased, in part because the United States is seen as irresolute, but basically as the result of a historical trend that is not likely to be reversed. These changed circumstances are primarily the

¹⁵⁶ William L. Richter and W. Eric Gustafson. “Pakistan 1979: Back to Square One,” *Asian Survey* Vol. 20, No. 2., (February 1980), 188-196. *Asian Survey*
https://www.jstor.org/stable/2644022?seq=5#metadata_info_tab_contents.

¹⁵⁷ Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency. FRUS. (1979), Document 35. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v18/d35>.

result of dramatic developments that have occurred during the 1970s: the revolution in Iran, the resurgence of politicized Islam and a rejection of Western culture.”¹⁵⁸ The report went on to say that due to these events the politics of the region have “reoriented.” Public opinion was swiftly changing amidst the chaos of these events.¹⁵⁹

Faith is what would strengthen and further ignite more to join the resistance fighting against the anti-Islamic communists in Afghanistan from the Soviet Union. Faith would become the number one motivation utilized as a tool by the newfound alliance the United States and Pakistan found themselves in with Operation Cyclone. With help from Saudi Arabia, their alliance’s aims were to galvanize *Jihad*¹⁶⁰ in the hearts of the *mujahideen* via advanced strategic exploitive propagation methods so that they could successfully drive the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan and back up north (which they would succeed in 10 years later).

In this alliance between the United States and Pakistan, Saudi Arabia also had a role. The most impactful and primary one being to match the funding of the United States for arming the mujahideen who would in turn be physically armed and trained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and the Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan on the

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ Michael T. Kaufman Special. “Pakistani Relations with U.S. Declining; Anti-American Sentiment Prevails – Gesture from Washington is sad to be Necessary,” *The New York Times*. December 2, 1979. <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/12/02/archives/pakistani-relations-with-us-declining-antiamerican-sentiment.html>.

¹⁶⁰ *Jihad*: (noun that is a homonym in the religion of Islam). A) A struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam. B) The spiritual struggle within oneself against sin. In the context of this text the former applies.

ground. Security interests and the call for supporting those fighting a holy war were both reasons that swayed Saudi Arabia to facilitate both of its allies, the U.S. and Pakistan.

Firstly, Soviet presence just miles away from Jeddah posed a clear threat. Pakistan was the buffer zone with Soviet Afghanistan to its north and Soviet friendly India to its South, protecting the buffer zone from Soviet penetration was vital. If Soviet dominance railed through Pakistan, the warm water port bordering India would give the Soviets direct access to the Middle East and Saudi Arabia. Secondly, this would not only endanger Saudi Arabia from the anti-Islamic communist threat but it also would have an impact on U.S. interests within Saudi Arabia, mainly oil. The U.S. oil supply was predominantly from this region and with the turmoil in Iran, Saudi oil had to compensate for the Iranian oil losses.

CHAPTER V

THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

5.1 United States of America: Interests and Reactions

President Jimmy Carter described the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as a “threat to the peaceful balance of the entire world,” thereby framing the Soviet invasion as a multi-dimensional threat, rather than just a U.S. security concern.¹⁶¹ Meaning, Soviet influence in the region would diminish in what is referred to in Washington D.C. as otherwise “traditionally Western-oriented” states both in the Muslim world and Pakistan. A loss of allies would mean a loss of influence and interests which would have an impact on the U.S.’s status as a superpower. Moreover, this would also be a direct threat to the U.S. oil supply from the region. The U.S. already felt the loss’s impact on its domestic economy during the loss of oil supply because of the Iranian revolution. Therefore, the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan created clarity in Washington that Soviet intervention and influence in Afghanistan must be driven out. The way forward would be to ally and strategize with Pakistan to ensure Soviets do not penetrate through Pakistan.¹⁶² On this note, President Carter promised “to help Pakistan defend its independence and its national security.”¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Jimmy Carter. Address to the Nation on the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. January 4, 1980. Teaching American History. <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/address-to-the-nation-on-the-soviet-invasion-of-afghanistan/>.

¹⁶² Memorandum of Conversation. FRUS. (1980), Document 408. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d408#fn:1.5.4.2.18.367.32.6>.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

While Soviet intentions were not clear to the U.S., deducing them was possible via the facts which were available on ground and the events that were unfolding in the region. The Pakistanis had been forewarning the U.S. since the Saur Revolution took place of Soviet intentions for direct access to the Indian ocean straight into the Middle East. However, for the United States this intention of the Soviet Union was accepted as a possible threat only after the events in Iran and Mecca took place.

According to a CIA Executive Summary from December 1979, Saudi Arabia's failure to quell the siege of Mecca swiftly and erstwhile misrepresentation of the severity of the siege, shed light on the Kingdom's "lack of confidence." Therefore, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and further "subversion" was an imminent threat to Saudi Arabia as well.¹⁶⁴ In addition to the threat the Soviet activities posed to Saudi Arabia another interest for the U.S. in taking action against the Soviets was the unmistakable threat it now posed on the security of Pakistan. Keeping in mind as per the 1959 bilateral agreement, the United States was also under the agreement bound to come to Pakistan's assistance. However, it should be noted this was not the primary driving factor, rather a part of all of the aforementioned multiple factors which related to U.S. security interests.

The failure of U.S. involvement in the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan would result in a domino of Soviet influence, Soviet hegemony of oil and other resources rich in the region important and imported to the United States. The United States' subsequent

¹⁶⁴ Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency. FRUS. (1979), Document 35. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v18/d35>.

actions were consequent on the protection of these multi-faceted principal interests. Under the backdrop of the regional events i.e. the Iranian Revolution and the siege of Mecca which both sent ideological waves through the Muslim world – were part of the reasons why U.S. policymakers responded with immediacy and propelled their alliance with Pakistan. In fact, the Soviet backed government in Afghanistan was becoming such a substantial concern that Washington D.C. responded to the threat by allying covertly with Islamabad six months before the invasion even took place with the execution of Operation Cyclone. President Carter could not have executed Operation Cyclone without the alliance with Pakistan. The geostrategic access and the cover Pakistan provided on the covert operation was crucial because the U.S. could not be seen visibly on grounds. It was not known then, but these actions cemented the United States' role into the region for not only the duration of the decade long proxy Cold War but for decades thereafter as well.

It was evident through both U.S. and Pakistani intelligence sources that the Soviet Union had been sending in arms deliveries into Afghanistan since the Soviet-backed government took over in Kabul. Moreover, it is important to note that this was the first time in U.S.S.R.'s imperial history in which it invaded outside of its region, which was alarming for the U.S. because it was territory which prior to the Iranian revolution, was heavily allied with the United States. The CIA's assessment was also of the view that Soviet attempts in the region were in cognizance of the "fundamental changes" and "instability" in the region. The Soviet Union looked favorably upon all of the occurrences of 1979 before moving into Afghanistan on December 25, 1979. American intelligence

was also of the view that “Soviet gains have come more in the direct form of the reduced US role in the area.” Furthermore, the United States was also of the view that part of the “gains” the Soviets had made in the region was also, the deployment and maintenance of “a significant naval presence in the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean,” also as establishment of “relations with a number of Arab states based on arms supply.”¹⁶⁵ These gains by the Soviets, were direct efforts of countering and undermining U.S. foreign policy efforts of lowering arms transfers and supply. The Carter administration had been brought into office partly on the agenda of a new arms supply policy as the Congress and Americans wanted the United States to revisit this policy because it went against its principals of championing peace in the world. In context of Pakistan, the Carter administration had lowered its arms supply from the previous Ford administration’s \$99 million worth of military equipment to \$40 million in 1978 and \$22 million in 1979.¹⁶⁶ However, in light of the Soviet invasion, this policy needed to be revisited for Pakistan. The Carter administration began the steps to adjust some key U.S. Foreign Policy goals in order to be able to fully partner with Pakistan and not jeopardize the covert op against the Soviets by any means, certainly not because of a shortage of resources. Although the operation had started six months prior, as a consequence of the invasion, now needed to be funded to the fullest extent. In order to do that the adjustment needed to be made on the Carter administration’s policy objective of nuclear non-proliferation which would then allow a change in the U.S. allocations, funding and assistance to Pakistan. The U.S.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Values in current dollars. U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Assistance Agency, *Foreign Military Sales and Military Assistance*, (1980 edition), 2.

policy of arms supply which Carter had managed to keep at a minimum in comparison to the previous administration was dramatically changed, President Carter offered President Zia-uh-Haq an arms package worth \$400 million. However, the Government of Pakistan rejected the proposal, calling it inadequate to arm the Pakistani Armed Forces with the military assistance it required. Nonetheless, at the end of the Carter administration in January 1981, the U.S made another effort via the Aid-Pakistan Consortium to postpone 90% of Pakistan's direct bilateral loans for 18 months. Furthermore, the U.S. endorsed the International Monetary Fund, IMF to extend a \$1.4 billion line of credit to balance the economic losses Pakistan was having in light of the ongoing crisis.¹⁶⁷

Moreover, since the start of the Carter administration nuclear non-proliferation was non-negotiable and that is why it was at the forefront in the bilateral relations with Pakistan. It was also the primary reason the relationship became strained during that time period. However, the invasion called for a dramatic change in the outlook and U.S. policymakers did everything they could to get past the technical legalities that bound them from assisting Pakistan monetarily and militarily. Although during the Carter administration the funding was done covertly under Operation Cyclone, in the following administration under President Reagan the United States was able to legally publicly assist Pakistan as well. This was done under the justification of national security interests which required the United States to assist its ally so that Pakistan could competently assist the United States. For these reasons, despite a consensus in Washington between

¹⁶⁷ Cronin, Richard P. "Afghanistan: Soviet Invasion and US Response". Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division. The Library of Congress Congressional Research Service Major Issues System. Issue Brief Number IB80006. Date originated: 1/10/80.

State and Intelligence that Pakistan's desire for nuclear capabilities could not be stopped, but only perhaps slowed down and so nuclear proliferation in Pakistan now became a matter of when.

In March 1979 during a Policy Review Committee meeting, experts from State (Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher, Under-Secretary for Political Affairs David Newsom, Under-Secretary Lucy Benson, Assistant Secretary of State Tomas Pickering, Deputy to Ambassador Smith George Rathjens), Defense (Deputy Secretary Charles Duncan, Assistant Secretary David McGiffert), Energy (Acting Assistant Secretary John Deutsch), Office of Management and Budget (Associate Director for Security and International Affairs Randy Jayne, Spurgeon Keeny the Acting Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency), Joint Chiefs of Staff (Lt. General William Smith), Director of Central Intelligence (Director Admiral Stansfield Turner, John Despres,) from the White House David Aaron and last but not least the National Security Council people, Thomas Thornton, Henry Owen, Reg Bartholomew, Jessica Mathews and Rutherford Poats, assessed that Pakistan "should have enough material for a weapon by the first quarter of 1982."¹⁶⁸ Despite the plethora of years-long negotiations and deliberations in 1977, 1978 and 1979, mentioned in detail in earlier in this study, the foregoing conclusions by State and Intelligence may have made it easier to shelve or side-step the nuclear non-proliferation policy in Pakistan, and perhaps also made it easier to justify it. Furthermore, in a last ditch effort to gain international support to persuade or influence Pakistan to discontinue its program, in November 1979, Gerard C. Smith, Ambassador at

¹⁶⁸ Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting. FRUS. (1979), Document 327. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d327>.

Large and Special Representative of the President for Non-Proliferation Matters and the representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), made an official trip to Western Europe where he met with officials from the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands.

Ambassador Smith tried to convince the officials to compel Pakistan that if they were to conduct a nuclear test, it would have “major consequences in bilateral relations,” as it would with the United States – Pakistan relations. However, the delegations disagreed with this approach and instead were of the view such pressure would “influence Pakistan’s nuclear course.”¹⁶⁹ In a memo to President Carter, Secretary of State Vance updated the President and in the end added a one line sentence stating that the People’s Republic of China’s Chairman of the Communist Party, Hua Guofeng followed up Ambassador Smith’s trip to the same countries to “emphasize the need to bolster Pakistan against Soviet activities in the area.” The rest of the lines of the memo are unclassified. There seemed to be international consensus on prioritizing support for Pakistan to absolve the Soviet problem. It should also be noted that during the Policy Review Committee meeting earlier in March a similar point was brought up by Under-Secretary David Newsom when he made the following point on Pakistan: “if they are determined and if our allies are not as committed to non-proliferation as us will we not further alienate the Pakistanis in addition to the actions taken under the Symington amendment by prodding our allies to take restrictive moves against Pakistan?”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

As the priorities in policy shifted, Pakistan's nuclear program went on throughout the decade long proxy war it was helping the U.S. fight – for both their security interests and it would not be until the Soviets finally left Pakistan a decade later when U.S. – Pakistan relations would revisit this matter under different circumstances. On this end, Ambassador Richard N. Haass who is now President of the Council on Foreign Relations, a seasoned United States diplomat and was previously an advisor to President George H. W. Bush from 1989 to 1993 while he had the Near East and South Asian portfolio¹⁷¹, published an article in the New York Times dated August 28, 1987. Ambassador Haass articulated a very poignant statement on the United States and Pakistan bilateral relations in regard to their contention on the nuclear non-proliferation front. He writes,

America is fast approaching the time when it will have to adjust its policy toward South Asia from one of preventing acquisitions of nuclear weapons to one of preventing their use. At such a point, threatening to cut off aid to Pakistan promises to be a luxury we can no longer afford.¹⁷²

This was written post the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan and just weeks after the Geneva Accords of 1988 were signed, the formal settlement of the crisis. By issuing such a statement it may be concluded that Ambassador Haas may have foreseen the nuclear problem would soon come back to the forefront as a divergence in the relations now that the Soviets were driven out of Afghanistan, moreover, his perceptive assessment was a new way for policy-makers to strategize moving forward on the bilateral relations. Leveraging aid was not going to end Pakistan's nuclear program and in hindsight, it did not.

¹⁷¹ Richard N. Haass Bio. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/expert/richard-n-haass>.

¹⁷² Richard N. Haass. "Give Pakistan Aid," *The New York Times*, August 28, 1987. <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/08/28/opinion/give-pakistan-aid.html?searchResultPosition=4>.

In 1979, the Soviet Union's imposed threats, catapulted the U.S. alliance with Pakistan as the invasion was a direct threat to the power of balance in the region, a possible communist take-over of Southwest Asia with access to the Gulf – a direct threat to U.S. interests which was now the number one policy matter in Washington. On January 23, 1980, during his State of the Union address President Carter officially introduced '*The Carter Doctrine.*' The President addressed the Middle East region, the Iranian situation and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. While doing so he said,¹⁷³

We face a broader and more fundamental challenge in this region because of the recent military action of the Soviet Union.” Moreover that, “the Soviet Union has taken a radical and an aggressive new step. It's using its great military power against a relatively defenseless nation. The implications of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan could post the most serious threat to the peace since the Second World War.¹⁷⁴

In his speech the President warned that the situation in Afghanistan may perhaps take many years to resolve. This was true because the Soviets would not be ousted from Afghanistan until 1989. The President also stated that the invasion,

demands the participation of all those who rely on oil from the Middle East and who are concerned with global peace and stability. And it demands consultation and close cooperation with countries in the area which might be threatened...Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.¹⁷⁵

President Carter outlined the steps the United States would take to implement the doctrine which included: “the rapid deployment of U.S. forces” for conflict prevention in the region, the enhancement of” U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean;” Moreover, fortifying “the U.S. guarantee of Pakistani independence.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Editorial Note. FRUS. (1977-1980). Document 45.
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v18/d45>.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

President Carter's National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski's most telling reaction of the U.S. response to the Soviet Invasion is in a memorandum to the President dated January 2, 1980 titled "Relevance of the Truman Doctrine to Current Situation." In which he says he, "would like to recall for you an earlier crisis which in my judgement has some striking parallels with the present challenge we face in Afghanistan, in that region and globally." He described the situation and context of the Truman Doctrine and compared it to the current situation of the Soviet invasion which called for the Carter Doctrine, concluding that the current events are far more alarming and worrisome.¹⁷⁷

The Soviet intervention in the present case is both more blatant and more brutal than in 1947, and the Gulf is unquestionably more vital to Western interests today than were Greece and Turkey 30 years ago.¹⁷⁸

Brzezinski's, National Security Council colleague, Thomas Perry Thornton recalls the situation in 1982 as,

Overnight, literally, the situation changed dramatically with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. Pakistan, now a frontline state, became an essential line of defense and an indispensable element of any strategy that sought to punish the Soviets for their action.

The United States was not alone in condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to the fullest extent. When the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan took place, an Emergency Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was called and the vast majority of Member States condemned the invasion and urged for the immediate removal of Soviet troops. 59 NAM Member States voted against the Soviet Union with the majority of the UNGA. During another UNGA session in March, while the Cubans

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

who had to side with the U.S.S.R. even though they were a NAM member filibustered the floor, the delegate representing Afghanistan tore up his statement from Kabul in anger and condemned the Soviet invasion of his country – and before walking out of the conference room, hugged the Ambassador from Pakistan.¹⁷⁹ A dramatic move like this was a raw unplanned show of display on the world's largest multilateral platform – many brave people of Afghanistan were not happy with Soviet occupation, aggression, intrusion, invasion into their land.

5.2 The Islamic Republic of Pakistan: Interests and Reactions

As for the Government of Pakistan, its foreign policy is influenced by its historical conception and geography, therefore, its foreign policy is its first line of defense. This is understandable given Pakistan's challenging security concerns at its borders with its neighbors (e.g. India, Afghanistan) from the onset of its independence. Pakistan reacted with utmost alarm to the Soviet invasion in its region. Its interests in Afghanistan were based on security complexities and concerns both internal and external. The Pakistani leadership had voiced its concern a year prior to the invasion when the Soviet backed government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, PDPA took power also known as the Saur Revolution in Kabul and their subsequent threats for

¹⁷⁹ John A. Graham. "The Non-Aligned Movement After the Havana Summit," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 34, No. 1, International Relations of Developing Countries (Spring-Summer 1980), 153-160. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/24356346.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A9b1bc542056e43951fb4eb942c95675c>.

“Pashtunistan.”¹⁸⁰ In fact, Kabul’s antagonism toward Pakistan for not recognizing the Durand line border had been there since its independence in 1919. The new communist government of the PDPA, in Kabul did not make their claim to take the province of the North West Frontier ambiguous. Pakistan’s ominous predictions of aggression in forms of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan became real; resulting in Pakistan’s strategic ambitions to protect its security concerns by upholding its sovereignty and national integrity against the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, it should be noted that although it was in Pakistan’s security interests to safeguard itself from the Soviet Union, it was nevertheless confronting one of the two superpowers of the world. The U.S. commitment to support Pakistan notwithstanding, a failure to counter the Soviet threat would have had disastrous ramifications for Pakistan given its geographical proximity to the Soviet Union. There were people in the Pakistani bureaucracy who were alarmed by the consequences of such a failed outcome. Thus, there was a divide in Zia-uh-Haq’s closest advisers, both in the armed forces as well as in the Foreign Office.

According to Ambassador Amin, there were senior Pakistani diplomats who were convinced that absolutely nothing could dislodge the Soviets from Afghanistan, and Pakistan had no option but to accept the *fait accompli* and come to terms with the Soviet Union. In efforts to thwart eventual Soviet occupation of Pakistan, some in the bureaucracy even suggested Pakistan to declare neutrality like Finland or Austria.

¹⁸⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1978), Document 303. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d303>.

Moreover, some warned that the United States was the wrong superpower to lean on, located 10,000 miles away and despite being a military ally – from their perspective, did not come to Pakistan’s aid in the previous wars with India. Therefore, following this train of thought, knowing the Soviet Union was located in Pakistan’s backyard, it was too high of a risk to overlook Soviet capacity to harm Pakistan.¹⁸¹

The view projected by some of the authors in the historiography such as Ambassador Amin on President Zia-uh-Haq’s initial reaction to the United States supportive response when the Soviet invasion was officially reported - is wrong. Zia was far from enthusiastic on the immediate U.S. reaction. According to the declassified cables Zia rejected President Carter’s proposal to send Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Warren to Pakistan. Pakistan wanted to give Iran and the rest of the Muslim nations a chance to respond first. Foreign Minister Agha Shahi gave his representation in Iran credit for Foreign Minister Gotbzadeh and the Ayatollah Behesti’s reactions “condemning” the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with a “thundering statement.”¹⁸² In a telegram dated December 30, 1979 from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, addressed to the Secretary, Ambassador Hummel wrote back on his meeting with Agha Shahi. He stated,

“Now Pakistanis want to wait a ‘few days’ to see whether Islamic world will rise to occasion following Iranian and Pakistan lead. A visit by Christophe would undermine prospects for Islamic condemnation of Soviets and would provide ammunition to Soviets and pro-Soviet Muslim countries to accuse Pakistan and others of acting at behest of USG and in collusion with NATO powers.” Pakistan also asked the United States to “not

¹⁸¹ Shahid M. Amin. *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy a Reappraisal* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹⁸² Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State. FRUS. (1979), Document 398. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v19/d398>.

repeat not give publicity to any moves that seem parallel to, or as instigation of, Pak responses to Soviet troops in Afghanistan.”¹⁸³

Despite the fact that the covert operation in arming the *mujahideen* was already underway since earlier in May, the current development in the Soviet Red Army’s physical presence in Afghanistan provided a larger threat and tackling that strategically was of utmost importance to both the United States and Pakistan. While the Soviet incursion in Afghanistan made the U.S.’s objectives of bolstering support clear, Pakistan, as perhaps a party to NAM, wanted to garner support in its region first instead of returning to its identity as a staunch U.S. ally as was its reputation during the days of CENTO and SEATO from which Pakistan never received the support it expected from the U.S. However, Ambassador Hummel advised Washington to not wait a “few days” for Pakistan to “assess the Islamic reactions.” Furthermore, that he be given instructions on U.S. support as soon as possible so that he may deliver them himself to President Zia.¹⁸⁴ Although there was a brief pause, the Government of Pakistan did ally with the United States owing to a convergence of mutual interests to counter the Soviet Union and ensure Pakistan’s security.

President Zia’s motifs as a military dictator may be questioned though. Was his decision truly primarily for Pakistan’s strategic long-term security? Or was it partially also based on the fact that he was after all a military dictator and this war would buy him time and perhaps a combination of valor and legitimacy to rule even longer – which he

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

did continue to do so for the remainder of the decade long war. Ambassador Haqqani presented an article from the Washington Post during this time period which forewarned that Zia, ““was plainly ready to trade on the country’s strategic utility” for the United States so as to ‘acquire the aid and arms necessary to protect his country and to keep himself in power.’ It advised caution ‘in broadening American commitment to a regime that is at once uncertain and necessarily fixed on its own agenda.’”¹⁸⁵ In the book “Magnificent Delusions,” Ambassador Haqqani dedicated a chapter to Zia titled, “A Most Superb and Patriotic Liar” in which he makes the argument that “in an effort to ensure that the US commitment remained long term, Zia also revived the idea of US bases in Pakistan.”¹⁸⁶ Moreover, Zia’s regime has been described as brutal in many works but Haqqani describes it as the longest military dictator in Pakistan “with far greater brutality.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ Haqqani, Hussain. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States and an Epic History of Misunderstanding* (Public Affairs Perseus Books Group. 2013), 258.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 259.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 224.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The Carter Administration (1977-1981) began with a definite set of foreign policy priorities with regard to Pakistan, with nuclear non-proliferation topping the list. The primary focus of this policy in the initial period of the Carter Administration was to persuade the Government of Pakistan to overturn its agreement with the Republic of France on a nuclear reprocessing plant. The U.S. engaged with the government of Prime Minister Bhutto on the question, by offering a package of economic and military support to woo Pakistan away from acquiring nuclear technology. While this engagement was still underway, General Zia-uh-Haq came into power by toppling the elected government of Bhutto. However, the U.S. continued to carry forth the negotiation process with Pakistan under the new set-up.

While this engagement was still underway with General Zia, the potential Soviet threat in Afghanistan to U.S. interests in the region became increasingly more pronounced with developments such as the Saur Revolution (April Revolution) in 1978. Parts of U.S. policy-making circles, especially the U.S. diplomats in Pakistan, became increasingly concerned that a pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan could pose a major challenge to U.S. regional interests and needed to be tackled. They were moreover quick to realize the

potential of Pakistan to influence events in Afghanistan through Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Durand line border.

In Pakistan, the developments in Afghanistan were viewed with great concern and as a possible revival of “Delhi-Moscow-Kabul” axis to the detriment of Pakistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, resulting in earnest requests for U.S. support. The issue of the French reprocessing plant agreement, however, continued to dominate policy considerations in Washington, with Pakistani leadership looking at U.S. policy as discriminatory vis-à-vis India and insensitive to its security needs and domestic public opinion.

The U.S., through a combination of pressure and incentives, was able to cancel Pakistan’s reprocessing plant agreement with France in August 1978, paving the path for resumption of U.S. economic and military aid for Pakistan in October 1978. Just four months later, the U.S. received intelligence that Pakistan was well on its way to acquire nuclear capability, leading to Washington to review its assistance to Pakistan.

Events elsewhere in the region, such as the Iranian revolution, the siege of Mecca as well as the emergence of radical religious ideologies in the Islamic world, however, forced a change in the U.S. regarding its foreign policy priorities vis-à-vis Pakistan. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, perceived in Washington as a multi-pronged threat to the international order as well as to its vital oil supplies, proved to be a tipping point. As a result, the United States side stepped its non-proliferation concerns in favor of Pakistan’s

geostrategic location as a spring board to optimize the covert Operation Cyclone to counter the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

Despite popular contrary assessment of current experts on the subject of the non-proliferation policy, like Levy and Clark, the Carter administration shelved the nuclear non-proliferation policy with great reluctance, as is shown in the narrative of the decision-making process in this study vis-à-vis discourse of deliberations amongst policy-makers and diplomats.

A U.S. economic and military package for Pakistan as well as security guarantees quickly followed the invasion of Afghanistan, thereby resulting in the making of a renewed U.S.-Pakistan alliance based on security concerns very different from the ones that the Carter Administration started-off with.

The Carter administration may be credited with realizing and implementing policy changes in light of an amalgamation of events. Much like when at the end of the Great War when President Woodrow Wilson realized international politics had changed under a new globalized world thereby needing a new approach when dealing with nations. President Carter too can be attributed with realizing the climate of an important region in the world in which the US had many interests, had changed and therefore required the US to revisit its strategy on foreign policy within it, putting long term international security concerns at the top instead of singular objectives such as non-proliferation, especially because as the archival material from the intelligence bureaus dictates, there was no debate of *if* the

Pakistanis could accelerate and enhance their nuclear program to reach nuclear weapons capability but instead it focused on *when*.

This study adds to the debate on US – Pakistan bilateral relations under the Carter administration, by providing a timeline of the circumstances stemming from contemporaneous regional developments of dissent, such as the Iranian revolution and the siege of Mecca from which began the contours of religious extremism in the region, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, each of which had severe implications on the United States, all of which were factored into the US foreign policy objective of non-proliferation vis – a – vis Pakistan. The Carter administration’s bilateral relations with Pakistan are an example of when external events shape the bilateral relations of these two countries which have been known for their alliances in period of mutual national and international security interests.

In the words of a retired Pakistani diplomat who saw the unfolding of these tumultuous events, “the objectives of both sides may not have been identical and consequently and otherwise as well, in implementation their interpretations are sometimes likely to be strikingly and divisively different at moments of stress as indeed the record brings out all so clearly in the context of this particular event. It is therefore political will and national interest that dictates interpretation and implementation or cooperation in all bilateral treaties.”

The United States and Pakistan both saw the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as an event which would require cooperation, resulting in a period of alliance.

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