

US Foreign Policy Parameters towards Pakistan and India (2001-2008)

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Abstract

In the early hours of September 11, 2001, the direct attack on mainland, first time in the history, shocked the Americans from a common man to policy makers, smashing geographical invulnerability of The United States of America. The 9/11 Changed America and subsequent changes in US mindset globally resulted into the pronouncement of United States policy of "War on Terrorism" with a determined hot pursuit of terrorist elements, wherever they could be. These attacks had grave ramifications for US South Asia Policy as well. The United States blamed Al-Qaeda as the main perpetrator of September 11th attacks. Afghanistan was identified as the sanctuary of Al-Qaeda. Pakistan's vicinity to Afghanistan had instrumented to bring it on the fore front of "War on Terrorism" in Afghanistan. President Mushraf's dictatorship was reconciled. India was focused during these years in four difficult areas: civilian nuclear energy deal, civilian space programs, high technology trade, and sidelining nuclear non proliferation issue. Bush administration carved a policy which meant to address a new emphasis on terrorism adjusting with ongoing concerns such as global economy, nuclear nonproliferation and democracy. In this article foreign policy apparatus of President George W. Bush Jr would be discussed with a focus on US foreign policy parameters towards India and Pakistan during 2001-2008.

Key Words: Policy reversal, war on terrorism, Afghanistan, operation enduring freedom, US-India strategic partnership, the three trinity issues

Introduction

Foreign Policy decision making structural arrangements are the major factors that influence the states' foreign policy. The components of structural arrangements are the foreign ministry, state department, bureaucrats and diplomats. The legislature of different states also influences the foreign policy decisions through the power of legislation. The process of decision making is not only influenced by the individual and group psychology but

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also by the states and societies in which the decision makers are operating. The states' bureaucratic agencies take the major share in decision making process.

How to arrive at Foreign policy decisions

Allison Graham, through his classic work in 1974 facilitated theorists to plausibly investigate the decision making process by applying one or mix of his models. As Chris Brown (1990) succinctly described:

Allison provides three models of decisions, each of which is used to provide a different account of the decisions that characterized the crisis – (Cuban Missile Crisis) - which are simplified to first, the Soviet decision to deploy Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles on Cuba, the second the American decision to respond to this deployment with a blockade and, third the Soviet decision to withdraw the IRBMS. His point is that, contrary to his title, there is no essence of decisions; only different ways of seeing the same events (P,86-87)

The first Rational Actor Model, inherently based upon realists and neo realists' assumptions, view state as a unitary actor to be engaged in maximizing goals in international politics. The Rational Actor Model in a way to be based upon the factual raw material in foreign policy needs to be dealt with, to make it meaningful, a rational mapping. The unit of analysis would be governmental action; termed as foreign policy choices, setting goals, seeking alternative options to maximize the established goals by analyzing the cost and benefit of alternative options, and select the best one which at minimum cost produce best outcomes. But this model according to Allison lacks accuracy, because the requirements for rational action are never actually met meaning fully defined goals to be maximized, a detail repository of all possible courses of actions available to decision makers, investigating tools capable of predictions of outcomes of each action. The reason may be several, just like the one, that officials may be exposed to more information than they can effectively sort out or evaluate or information may be lost in the course of information transfer or bureaucratic management. As Robert North (1996) reinforces it by stating:

Professional gatherers and transmitters of information –intelligence agents included maintain what is essentially a bargaining and leverage relationship with their bureaucratic superiors. They agree to produce some amount or continuing flow of information in return for rewards of one kinds or another-fee, salary, recognition, possibility of promotion and the like –such purveyors may tend to emphasize the types of information their principal desire to expect.(p, 89)

He identified another constraint on communication on information to decision makers as that treatment of information takes place according to level of decision makers in Bureaucratic hierarchy. On lower level, the bureaucrats

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are closely associated with and internalized the values and beliefs of their respective departments, and generally identify the welfare of the department with that of whole of nation. Contrary to it the top decision makers- president, prime Minister, Foreign Minister are free from these types of strings. The last sufferer is rationality eventually resulting in policy contradictions and endangering a nation's security and well being. As the foreign policy is a complex phenomenon with wide variety of issues, dimensions, crises and non crises situations, the rational process does not seem sufficient tool to arrive at decisions regarding foreign policy issues.

The Bureaucratic / Organizational Models being alternative to rational Actor model focus upon the bureaucracies as the players in the Foreign policy decision making process. This directs the decision makers to define the goals and alternative actions relying on standardized operating procedures or categorized responses. Any crisis under this model is met by organizations by recalling institutional memories to meet the same problem with same policy option.

Decisions are also arrived at by the bargaining process among the various government agencies with different interests. Actually bureaucrats have a very obvious role, since politicians, sometimes lack expertise on foreign affairs and sometimes their inconsistency in the system becomes the main reason for overriding role of bureaucratic departments. So a tug of war situation arises, because all bureaucratic departments with a self perceived responsibility to protect the nation specify their goals and interests. So state qua state foreign policy becomes the complex reactions of insiders of administration.

One thing is notable here that these models are at large, meant to analyze 'crisis', while non crisis situations expect somewhat different patterns of behavior from states, because non crisis decision making is generally free from time constraints, so the *internal and external factors and influences* surface up. Similarly, these models require highly differentiated institutional structure, with no discrepancy in myth and reality about formal decision makers and the real power holder of decision making.

US foreign policy has been a subject of change with the change in US presidency. This is an observable phenomenon that this change encompasses from perceptions to objectives of foreign policy and strategy to achieve them as well. It also includes the network of foreign policy decision-makers. As we know foreign policy decisions cannot be unilaterally taken, they involve a number of government officials and departments. The role played by these sources bears a significant impact on the policy outcomes.

Early South Asia Policy of President Bush:

When Bush Jr. entered into the Presidency in 2001, South Asia was on the backburner of American foreign policy agenda, with an assumption that this region had lost all vitality for US strategic interests after the cold war, so America virtually disengaged itself from the region after the collapse of Soviet Union and ensuing end of the Cold War. However, India-Pakistan crisis of 1990, South Asia's overt nuclearization in 1998 and the Kargil Conflict in 1999 were the main incidents which temporarily attracted American foreign policy makers towards the region in the 90's. US policy entailed sanctions on both India and Pakistan in 1998 and again on Pakistan in 1999 after General Pervez Musharraf's military coup. The role of US during the Kargil War was obviously an attempt to minimize the chances of full scale war between two nuclear states, not because that America was seeing any long-term interests in the region. With this low priority milieu in foreign office for South Asia, President Bush started his first term as President of United States of America – the sole superpower of our time.

The new administration was expected to continue broadly Clinton's policy towards South Asia, featuring: a tilt towards India and a mild desire to rectify the previous indifferent and cold attitude towards relationship with Pakistan, urging nuclear restraints and encouraging a peace process in Kashmir. The Bush team's perception of India as a future strategic partner in maintaining stability in the Indian Ocean, fighting emerging Islamic fundamentalism and checking Chinese ambitions was very strong – not merely in a military sense, but in an economic sense as well. (Zahng Guihong,2003:8)

Although an objective analysis of early years of President Bush reveals that India did not meaningfully deliver for the United States, despite it , a closer partnership with India over a broad spectrum of issues remained on the US foreign policy agenda.

Pakistan at that point of time was viewed by US Policy makers under two parameters: weapons of mass destruction and perceived links with terrorism. (These concerns often resulted in the imposition of sanctions at a time when Pakistan was in dire need of developmental aid and assistance. Pak-US cooperation continued uninterrupted in the spheres of narcotics control and counterterrorism only.

Pakistan and the United States

Policy Reversal - 9/11 and Consequences for South Asia: Immediately, after the 9/11 attacks, both India and Pakistan offered to extend all out support to the United States. For the first time in history, America simultaneously enjoyed cordial relations with both Pakistan and India. However, Pakistan with Musharraf's offer for cooperation in the fight against terrorism, phenomenally accrued it to the 50's front line status. In a televised speech to the nation on September 19, 2001 Musharraf identified four core Pakistani interests behind this decision: firstly, the security of the country,

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secondly to meet the economic challenges, thirdly, the emerging need of securing strategic assets of Pakistan and finally to pursue the Kashmir cause. (Kronstadt, K. Alan, 2008:51). Resultantly Pakistan became a vital ally in the US-led anti-terrorism coalition targeting Al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan. Pakistan because of its U turn after 9/11, withdrew its support from the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. President Bush in response waived sanctions imposed after the 1998 nuclear tests and the military coup of October 1999. So Pakistan once again became a beneficiary of large amounts of US aid and assistance, this time allocated for counterterrorism cooperation. Pakistan also accrued the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) in 2004 for its efforts against terrorism. The same year, a Pakistani Congressional Caucus was also established to improve and strengthen relations between Pakistan and United States.

War on Terrorism:

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. About two to three decades ago, terrorism was usually occurred due to local issues and conducted by small groups that wanted to draw attention to their cause through terrorist acts. It was designed to kill a few but capture the attention of large audiences. Nowadays Terrorism is an ideologically motivated phenomenon, its agenda is not limited to one country, and it is international in character. The transnational nature of terrorism has led the governments to adopt new doctrines and develop collective regional efforts.

September 11 has changed the needs of international security and the international system drastically as well, forcing states to reexamine their perceptions and responses. Now even marginal local groups across the world are connected by a global ideology. US foreign policy has changed accordingly to deal with menace of terrorists' threats, and military preemption has become core objective of its policy option. Combating terrorism became the most important aspect of US foreign policy. In March 2004 the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, told the Senate Foreign Relations committee that the top US policy goals in the South Asia region would be combating terrorism and the eradicating conditions that breed terror in the frontline states of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Rocca(2004) laid out this objective as such:

Through a network of partnerships throughout the region, we will achieve our goals of defeating terrorism and preventing the additional spread of weapons of mass destruction. Will do this through cooperation on security and law enforcement, but more importantly, we will consolidate and preserve our gains by encouraging and supporting freedom and democracy, development and human dignity. (p,6)

To achieve this end, the United States declared War on Terrorism aiming to dismantle terrorist networks and to target states that offer safe haven for those networks. Even states opting not to pursue active measures to eradicate terrorist networks were warned of American wrath. Secretary of State Colin Powell's blunt message to General Pervez Musharraf declaring, "You are either with us or against us" resonates the same viewpoint. (Musharraf, 2006: 119) However while America intensified its efforts against terrorism following the tragedy of 9/11, counterterrorism cooperation was already underway in South Asia prior to this incident. The U.S-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was established in 2000 to intensify bilateral cooperation while mutual collaboration against terrorism between Pakistan and the US was ongoing for more than a decade. The 9/11 Commission Report, released in July 2004, identified the "government of President Pervez Musharraf as the best hope for stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and recommended that the United States make a long-term commitment to provide comprehensive support for Islamabad so long as Pakistan itself is committed to combating extremism and to a policy of enlightened moderation." (Akram, 2002:118)

Agreeing to help America fight terrorist elements in Afghanistan, Pakistan became a partner in the US led Global War on Terror. Musharraf dubbed it a "war against shadows." (Musharraf, 2006: 119). Pakistani leadership saw it as an opportunity and enlisted support in the interest of self-preservation. The attached economic support offered the possibility of addressing years of social and economic decline that fuels such militancy.

The relationship between international terrorists, indigenous Pakistani extremist groups and some elements of Pakistan's political military structure remain vague but represent a major threat to US security goals. The alliance with the US, and America's role as a guarantor of Pakistan's stability offered an opportunity for Musharraf to crack down on radical support for terrorist organizations. . A 2003 poll revealed that 57 percent Americans perceived threats to the world from Pakistan while only 29 percent thought the same way about India.(Srinivas,Kolluru& Pingle, Gautum,2007:2). Indigenous Pakistani terrorist organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), Lashkar-i-Jahngvi (LJ), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen not only carried out terrorist activities within the country but also form the support structure for al Qaeda, especially JeM, LJ and HuM. LeT and JeM were declared foreign terrorist organizations by USA.(Vaughn,Bruce & Kronstadt, K Alan,2004: 14) In January 2002 speech, President Musharraf pledged to purge Pakistan from terrorists and stop use of Pakistan as a base for terrorism and he also criticized religious extremism and intolerance in the country. The aftermath of this speech was that, about 3,300 extremists were detained. Subsequently bank accounts were frozen of these of militant groups and several militant leaders were placed under house arrest. US welcomed these steps by Pakistan while still insisting that Pakistan take more aggressive action against these groups. Defending Pakistan, President General Musharraf revealed in his autobiography, "We have captured 689 and handed over 369 to the United

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States...Pakistan is the one country that has done the maximum in the fight against terrorism.” (Musharraf, 2006: 119)

There was an unprecedented level of cooperation between Pakistan and United states at that particular point of time. US military was allowed to use bases, help to identify and detain extremists and deploy tens of thousands of its own security forces to secure the Pak-Afghan border. The US policy of Drone attacks was endorsed by Pakistan though raised weak protests, however increased cooperation with America in this regard fueled militancy within Pakistan, which is said to be a reaction to the government’s support for US. In 2007 the intensity in Islamist militancy increased manifold than the previous six years. Only two suicide bombings occurred in 2002 while such incidents were at least 57 in 2007. (Kronstadt, K. Alan,2008:5)

Operation Enduring Freedom – War in Afghanistan:

The Soviet Union invasion in Afghanistan in December 1979, and its attempt to install a communist regime was completely denounced by the international community. It demanded an immediate withdrawal of Soviet forces. At domestic level during the 80’s armed Afghan resistance groups known as ‘mujahideen’ resisted Soviet occupation. These freedom fighters received covert monetary and military support from the United States through Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

The Geneva Accords finally brought the conflict to an end in April 1988. Soviet troops began withdrawing by mid-March 1988. The withdrawal of the Soviets and the collapse of communist threat, the United States lost all its interest in Afghanistan and the country had to face the worst sort of anarchy and internecine civil among ex Mujahideen commanders and War Lords which ended up in to the rise of the Taliban in 1996. The Taliban with a profound agenda of establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan also sought to bring the country under a strict Islamic code of life under their own interpretation using whatever means they deemed necessary in the process. Taliban successfully established their control over 90% territory of Afghanistan by 2001, though a very marginal resistance was still present in some small areas held by Northern Alliance forces in the northeast and northwestern part of Afghanistan. During the same period, The Taliban’s Afghanistan also emerged as safe sanctuary for al Qaeda operatives as well as for its leader Osama bin Laden who arrived in Afghanistan in 1996. Afghanistan’s years of civil strife were marked by the deaths of over a million people, the complete destruction of Afghan society due to division along ethnic and sectarians’ line, millions’ displacement from their ancestor homes, proliferation of weapons and destruction of key institutions and infrastructure. (Ahmed Rashid, 2008:63)

Following September 11, 2001 attacks , Afghanistan became the first battlefield where the War on Terrorism, renamed as the Global War on

Terrorism (GWOT), was initiated. Al Qaeda's leadership misperceived that protected by the fanatical Taliban regime, American arms in that far-off mountainous land would not have the potential to forge any sort of strike against them. The rugged geographical and topographical composition had been one of the major obstacles for the Soviets as well, and this factor made them to believe that it would also pose grave challenges to any U.S. military effort. Nonetheless, within hours of 9/11 attack, the U.S. officially declared Osama bin Laden the prime suspect and on September 20, 2011, addressing a joint session of Congress President Bush demanded for handing over of Osama bin Laden with all leadership present in Afghanistan, access to all terrorist training camps, release all foreign national prisoners. (Linscoten, Alex Strick van, Kuehn, Felix, 2012: 221)

On September 21, 2001, the Taliban rejected these demands, stating that there was no evidence in their possession against Bin Laden for the September 11 attacks. In an interview with Voice of America he said that "we cannot give (give bin laden) , if we did it means we are not Muslims" (ibid,p,235) On October 7, 2001, military action was initiated against the Taliban , bombing Taliban forces and al-Qaeda terrorist training camps. The stated purpose of US attack was to end the ability of the Taliban to provide shelter to al Qaeda and to stop al Qaeda's use of Afghanistan as a base of operations for terrorist activities. Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan was launched October 7, 2001 and continues to this day. Although military victory was achieved early by December 2001, Afghanistan has not been stabilized yet. After the fall of the Taliban, coalition forces shifted their attention towards Counter Insurgency (COIN) efforts aimed at smothering any Taliban/al Qaeda insurgency by strengthening Afghan civilian government and enabling it to provide security, governance and economic development. COIN efforts are also led by American forces. The interim government set up in June 2002 was headed by Hamid Karzai. Karzai was reelected as President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as a result of 2005 elections. (In 2009 elections he has been reelected).

America could not have forged its GWOT in Afghanistan without Pakistan's help and long term stability in Afghanistan remains dependant on Islamabad's willingness to cooperate. As commented by Zahid Hussein (2010) that "Pakistan's support was important for the USA. Its geographic proximity and its vast intelligence information on Afghanistan were seen as crucial for any military action against the Taliban or al-Qaeda"(p,37) Traditionally, Pakistan's policy makers viewed Afghanistan as an asset to be a source to rectify the lack of strategic depth, essentially required to cater the security compulsions. With a hostile India to the east, Pakistan has consistently sought a stable and friendly Afghanistan to the west to avoid having enemies on two fronts. It was due to this belief that Pakistan supported Afghan mujahedeen during the Zia era and later recognized the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Pakistan's Afghan policy had also been guided by the need to ensure the safe repatriation of 3 million Afghan refugees and end inflow of terrorists arms (responsible for the klashinkov

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culture) and drugs into Pakistan. Ethnic hatred and exacerbated religious division was also a result of Afghan instability.

After September 11, continued support for Taliban would have subjected Pakistan to fierce international ostracism and possibly armed attack. US gave a list of demands to Pakistani officials which were declared nonnegotiable. This list generally included “to halt AlQaeda operatives coming from Pakistan to Afghanistan, to strictly forbid arms shipments through Pakistan and all logistical support for Osama Bin Laden, Give blanket over flight and landing rights to US aircraft with an access to naval and air bases and to the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, share all intelligence and immigration information, condemn the September 11 attacks and curb all domestic expressions of support for terrorism”. (Linscoten, Alex Strick van, Kuehn, Felix, 2012::222) It was therefore in the interest of Pakistan, Mushraf Govt decided to support US led war against a regime, which Islamabad had covertly supported in the past. Pakistan not only withdrew its support of the Taliban following 9/11, but also offered all possible help to America including military intelligence and use of bases for carrying out operations in Afghanistan. Pakistan also vowed to stop cross border infiltration of extremist elements. In April 2003, the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan formed a ‘tripartite commission’ to coordinate their efforts to stabilize the border areas. (Dale, Catherine,2009:6)While initially praising Pakistan’s efforts in the GWOT, the Bush administration soon began asking Pakistan to “do more” to prevent Taliban/al Qaeda from finding refuge in the tribal areas especially after the US uncovered evidence linking Pakistan’s ISI to the terrorists in Afghanistan. This has been a general belief amongst Pakistan’s elite that the West has unrealistic expectations of what Pakistan can do in Afghanistan and in the fight against terrorism.

US Aid to Pakistan

Pakistan’s economy was in a state of near collapse before being rescued by massive aid and debts write off after 9/11. The massive influx of counterterrorism aid included about \$3.1 billion for economic purposes only. The US also became Pakistan’s leading export market, accounting for nearly one quarter of the total exports. In June 2003, President Bush and President Musharraf met at Camp David where President Musharraf was ensured to be provided a five-year, \$3 billion aid package for Pakistan. Under this aid package annual installments of \$600 million, each split evenly between military and economic aid, began in 2005. However, Critics argue that these funds hardly reach their intended goals and Washington must pay more attention towards specific developmental projects and education promotion rather than handing out money to the government. Moreover, US should encourage US companies to invest in Pakistan in order to bolster its economy. (Wisner, Frank. G& Platt, Nicholas & Bouton , M. Marshal,2003:54)

Pakistan received very minimal aid before 9/11 on account of the several layers of sanctions imposed on it by the United States. Following Pakistan's participation in the GWOT, it became the largest receiver of foreign assistance in the region after Afghanistan and followed by India. Aid to Pakistan was significantly greater than aid to India. The trend continued throughout the Bush administration.

The disparity in aid amounts was in part due to the intentions of US aid. The aid program to India aimed to further Indian economic development in order to enhance it as an influential US partner in the international system. In contrast, approximately 43% of US assistance to Pakistan supported counterterrorism and border security efforts. Funding economic growth has always been relegated as the secondary objective. (Lum, Thomas, 2008:30-32)

In 2007, the Bush administration restructured its US Foreign Aid Programs to better serve its goal of transformational development, which placed greater emphasis on US security and democracy building as the chief goals of foreign aid. The new framework divided aid programming among five objectives: peace and security; governing justly and democratically; investing in people; economic growth; and humanitarian assistance. Keeping the new aid goals in perspective, a crucial challenge for the US was how to assist Pakistan in its counterterrorism activities and reward its cooperation in Operation Enduring Freedom while still applying pressure regarding democratization, nuclear nonproliferation, and other US foreign policy imperatives. India, capitalizing on its status as the world's second largest democracy, fit more of the aid criteria than Pakistan. Other aspects of joint Pak-US counterterrorism cooperation included US assistance programs for training and providing equipment for Pakistani security forces, along with aid for health, education, food, democracy promotion, human rights improvement, counter narcotics and law enforcement. A high level US-Pakistan Defense Consultative Group was revived in September 2002 (it had been inactive since 1997) for discussions on military cooperation, security assistance and terrorism. Then in October 2002, following a hiatus of five years, Pak-US joint military exercises were also started again. Pakistan Air Force and Navy were already conducting such exercises with their US counterparts since 2001. (Tarnoff, Curt. & Lawson, Marian .L2009:2)

As In June 2004 President Bush declared Pakistan to be a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) of the United States. It was meant as an indication of the special status and long-term nature of Pak-US relationship. This status facilitated the enhancement of defense cooperation between the two countries. The announcement created doubts in Indian minds about seriousness of US intentions towards inculcating a strategic partnership with India. India complained at not being given prior notice of this decision but had no other objections.

In 2001 the United States resumed arms sales to Pakistan for counterterrorism purposes. Since then till 2007 The Pentagon reported total

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military sales to Pakistan worth \$4.55 billion. The United States also provided Pakistan nearly \$1.6 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) used to purchase military equipment. Pakistan was granted U.S defense supplies as Excess Defense Articles (EDA). Islamabad secured deals for the purchase of 18 new F-16 fighter planes in 2006. The Indian external affairs minister objected over the US decision to sell F-16 planes to Pakistan, questioning their counterterrorism applicability and adding that “US arms supply to Pakistan would have a negative impact on the goodwill the United States enjoys with India, particularly as a sister democracy.” (Vaughen,2004:27) Indian Defense Minister Mukherjee pointed out “given Pakistan’s track record, we fear such weapons will be directed towards India.” (Limaye,Satu,2005:151) Despite Indian reservations, US moved forward with its arms supplies to Pakistan.

The US Concerns towards Pakistan

Pakistan was identified as a source of nuclear proliferation when the Dr. A. Q. Khan network was revealed in December 2003. A.Q. Khan and his cohorts were blamed for the sale of nuclear secrets to North Korea, Libya, and Iran. At least 6 Pakistani scientists were blamed of having meeting with Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri, as well as other top al Qaeda and Taliban Leaders in Kabul. But Pakistan refused to allow international investigators to question or trial A.Q. Khan, insisting that it is an internal Pakistani matter and any relevant information discovered during Pakistan’s own inquiry would be exchanged with concerned parties. Pakistan also took stance that A.Q. Khan acted independently and not under government direction. Satisfied by Pakistani government’s investigation, the US avoided linking North Korea’s nuclear test in 2006 to the Dr Khan network, pointing out that Khan had been “out of business” since his gang of nuclear proliferates was discovered. (Rocca, Christina,2004)

United States and India

The US India Strategic Partnership: Early 90’s was marked by the end of cold war and United States and India efforts of exploring the possibilities of a more normalized relationship. However, 1998 nuclear tests appeared a cause of lowering down the Indo-US relations for the time being. Sanctions were imposed on India but at the same time efforts were not abandoned by US officials to bring New Delhi and Washington closer. By 2000 Vajpayee expounded a “natural” alliance between the world’s two largest democracies as the two countries pledged to “deepen the India-American partnership in tangible ways.” (<http://www.usindiafriendship.net/archives/delhideclaration.htm>, accessed on June, 10, 2009) A change in the White House in 2001 strengthened bilateral ties because the newly elected President Bush significantly viewed the necessity of developing a strategic partnership with India. One concrete step was taken in this direction to strengthen the Indo – US relations in November 2001 Vajpayee and President Bush agreed to

meaning fully enhance U.S-India cooperation in the spheres of regional security issues , space and scientific technology , civilian nuclear safety and expanded economic relations . (Kronstadt, K. Alan,2009:14) . This dimension remained on the Bush agenda throughout his two terms in office as President.

India, surprised over Musharraf's sudden policy reversal after the horrific event of 9/11, attempted to meet the challenges emanating out of this bold decision of policy changes. So under this crosscurrent, Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of State, assured New Delhi that fresh look into US Policy towards South Asia would not damage India and US ongoing efforts of maintaining natural alliance between the United States and India as envisioned by Prime Minister Vajpayee in 2000. On September 22, 2001 sanctions were simultaneously removed against Pakistan and India.

India offered the United States to use India's bases for counterterrorism operations. This was in complete contradiction to India's traditional conviction of neutral policy. While September 11th diverted US attentions towards the War on Terror, strategic partnership with India remained a US policy goal for South Asia not only because by its very existence as a US ally, India may help to keep the pressure for cooperation very high on rival Pakistan but also because India is seen as a major emerging power. India envisioned America as to be a replacement for the Soviet Union and pressurized Washington; to ease restrictions on the export of dual use of high technology goods; to increase civilian nuclear and civilian space cooperation as proof of "tangible" improvement in relations. These three issues came to be known as the "trinity" issues. In January 2004, President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee issued a joint statement declaring that the "US-India partnership included cooperation in the trinity areas, as well as expanding dialogue on missile defense. These initiatives were termed as the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership or NSSP". (Gautam Adhikari, 2005:7)

Counterterrorism Dimension of the Strategic Partnership

The growing "strategic partnership" between the US and India also enhanced counterterrorism cooperation initiated in 2000 when the Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was established to intensify bilateral cooperation. The United States maintained an interest in India's domestic stability and human rights issues and made significant contribution in improving India's counterterrorism capabilities in the form of military supplies and counterterrorism training.

After the United States began the War on Terrorism, New Delhi expected the US to see Pakistan backed terrorism in Kashmir as being of the same breed as the one threatening US interests in Afghanistan and the situation in Kashmir as a terrorist war, however much to India's surprise, the United States saw Pakistan as a means to eradicate terrorist elements rather than as propagators of terrorism.

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Even though September 11th initiated a Pak-US rapprochement, security cooperation between India and United States continued. In June 2005 India and US signed a ten-year Defense Pact outlining collaboration in multilateral operations, increased defense trade, more technology transfers and co-production, expanded missile defense collaboration and the establishment of a bilateral Defense Procurement and Production Group. The “New Framework for the US-India Defense relationship lists defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism as one of the key shared security goals and calls for bolstering mutual defense capabilities to achieve the stated goal”. (Vaughan, Bruce, & K, Alan 2004:14) A Maritime Security Cooperation Agreement was also signed in 2006. The United States views defense cooperation with India in the context of defeating terrorism, preventing weapons proliferation and maintaining regional stability.

Since 2002, the United States and India have also been conducting substantive combined military exercises involving all military services, a first in their bilateral relationship history. Also a first was the arms sale to India in 2002 of 12 counter-battery radar sets. Since then various other deals were signed between the two countries signaling commencement of major arms trade. These developments in Indo-US relations caused concern in Pakistan where they believed transfer of more sophisticated weapons to India would disrupt the regional balance entailing all the chances to be used against Pakistan. It is pertinent for both India and Pakistan to realize the fact that US cooperation with one South Asian power need not inhibit cooperation with the other. Counterterrorism cooperation is the need of the hour for South Asia.

In June 2005 the New Framework for India-US Defense Framework Agreement was announced. It laid the foundations for extensive strategic and military relations including joint planning and operations as well as defense procurements. The State Department announced in July 2005 the successful completion of the NSSP, increasing cooperation in bilateral commercial satellite links, and revision of some US export license agreements for certain dual use and civilian nuclear items. The NSSP was seen as a major policy shift in favor of India leading writers to conclude “the doctrine of parity between the two nations of South Asia has been abandoned as it is more in India’s favor.” (Fani, Muhammad Ishaque, 2006:35)

The Three Trinity Issues

1. Civil Nuclear Deal:

NSSP initiative included expanded cooperation in civil nuclear technology as one of three goals. America has long been a staunch supporter of nonproliferation and is a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) – an international export control regime for nuclear related trade. Several legal

adjustments therefore needed to be made before such cooperation could take place between the United States and India. Before the issue could be taken to Congress by US, India decided to take some steps on its own to show its commitment as a responsible state in March 2006, which included separation of its civilian and military nuclear facilities and programs, inform about its civilian facilities to the IAEA, voluntarily place civilian facilities under its safeguards, sign an Additional Protocol for civilian facilities, remain stick with its unilateral nuclear test moratorium, sort out cooperation with the US to conclude a Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty, avoid and restrict transferring of enrichment and reprocessing technologies to states that do not have them, as well as support international efforts to limit their spread, secure its nuclear materials and technology through comprehensive export control legislation and through harmonization and adherence to NSG guidelines.(Shaheen Afzal,2006:36)

Shortly after the announcement of the Separation Plan March, 2006, legislation to waive the application of certain requirements for India under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 was introduced in the US Congress. The Hyde Act was passed by Congress in December 2006 after extensive deliberations, paving the way for negotiations to the 123 Agreement. The 123 Agreement was negotiated and finalized by the governments of US and India in mid-2007. However before the said agreement could be put before Congress, India needed to first sign a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for putting its civilian reactors under safeguards, then the NSG was to lift sanctions on India. By mid-2008 India fulfilled these requirements despite intense opposition within the country and from the opposition party. The 123 Agreement gained Congressional approval on October 1, 2008. President Bush signed it into law on October 8, 2008. (Kronstadt, K. Alan 2009:40)

The Civil Nuclear Cooperation sought to meet India's growing energy needs in an environment friendly way. Currently nuclear power accounts for less than 3% of India's total electricity production. Estimates posit that new nuclear plants would account for no more than 6-8 percent of India's energy needs and that too at a very high cost. The proposed cooperation would however create thousands of jobs for Americans and generate lucrative contract potentials for American businesses. The agreement has effectively granted India de facto recognition of its nuclear weapons status. It has become a member of the NPT regime without actually signing it by pursuing nuclear energy itself but denouncing it for others. India is also free to engage in nuclear cooperation with NSG countries other than the United States. So the US has opened up a nuclear export market for other states as well.

Many observers had noted that there were no measures in this global partnership to restrain India's nuclear weapons program. The United States should have asked New Delhi to halt fissile material production for weapons. The deal with India may actually undermine the non-proliferation efforts instead of bringing India in its fold as Bush would like to believe. America's Civil Nuclear Deal with India threatened regional balance of power according

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to Pakistani officials. Pakistan not only voiced concern when the deal was first suggested in 2005 but continued to show its resentment throughout the process. Pakistani Foreign Minister at that time Khurshid Kasuri tried to convince the United States that Pakistan's energy needs warranted a similar deal. The issue was raised by President Musharraf during Bush's brief visit in 2006. President Bush responded by out rightly dismissing Pakistan's plea stating that "Pakistan and India are different countries, with different needs and different histories." (Fani, Muhammad Ishaque,2006:44)

2. Civil Space Cooperation:

The NSSP also called for enhanced cooperation on the peaceful uses of space technology and the July 2005 statement anticipated closer ties in space exploration, satellite navigation and launch, and in the commercial space arena. In 2007, a meeting of the US-India Joint Working Group on Civil Space Cooperation was held in Washington where officials expressed satisfaction with growing bilateral ties in this field. (Kronstadt, K. Alan, 2009:45).

3. High Technology Trade:

This was the third "trinity" issue agreed upon by the NSSP initiative in 2004. July 2003 saw the inauguration session of US-India High-Technology Cooperation Group where officials discussed a wide range of issues relating to expanding bilateral high technology trade. The establishment of a High Technology Defense Working Group in 2005 followed it. In October 2007, India was formally designated as an eligible country for the "Validated End User" program. This program allowed certain trusted buyers to purchase high technology goods without individual license. Hence laudable initiatives have been undertaken by both the "natural" allies to promote and strengthen their strategic partnership. Some of the special treatments given to India were also available to Pakistan due to its status as a MNNA such as access to space technology. Though Pakistan's success at attaining these benefits could not be successful

Pre September 11 debates over the nuclear issue in South Asia focused almost exclusively on how Pakistan and India would handle their nuclear arsenals during a crisis that mandated full or partial nuclear deployment. In contrast, the post September 11 debate encompasses the need for tight security over fissile material stocks as well as assembled and unassembled weapons in both countries. The very real terrorist threat in both countries combined with the popular belief that South Asia would be the next likely nuclear flashpoint makes the security of its nuclear weapons of the utmost importance. (Feinstein .Lee, James C, Clad Lewis A. Dunn, David Albright.2002:27)

Nonproliferation Ally

The administration proposed that India should be courted as an ally in US nonproliferation policy, rather than continued as a target of US nonproliferation policy. US policy makers identified three reasons for the change in strategy: failure of past policies to curb India's nuclearization; India's relatively good nonproliferation record (two Indian scientists were blacklisted for proliferation related activities in Iran but was contested by India and usefulness of India as an ally in the nonproliferation regime. The same reasons were used to justify US civil nuclear cooperation with India that goes against all previous international rules and regulations. As the world feared demoralization of the nonproliferation regime due to the agreement, India welcomed the changed policy previously referred to as the "three D's" of US nuclear policy – dominance, discrimination, and double standards. (Riedel Bruce, 2007: A shift in Indian policy was also seen when Prime Minister Singh declared "India is willing to shoulder its share of international obligations as partner against nonproliferation provided our legitimate interests are safeguarded...India is prepared for the broadest possible engagement with the international nonproliferation regime. India has jumped on to the US bandwagon to promote nonproliferation: from an opponent of nonproliferation, India has become its latest champion. India would henceforth preach disarmament to others while keeping nuclear weapons for itself. (Paul K.Kerr, 2008:11).

Increased Economic Cooperation and U S Aid:

The removal of all nuclear related sanctions on India and Pakistan immediately after September 11 paved the way for increased economic cooperation, aid and assistance with America. All democracy and debt rearrange related sanctions were also removed against Pakistan by October 2001. It enabled increased US aid to Pakistan to salvage Pakistan's seriously crippled economy. India is projected to become the world's third largest economy by 2015 and so America wants it to be a strong trading and economic partner. Bush bluntly stated that America needs India's 300 million middleclass for the goods it produces. (Fani, Muhammad Ishaque, 2006:44).

Since 2004 a major part of the US-India strategic partnership involved improved economic and trade relations. India is in the midst of rapid economic expansion and US firms view India as a lucrative market. The United States feels there is still long way to go and a lot more potential for economic collaboration between the two countries. Bilateral merchandise between India and US grew from \$6 billion in 1990 to \$33 billion in 2006. Total value of bilateral trade has doubled since 2001. Several initiatives ranging from the US-India "Open Skies" agreement that removed restrictions and lowered fares on airline services between the two countries and the creation of a Verified End User program in 2006 to facilitate technology transfer were concluded. Economic relations were further strengthened during the Indian Prime Minister's July 2005 visit to D.C where he and President Bush agreed to revitalize the US-India Economic Dialogue. The

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objective of the Economic Dialogue was to seek ways to resolve outstanding economic and trade issues, develop administrative capacity, and provide technical assistance. A US-India Trade Policy Forum was created in November 2005 to expand bilateral economic engagement and provide a venue for discussing multilateral trade issues. India also became a beneficiary of the US Generalized System of Preferences Program, which provides duty-free tariff treatment to certain products imported from designated developing countries. (Thomas Lum. 2008:30-32)

Conclusion

The US foreign policy has passed through many phases, as such from one of complete isolation to that of active interventionism in world affairs – both militarily and non-militarily. The two key South Asian States i.e. Pakistan and India despite being situated halfway across the globe from America have had the grave consequences of these changes. During the Cold War, US in pursuance of its containment policy of Soviet Union befriended Pakistan to fight communism and it sought close cooperation with India to gain access to its large market for American goods and investment potential. But the phenomenal changes came in the wake of fateful events of September 11, 2001 which brought both the countries on the top of American foreign policy agenda.

Once again, after a long break of indifferent attitude of US showed after withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989, Pak-US relations sailed in same boat. Pakistan was reengaged as the frontline state, this time to fight the menace of Terrorism. However, unlike in the past, both India and Pakistan equally attracted attention, because for the first time both the key South Asian states vowed to help America in the Global War on Terror. The Bush team's policies towards Pakistan were shaped by the need to combat terrorism through whatever means necessary while the policies towards India continued on the basis to build an envisioned natural alliance between world's two largest democracies. Pakistan was granted large sums of aid and assistance, both economic and military for its increased role in Afghanistan. A Civil Nuclear Agreement was finalized with India as part of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership that sought to increase collaboration in civilian nuclear technology, civil space cooperation and high technology trade. During Bush Jr.'s term in office, America once again facilitated to resolve tensions between Pakistan and India many times. And so US involvement in South Asia increased in post 9/11 scenario.

The nuclear nonproliferation has been the key issue of concern for South Asia. But in Post 9/11 scenario, it was supplanted by terrorism and Islamic radicalism. Bush quickly waived nuclear related sanctions against India and Pakistan as well as debt related sanctions against Pakistan to clear the way for extensive counterterrorism cooperation. The US identified a new global enemy, terrorists and their networks, and launched a War against all those

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that threaten world peace. Bush Jr continued the same policy parameters with slight changes during both the term of office.

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